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NOVEMBER 1983

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How To Live Happily (Unhappily?) On A Minister's Salary

By Brenda Evans

“Daddy, you know what I want?” Scott beamed. He was six, and we were a preacher’s family on our way to “try out” for a church.

“What do you want, Son?” my husband asked.

“I want a creek to play in. Let’s take any old kind of church, Daddy, just so it has a creek.”

Deerville had a creek all right. And a friendly lot of Christian families. What it didn’t have was enough money for us to live on.

Everything, I mean *everything*, was

right except the money. Quaint town, cordial people, colonial two-storied church, white fenced lawns straight out of Tom Sawyer, and a town square where everyone congregated on the Fourth of July. There were even bells in the belltower.

It’s hard to admit saying no because of the money. Still, with no job opportunities for me, one son beginning college, and two others right behind him, our decision made sense.

“Live on faith,” I scolded myself. But mine wasn’t strong enough. We needed another \$100 per week to meet routine obligations of a five-member family.

A quick review of community economics, membership records, and financial statements, even by non-financially-minded me, showed that this church was not doing what it should to pay a reasonable salary.

Living on a preacher’s salary had never been unpleasant for us. We

always managed and adjusted according to the income. But there were limits. Five people couldn’t live on Deerville’s offer, and we knew it.

Being Candid

Thinking back reminds me that I, we, all of us must talk more about the pastor’s salary. We could have been candid with Deerville. They might have reevaluated their resources. Or we could have taken that giant faith-step, and trusted them to supply. But we didn’t. Instead, we declined their invitation.

When it comes to salary, we pastoral families are good at silence. We may need more or want more, but we feel uneasy asking. We don’t like admitting we want more comfortable or improved living standards. But we do.

For one thing, there are honest needs beyond food, clothing, shelter.

In our community ministers must meet certain educational and social standards. Poor grammar or a shabby suit doesn't go unnoticed. Ragged tennis shoes on the kids embarrass the church folks.

Periodicals for staying informed about church and world news, two cars to match the schedule of a busy pastor, wife, two teenagers, and a preteen—these are not luxuries. And they cost money.

Trying Hard

Some pastors' families are famous for their ability to manage well. Others are infamous. Early in our marriage we recorded every penny we spent in a simple ledger just to see where it was all going.

The salary was small. The church even smaller, and everybody in our little group struggled just as we did. We didn't ask for a salary raise, and rightly so.

I still have that ledger. Most of the early pages are torn out, but a later budget is there. That notorious catch-all—miscellaneous, representing myriad unknowns—was large.

By then we were at a different church. Things had changed, including the size of our family and the prosperity of our church members. On paper, the budget said we'd have \$300 at year's end. In fact, we dipped into our savings to pay the bills.

We said nothing to the church about our needs. This time, we should have. We were hard against non-necessities. We gave generously to the church and missions. Of what profit was our silence?

In a recent business meeting a new pastor was elected. No comment was made about salary. My friend said to me, "I have no idea what we will pay our new pastor. No written report was given and I didn't ask. The deacons handle all that."

Facing Facts

In 1981 only 247 of our 2500 churches reported pastor salaries in our report system. Both pastors and churches are closemouthed on the subject of pastors' salaries. Silence does not mean all is well, however.

Pastors would like to talk about salary, at least my husband would. A recent survey by *Leadership* magazine indicates others would. But pastors are hesitant to ask for more money, they say, because they feel like hirelings or beggars.

Too, pastors fear being labeled materialistic. Truth is, they'd like to talk freely about a more equitable car allowance, advantages and disadvantages of parsonages, vacations according to years in ministry, better retirement benefits, housing for old age, the relation between salary and self-image for a man.

Other studies show that what pastors think about their salaries and what church leaders think is often quite disparate. Preachers aren't necessarily right, neither are church boards. But how can the two views be brought to agreement without conversation on the subject?

Getting Specific

What's there to talk about? I can think of a baker's dozen for starters:

* According to a 1980 study, ministers often spend \$1,000 a year out of their own pockets for job-related expenses.

* One pastor says that a pastor and his wife must budget "mutually agreed-on priorities" and stick to them. But he has two financial bugbears—Christian College for his children and a home for retirement. He'd like to talk about it.

* Nearly half of the ministers' wives in this country work outside their homes.

* One pastor almost lost his job by asking for a 100 percent salary increase. Some said he was too audacious. Others thought he merely requested a just wage.

* Sixty-two percent of the ministers live in church-owned parsonages. But some pastors argue that the financial benefit of a parsonage is questionable. For the pastor it means no equity, and no choice about where to live.

* A low-paid minister sometimes feels negative about his church, especially if the church doesn't pay what it could. Yet, 80 percent in a recent survey said they had no such negative feelings.

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SALARY (From Page 3)

* One church consultant says a church should double a minister's salary every eight to 10 years.

* For most men and many women, salary and self-image are intricately related. Pastors are no exception.

* One minister commented: I suggest distributing an anonymous survey and averaging the incomes of the congregation to see how the pastor's compares.

* One salary expert believes pastors' pay is least equitable in the areas of experience and tenure.

* Only 500 out of 2500 Free Will Baptist churches have full time pastors.

* Poor retirement benefits and lack of property ownership are high on the list of worries for ministers nearing retirement.

* One church hasn't given a salary raise in more than two years. When Pastor A left the church, his salary was \$300. Pastor B was hired at that same salary. In less than two years he resigned to assume another position, and Pastor C was hired, again at \$300.

I've been quite happy living on a pastor's salary, but there's plenty to talk about.

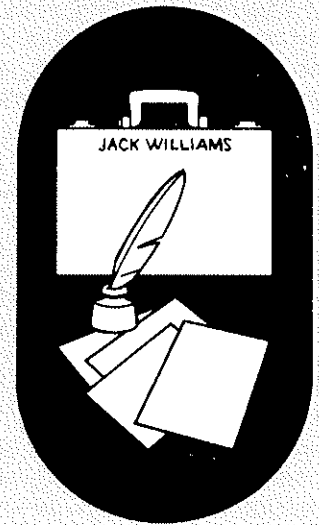
And too, Scott never did get his creek to play in. He's almost a teenager now. Probably it hasn't really mattered.

Still, I'm his mother, and mothers are softies. If I could afford it, I'd go looking for a creek in a minute. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Brenda Evans is a free-lance writer who resides in Ashland, Kentucky. She has 20 years' experience as a pastor's wife.

Briefcase



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Whatever may be wrong with the Free Will Baptist denomination could be cured with a renewed commitment to missions and tithing.

Missions is our reason for existence. Tithing pays the bills, runs the churches, supports the missionaries, prints the literature and trains the workers.

It's easy to build a case for sending missionaries to West Africa or Brazil or France or almost anywhere else in the world after a Spirit-anointed missionary explains just how lost lost people are.

I applaud this new awakening of missionary commitment. But our problem is we're sending out more missionaries with no increase in the number of tithers in our local churches. Since tithing and missions are inseparable, let's talk dollars and cents.

Our financial base has not increased. Our vision has. There's no need to wring our hands and resort to gimmickry to underwrite growing missions programs.

The answer is, was, and always will be found in the Bible. That answer is tithing.

We get downright embarrassed, and justly so, when missionaries are accused of only being interested in money. Yet when churches lie in disrepair and full-time Christian workers draw half-time salaries, this says something heavy about our lack of stewardship.

But tithing will cure all that. A church full of tithers is a church with no financial problems. A denomination full of tithers is a denomination with no financial problems.

I for one am not interested in trying to devise some scheme or some other way to finance the work of the Lord. Tithes and offerings will pay the freight in any program that has God's name attached to it.

The tithe belongs in the local church—the storehouse of God. Not in a college. Not in a missions department.

Not in an evangelist's pocket. This frees the individual to then give above his tithe to specific needs wherever he may want to designate his money.

One thing we know, a man who tithes can preach the gospel in Africa, send medical supplies to South America, print literature for the French, and a hundred other things that missionaries are able to do because of his tithing.

The only equitable plan to fund the Lord's work is tithing. No other solution should even be considered. No man is too rich to tithe and no man is too poor to tithe.

The rich man and the poor man alike pay the same \$1.37 per gallon for gasoline—that's a hardship on the poor man. The rich man and the poor man alike pay the same \$10,000 for a new car—that's a hardship on the poor man and that's unfair.

The same is true for buying groceries, buying clothes, and paying the light bill. But that unfairness does not exist in God's tithing program.

The man with with large income may tithe more dollars than the man with the small income, but he does not tithe any more of the percentage. Ten percent off the top of the gross income is the same for any man rich or poor.

The tithe gets paid first. The tithe gets paid before the rent, before groceries are bought, before the car payment is made, before children's college tuition.

Tithing works for the denomination. Of all the great issues that should be addressed in our pulpits, none is any more needed than the subject of tithes and offerings from a biblical perspective.

Tithing is not for the few but for the masses. Tithing is not for the lost but for the saved. Tithing is not for the ordained only but for every member of every church.

There are positive and negative ways of looking at tithing. We could dwell on the fact that a man is a thief if he does not tithe. While I do not wish to belabor the point, neither can I change it.

On the positive side, every man who begins tithing wonders why he didn't start sooner. The only people who oppose tithing are non-tithers.

And, yes, tithing is the starting point for the Christian. Nobody wants to say

give 10 percent and then give no more. But then tithing was never designed as a deterrent to more generous giving.

Those who imply that teaching tithing will result in scrooges who refuse to give more than 10 percent should try it for awhile.

Right now a small percentage of our church members tithe and give offerings. We have done amazingly well with a minority paying the freight. What we could do if the entire denomination took tithing as seriously as God intends, only God knows.

But I am convinced that we are going to continue on a financial treadmill, harrassing the faithful few who have carried the load for so long, heaping ridiculous guilt on those who have given all they can give, just because we are afraid to teach the Bible system of tithing.

Car washes have their place, but not as a substitute for tithing. Rummage sales have their place, but not in the church of the living God as a means to finance His program. Spaghetti suppers have their place, but not as the means of underwriting the cause of Christ.

Our problem is we have not practiced what we believe with regards to biblical stewardship. Oh, by-in-large, the leadership does. But we have inexplicably and unforgiveably neglected to teach biblical stewardship.

The problem didn't seem so serious a few years ago when our national outreaches and worldwide interests were dwarfed. But now with our vision finally catching up with what the Bible mandates, we find ourselves strapped financially because we built on the base of emotions and the needs of the moment instead of the long-term, God-honoring principle of tithing.

Tithing isn't much. But little is still much when God is in it! ▲

A Master's Men Project



The Master's Hands— No Hands But Our Hands

By
Bill Daniel

When Paul received the Macedonian call, there were two imperatives: (1) Come over, and (2) Help us. Those same two pleas go out daily by many of our Free Will Baptist churches, both home and abroad.

Today, there is a young Brazilian enrolled at Free Will Baptist Bible College. He had the privilege of hearing the gospel from one of our missionaries in Brazil.

He was born in a Roman Catholic family and was also exposed to spiritist teachings. But through God's mercy, he attended a Free Will Baptist youth camp and was converted.

By-products of that decision—his father and mother are Christians now as well as his sister. From that same youth camp facility, at least 15 other young lay-preachers are serving God. They all accepted Christ while involved in youth camp activities.

Youth camp facilities are often used in Brazil to introduce children and adults to Jesus. Tragically, the facilities are inadequate and old.

The baked-tile roofs have to be removed every year and poison sprayed, then the roofs replaced. This is laborious work. Walls of hand-made bricks are becoming unrepairable.

But Master's Men have the opportunity to transform that camp with a new concrete block dormitory that can sleep 52 persons in family-style rooms.

More lost, hopeless souls will be able to hear God's message of love and redemption. Adequate facilities will make possible more meetings involving greater numbers of folks eager to hear about Jesus.

During the 1983 National Master's Men Conference in Columbus, Ohio, three laymen from Arkansas became burdened with the need to build the dormitory in Brazil. They are strong, able-bodied men—successful contractors who are willing to leave their jobs for four weeks to use their hands in the Master's service.

These pleas for help could probably be repeated on virtually every Free Will Baptist foreign mission field. But the calls are also coming from our home fields.

Almost all national home missionaries are confronted by the problem of erecting a building with limited resources. Many times the cost of building forces them to remain in rented facilities for years. This cripples the work and makes it that much harder and more expensive to establish a church.

Some problems, they say, are (1) They cannot qualify for a large enough loan to buy land and erect a building. (2) They do not have enough members with the experience to do a lot of the work to help cut the cost.

The Home Missions Department has established a Church Extension Loan Fund so that Home Mission churches can borrow money at a lower rate of interest. This reduces the monthly payment for the mission churches.

Local Master's Men chapters could go at different times for specific projects such as framing, roofing, or drywalling. The missionary could have all the materials on the site when the team arrives. This could cut the cost of building in half. It would also save a lot of precious time.

What we've talked about so far has been a strictly manual, hands-on approach. But what if every time you

try to drive a nail in a board your thumb seems to receive more attention than the nail head? Or you simply aren't the household handyman?

Is there still a service you can render for a sister (fellow) church in need? By all means, every one can have a part. Here are just a few of the specialties that may be needed:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Accounting | Framing |
| Architect | Landscaping |
| Budgeting | Legal |
| Bus Ministry | Masonry |
| Canvassing | Mechanic (bus) |
| Carpentry | Pipefitter |
| Construction | Plumbing |
| Drywalling | Refrigeration |
| Electrician | Roofing |
| Finance | Visitation |

In some instances, actual performances of the specialty may be needed. In others, problems may be solved or corrected by means of a phone consultation or correspondence. But the fact remains that every Master's Men can be used in the Master's Hands.

For years, men across our denomination have given helping hands to churches in need. The primary purpose for Master's Men involvement is to organize this entire concept in matching volunteers with the needs.

The result will be to use this untapped source of energy that God has given to us to its fullest potential. Secondly, this project will help bind us in a fellowship of love and concern one for another.

The Master's Hands Project is divided into three categories:

VOLUNTEERS—Individually or as a chapter project.

Just call the Master's Men office (615-366-0318), and we will send you an application. The application includes questions such as area of trade, experience, how far will you travel one way, will you need lodging or facilities for a travel trailer, camper, etc., and the number of days you can assist.

When a church notifies Master's Men about a need, the file with that trade will be pulled and selection initiated. Admittedly, many circumstances may alter your answers on the application so the selection process may involve several phone calls.

If you select the assignment, you will be sent a letter of confirmation with all the details.

NEED—Individual stateside church or a foreign field work.

As with volunteers, call the Master's Men office, and we'll record all the necessary information. As soon as a volunteer is found, the church in need will also be sent a letter of confirmation.

SUPPORT—in three areas:

1. Funds for volunteers unable to pay their way. As with our three Arkansas laymen, they must raise their own passage to Brazil, plus pay for repair work on the building which will cost approximately \$8,000. In local instances, someone may volunteer even though he is unable financially to pay the travel expenses.

2. Funds to help underwrite the National staffing. With this new project, new areas of expense will arise: phone calls, correspondence, printing of forms, added filing systems and increased staffing due to the response for volunteers and needs.

3. Prayer Support. Call or write Brother Jim Vallance, Master's Men general director, and let him know that you're praying for this project. Please pray as Master's Men takes another giant stride forward in being all we can be in the Master's Service.

The call continues—Come over and help us!

Be a helping hand—join the Master's Hands today! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Bill Daniel is a member of Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

MASTER'S HANDS

Dear Brother Jim:

I am interested in the following:

- Becoming a volunteer
 My church has a need (please call the office)

I will support:

- Financially
 Prayerfully

Name _____

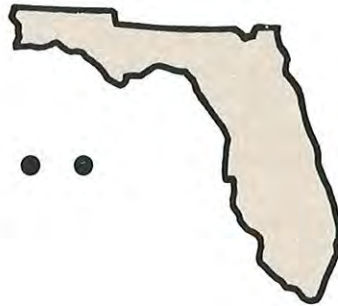
Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Clip and mail today to: **Master's Men**
P.O. Box 17306
Nashville, TN 37217

Home Missions . . .



Is My Life



By Pat Thomas

HOME MISSIONS! Those words have always held a fascination for me. I have never failed to be challenged, thrilled, burdened, and excited when I think of Home Missions.

Since my conversion in 1954, I have been interested and involved in this great cause. What a tremendous way to spend a lifetime—in the never ending, stimulating, inspiring labor of love called Home Missions.

As Tent Makers

I was saved in 1954 in the only Free Will Baptist church in Hobbs, New Mexico, my home town. That summer

I married Roy Thomas who had been saved in 1951 in the only Free Will Baptist church in Buhl, Idaho, his home town.

A week after we married, we started the second Free Will Baptist church in New Mexico, at Artesia. Roy was still in the Air Force, stationed 45 miles from Artesia at Walker Air Force Base in Roswell. We were more than happy to drive the 45 miles back and forth from home to church, many times using grocery money to buy gasoline for our car.

Roy and I were so excited to be starting our first church—me at age 18 and Roy at age 24. We were young, untrained, and inexperienced. But what a thrilling time we had knocking doors, witnessing to people, going through the plan of salvation, and winning souls to Christ. We worked during the week at secular jobs, and spent our evenings and weekends building the church.

After a few months the church climbed over 100 in Sunday School, and we discovered that we did not know how to train the people to be soul winners, tithers, or established workers in the church. So we began to pray about going to Bible college.

However, *I will never forget those precious, wonderful years we spent as "tent makers" establishing our first church in the isolated, western state of New Mexico. I still look back with fond memories on those days, and have always had an appreciation in my heart for those preachers and their wives who are willing to go as tent makers, work at secular jobs, and dig out a work for God in their "spare time."*

As Home Missionaries

After two years in Artesia, we moved to Nashville, Tennessee to

attend Free Will Baptist Bible College and get the training we needed to do a better job for the Lord.

During the four years of Bible college (and while Roy served in two Tennessee pastorates), we knew that God wanted us to go back out West to start a new church in an isolated area. Months before Roy's graduation in May 1960, we applied to the National Home Missions Board and were approved as missionaries to a city where we had never been—Denver, Colorado.

We spent an exciting four months doing itinerate work to raise support. By the way, I love doing itinerate! During those four months we saw many people saved in our services, gained prayer support throughout several states, and built a solid financial basis for our account to be maintained while we were on the field.

The day finally came that we drove our car—pulling an old stock trailer full of furniture—over the top of a hill and surveyed the huge city of Denver below.

As we looked over the 20 miles of lights that twinkled in the early evening darkness, we prayed that God would “give us this city for Christ.” We were not frightened or scared in the least—that's youth for you—and had a confidence that we could conquer the world in God's name.

Now that I am older, I probably would approach such a gigantic task with much fear and trembling. But at that time we had every confidence that we would build a church and win men to Christ in that sprawling city at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

We tackled our task with the enthusiasm of two tigers. We knocked doors, prayed, fasted, witnessed to people, rented a building, bought supplies, contacted prospects, advertised and promoted, and waited in excited anticipation for our first service.

I remember one day we knocked doors all day, and the hottest it got that day was three degrees below zero! But it was worth it when 48 people came to our first service, and five of them got saved. The rented building (a ballet studio) was packed full of people, and what an exciting service we had.

This service seemed to set the pace

for the next 10 years—years filled with blessings, tears, singing, shouts of rejoicing, pleading, teaching, training, developing, building, and establishing.

I will never forget those precious, wonderful years we spent as home missionaries— and would do it again



“As we looked over the 20 miles of lights that twinkled in the early evening darkness, we prayed that God would ‘give us this city for Christ.’”

and again, if God gave the opportunities and if time would stand still so that the aging processes would slow down.

As A Board Member

After we served as home missionaries for about two years, the church in Denver became self-supporting, and we settled down to the difficult task of grounding the church members, making soul winners out of them, and training them in the Word of God.

Each year we would take several carloads of our people to the National Association, because we wanted them to see that Free Will Baptists *did* have other churches, pastors, and people, and that all our states were not as isolated from the denomination as Colorado.

In 1963 we attended the National Association in Detroit, Michigan, where Roy was elected to the National Home Missions Board. He served for eight years, five of those years as chairman.

During the time we had served as home missionaries, living on \$200 a month, plus \$40 for housing and no other benefits, Roy had always said, “If I ever get elected to the National Home Missions Board, I am going to work for benefits for the missionaries.

So for eight years he journeyed to Nashville each May and November to attend board meetings and labor to see that hospitalization insurance, social security, higher housing allowances, and other benefits were added to the missionaries' salaries.

He also felt that some materials needed to be developed so the home missionaries would have some “tools” to work with on the field. He started writing follow-up lessons, gospel tracts, church brochures, and other materials that would aid the missionaries in laying the ground work in starting their new churches.

Those were productive years and exciting times as we watched the work of Home Missions develop, new churches start, and virgin territories open up for Free Will Baptists. *I will never forget those precious, wonderful years* Roy spent on the National Home Missions Board.

As Staff Workers

During the November 1970 board meeting, Roy called me from Nashville as I was holding down the fort in Denver, and said, “The Board would like us to consider coming to Nashville and working on the Home Missions staff. What do you think about this?”

Once again the excitement of a new challenge swept over me. Oh, we could do so much more to promote the cause of Home Missions if we had our full time to put into it. So once again we packed our furniture, told the Denver church goodbye (that day



MY LIFE (From Page 9)

was like a funeral), and started off on a new adventure.

Roy's job at that time was to be the associate director of the Home Missions Department (a job he held for seven and one-half years before becoming the general director in 1978). He hit the road raising both prayer and financial support for the Department.

At that time there were about a dozen couples working as home missionaries, and Roy had a burden which he shared everywhere he went—"I hope to see the day when there will be a Free Will Baptist church within a short driving distance of everyone in the United States, Canada, and Mexico!"

Therefore, he adopted the motto, "A MISSIONARY IN EVERY STATE FOR A CHURCH IN EVERY CITY!" He purchased a map of the North American continent and put a dot on it for every church affiliated with the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

He carried this map with him everywhere he went—and still does. Some have even called it his security blanket. The main purpose of the map, however, is to show the whitened harvest fields where we have no Free Will Baptist churches.

By this time our children were in junior high school, and with Roy gone from home much of the time, I had most of their disciplining and training. I did not want us to be busy traveling all over the country starting churches, helping other people's children, and then lose our own.

I knew I *must* get the children involved in a strong, soul winning, youth-oriented church. Therefore, we joined Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville and got involved.

Our daughter, Patsy, and our son, Mark, spent their teenage years working bus routes, going on "Teenage Soul Winning," singing in the youth choir, and participating in all the youth activities. During those years I served as mother, teacher, taxi-cab driver, disciplinarian, coach, counselor, adviser, bus captain, and youth sponsor.

However, during the summer months we traveled with Roy, living in an 18-foot travel trailer, and conducting services every night in churches from coast to coast.

One summer we pulled the trailer west to California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The next summer we went to Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas. After that we went to West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri.

Can you imagine four people trying to get ready for church each evening, eat supper, take baths, and get dressed in an 18-foot trailer? We have laughed over it probably as many times as we got frustrated and cried. One day Patsy said, half jokingly and half seriously, "I am sick of all this *togetherness*."

What times we had, though, as we saw America, visited our churches, and fellowshipped with Free Will Baptist people all across this great country.

Our children were privileged to see both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, pick cherries in Washington, ride their bikes on the Salt Flats of Utah, climb mountains in Colorado, visit a coal mine in West Virginia, tour Washington D.C., watch a rocket launching from Cape Kennedy, harvest hay in Missouri, and delight in meeting Free Will Baptist young people in our churches both great and small.

I think during those years a desire began to grow in their hearts to serve God in full time Christian work. That yearning was later fulfilled, for Patsy is now a pastor's wife at Central Free Will Baptist Church, Kansas City, Missouri, and Mark is the military pastor at Gateway Free Will Baptist Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

No, they did not resent the times their dad had to be gone from home. They filled their days with church and school activities, and grew up believing it was a privilege and blessing for their parents to be "servants of the denomination."

Later as the children went off to Bible college, the work load grew in the office, and I began to work 40 or more hours each week editing the Home Missions publications, doing secretarial work, and traveling, when I could, with Roy.

How exciting it was to watch the work grow, see new missionaries added, see the Department expand into evangelism and church growth ministries, and see added staff members employed to help carry the work load.

Now I can hardly wait to read the missionaries' monthly reports and newsletters as they come into the office. Many times the entire staff drops all work and gathers into Roy's office for a time of prayer because the monthly reports from the missionaries have brought special needs to our attention.

Countless evenings have been spent with staff workers gathering at our home or the Messer's home for "stuffing parties." At these events we joked, laughed, and stuffed permit mailings for hours, but felt that this was necessary in order to make things easier on the "soldiers on the front lines"—the missionaries.

I will never forget these precious, wonderful years we have spent as staff workers!

CONCLUSION

Now that both children are gone from home, I spend many hours at home alone while Roy is gone in services. Am I bitter about this? No, a thousand times, no!

I fill the lonely hours with a hundred projects I have going. There is so much I want to get done in the work of the Lord, and so little time to do it. I have no time to sit around and be lonely and frustrated, or grow bitter and feel sorry for myself. *There will be no "pity parties" for me.*

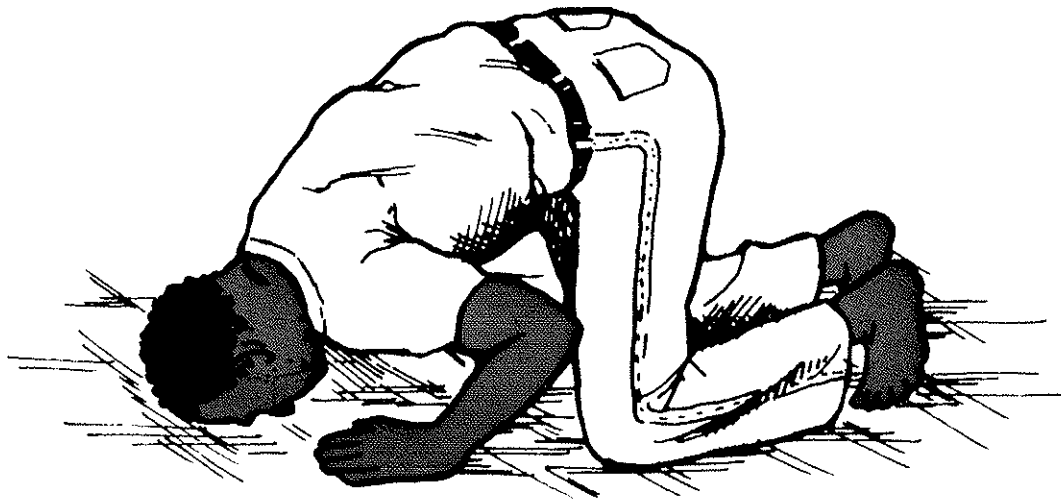
I have so much for which to be thankful. God has been so good to me. How blessed I am to have had the privilege to serve my denomination through Home Missions.

Just think about this. God picked me up out of sin and saved me way out in New Mexico, gave me a wonderful husband and children, led us into an exciting, fulfilling life in Home Missions, and blessed us with more blessings than I can count.

Yes—Home Missions Is My Life! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Pat Thomas, wife of Home Missions General Director Roy Thomas, is publications editor for the Department. She serves as secretary to the Associate Director Trymon Messer.

Pat is the mother of a daughter, Patsy Gwartney, and a son, Mark Thomas. She is a member of Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee. She has spoken at district and state auxiliary retreats, as well as the National Convention.



My Head Is In The Dirt

By Morris Chalfant

The Mossi tribesmen of French West Africa express gratitude by saying, "My head is in the dirt."

This comes from the Mossi custom of showing thanks by bowing low before another and pressing one's head into the dirt. For these Africans, thanksgiving dictates humility before the person to whom one is indebted.

In the Karre African dialect, the expression for thankfulness is "to sit down on the ground before" another. A thankful Karre will go to the home of his benefactor and sit on the ground before his hut. No word need be spoken; his silent vigil signifies his gratitude.

The man who is thankful to God, therefore, sits before God to enjoy His presence. He is never satisfied merely to tip his hat to God as he passes; gratitude demands that he seek God's presence and fellowship.

An accurate definition of ingratitude, though not the one usually found in dictionaries, might be worded like this: "Ingratitude is the attitude of

the person who receives every good and perfect gift without so much as an appreciative nod in the direction of the donor, be he human or divine."

Sir Winston Churchill told a story which shows how utterly ungrateful some humans can be.

There was once a sailor who plunged into the waters of Plymouth Harbor to rescue a small boy from drowning. A few days later the gallant hero met the boy with his mother on the streets of Plymouth.

The youngster nudged his mother, who remembered at once having seen the seaman somewhere. But she couldn't be positive about it, so she asked, "Are you the man who pulled my little boy out of the water?"

The sailor grinned, saluted, and answered briskly, "Yes, Ma'am." Already in the back of his mind he was figuring how best to respond to her thanks.

But she saved him the trouble. Her face set in stern lines and her lips unsmiling, she snapped: "Then, where's his cap?"

Most of us would not be so thoughtless and thankless in the presence of a benefactor as this woman who acted

as if a cap were the most important thing next to life itself.

However, barring all major incidents and emergencies, how do we measure up as grateful souls? Do we take our blessings for granted? Or do we take them with gratitude, realizing just where they come from when traced back to their divine starting point?

How vivid is our sense of gratitude to God, whose finger is present in everything and who deals so generously with us who deserve less than one-millionth of His gifts?

True gratitude is closely associated with self-giving. It says, with the psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Psalm 116:12).

Those who have true gratitude gladly pour the best perfume upon Jesus' feet, as did the woman of New Testament times (Matthew 26:6-7).

At the last supper, Jesus thanked God for the bread, which represented His broken body, and "he took the cup also, and having thanked God for it, he gave it to them." This act meant Jesus'



DIRT (From Page 11)

utter giving of Himself, and He thanked God that He could do it.

A gentleman says, "Thank you," for favors received. Expressing praise and thanksgiving to God is doing the gentlemanly thing. Gratitude demands expression other than words. Sincere words mean much, but they alone are insufficient.

On the first Thanksgiving Day, the Pilgrims held a prayer meeting to thank God. They also invited their Indian neighbors to share their turkey and pumpkin pie. Sharing is always proof of gratitude.

Thanksgiving Day commemorates the harvest reaped by the Plymouth Colony in 1621. Thanksgiving Day is peculiarly an American institution. It is older than the Constitution. It is older than the Declaration of Independence.

At this Thanksgiving season we should not only feel and express our thanks, individually and collectively for the vast acres of golden harvest stretched out across this great and blessed land of ours; we even more should feel and express our thanks for the rich harvest of grace and mercy that stretches clear back to our infant cribs.

Many years ago, as the story is told, a devout king was disturbed by the ingratitude of his royal court. He prepared a large banquet for them. When the king and his royal guests were seated, by prearrangement a beggar shuffled into the hall, sat down at the king's table, and gorged himself with food. Without saying a word, he then left the room.

The guests were furious and asked permission to seize the tramp and tear him limb from limb for his ingratitude.

The king replied: "That beggar has done only once to an earthly king what each of you does three times each day to God. You sit here at the table and eat until you are satisfied. Then you walk away without recognizing God, or expressing one word of thanks to Him."

Let us thank God for His blessings. He provides all things, supplies our daily needs. Let us this day, and every day, heed the counsel of His words: "Be ye thankful." ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: *Morris Chalfant is a free lance writer who resides in Norwood, Ohio.*

Thank You For Your Contributions...



... Through the Cooperative Channel

August, 1983

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	Undesign.	Total August '82	Yr. to Date	
Alabama	\$ 216.00	\$ 1,579.48	\$ 1,795.48	\$ 328.60	\$ 8,325.03
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	340.62
Arkansas	.00	3,569.18	3,569.18	3,220.53	27,965.15
California	.00	944.72	944.72	1,048.38	8,355.95
Florida	.00	3,481.18	3,481.18	33.33	12,997.19
Georgia	2,083.65	651.39	2,735.04	3,685.29	27,470.54
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	275.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	261.46
Illinois	10,379.94	3,280.81	13,660.75	14,659.60	65,462.11
Indiana	.00	62.54	62.54	76.17	222.38
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	78.95
Kansas	.00	412.22	412.22	.00	2,304.97
Kentucky	.00	220.00	220.00	.00	2,948.29
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	10.00	270.00
Michigan	3,156.54	150.00	3,306.54	2,964.05	27,074.61
Mississippi	.00	229.35	229.35	489.03	7,480.39
Missouri	.00	5,901.44	5,901.44	6,903.24	46,727.59
New Mexico	19.33	9.67	29.00	79.17	1,282.56
North Carolina	454.00	580.00	1,034.00	702.13	5,233.60
Ohio	467.18	1,381.00	1,848.18	1,726.00	12,899.26
Oklahoma	22,920.87	11,682.90	34,603.77	24,882.88	223,276.53
Tennessee	156.24	327.75	483.99	909.38	8,368.57
Texas	8,623.81	254.47	8,878.28	7,471.29	31,599.70
Virginia	.00	303.66	303.66	200.33	885.56
West Virginia	3,672.81	113.92	3,786.73	.00	13,555.65
Totals	\$52,150.37	\$35,135.68	\$87,286.05	\$69,389.40	\$535,661.66

DISBURSEMENTS

Executive	\$ 408.53	\$10,928.33	\$11,336.86	\$10,568.69	\$ 92,903.81
Foreign Missions	37,108.48	5,567.63	42,676.11	36,351.67	262,483.29
FWBBC	2,528.13	5,567.63	8,095.76	8,544.77	51,887.42
Home Missions	11,408.39	4,357.32	15,765.71	10,187.07	83,446.15
Retirement & Insurance	190.05	3,631.10	3,821.15	2,402.99	19,145.54
Master's Men	33.45	3,147.01	3,180.46	1,122.88	14,804.34
Commission on Theological					
Liberalism	9.30	242.06	251.36	211.33	1,427.46
FWB Foundation	206.86	1,452.54	1,659.40	.00	7,499.51
Historical Commission	47.59	242.06	289.65	.00	1,230.10
Radio/TV Commission	180.00	.00	180.00	.00	180.00
Hillsdale College	17.21	.00	17.21	.00	84.97
California Christian					
College	12.38	.00	12.38	.00	27.87
FWB Children's Home	.00	.00	.00	.00	391.20
Convention	.00	.00	.00	.00	150.00
Totals	\$52,150.37	\$35,135.68	\$87,286.05	\$69,389.40	\$535,661.66



Before You Spit Tacks

By Matilda Nordtvedt

Did you ever stop to think that the trait you now find so irritating in your mate may be what attracted you to him/her in the first place?

The super-organized, uptight fellow finds refuge in a girl who is easy-going and relaxed. He doesn't want to change his ways, but he admires someone who has the qualities he lacks.

After marriage, however, he often fails to appreciate this trait in his wife, calling her sloppy and disorganized.

When we say opposites are attracted to one another, we don't mean those who are opposite in their value systems or life goals.

The prophet Amos asked, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). In other words, how can you walk together if you are going in different directions?

There are many unhappy marriages today where the husband and wife have diametrically opposed value systems and life goals. Consequently they aren't "walking together" or enjoying the oneness and fellowship God intended.

Even though a couple may be walking in the same direction, however, they may be opposite in temperament. Most often they are. Not only do we tend to choose someone with qualities we lack, but God guides us to them. He puts us with those people who have the pluses that will develop our minuses.

A phlegmatic, easy-going husband might have a choleric wife bent on getting things done. He slows her

down so she is more relaxed, while her drive gives him a needed boost.

A perfectionist will probably marry a non-perfectionist. He will help her be more organized, while she will help him to be less demanding of himself and others.

An extremely punctual woman who lives by the clock will probably marry a man who is not so conscious of time. Hopefully her punctuality will rub off on him and his nonchalance will make her more balanced.

Everyone was surprised when super-serious Glen fell for happy-go-lucky Barbara, not realizing how much Glen needed Barbara to develop his sense of humor and how much Barbara needed Glen to give her spiritual stability.

It is much easier to criticize our spouses when they differ from us, than it is to recognize them as a gift from God, just what He ordered for our spiritual growth and development. Frantically we try to



SPIT TACKS (From Page 13)

change our mates to be like ourselves, when we really don't want them to be that way at all.

Elisabeth Elliot in her book, *Let Me Be a Woman*, suggests that wives often expect their husbands to think and act like women instead of the men they are. That's a good point for me to ponder when my husband has been watching a football game all Saturday afternoon. What do I want him to do to relax—embroider?

We can't change our mates, but we can change ourselves by the power of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes an unchangeable mate will also change in the process, but don't count on it. Rather, accept him or her as is.

In accepting them we bring positive forces into play instead of negative ones, such as gratitude instead of grumbling, and appreciation instead of criticism. We recognize that our mates' irritating points are actually blessings in disguise, means by which God is able to chip off our rough edges and make us into complete persons.

This also goes for roommates, fellowworkers, supervisors, employees, or anybody we have close contact with from day to day. You asked God for patience, love and humility, didn't you? Thank Him, then for the opportunity He is giving you through these people He has put you with to acquire and practice these virtues.

Your reaction to their irritating ways will be different if you think of what you are gaining and learning through them.

Acceptance is the key. The perfect God accepts us just as we are. Should we imperfect human beings do less with one another, especially the mates He has given us?

When our criticism turns to consideration and our complaining to appreciation, we'll be well on our way to a happy relationship.

Think about it the next time you feel like spitting tacks! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Matilda Nordtvedt is a free lance writer who resides in Everett, Washington.

A Thanksgiving Prayer

By Floyd Wolfenbarger

Thank you, Lord. Sometimes I think you treat me special, and I don't know why. There are so many millions who don't enjoy the same privileges that I experience.

Thank you for Christian upbringing by a wise father and gentle mother. Because they introduced your salvation into my life, I have avoided many snares.

Thank you for letting me be there when Dad died. I saw his unflinching faith touch lives even afterward. Thank you for letting me pastor near my folks for several years.

You've given me charge of a Christian home. A wife who is sensitive and compassionate. Her straightforwardness is humbling and I need it.

I'm crying now as I rejoice in the privilege of baptizing Angela that Easter afternoon in the chilly water of

Lake Hudson. The cold water which made her cling to me only warmed me in the glow of her affection. My family loves you and for that I am grateful.

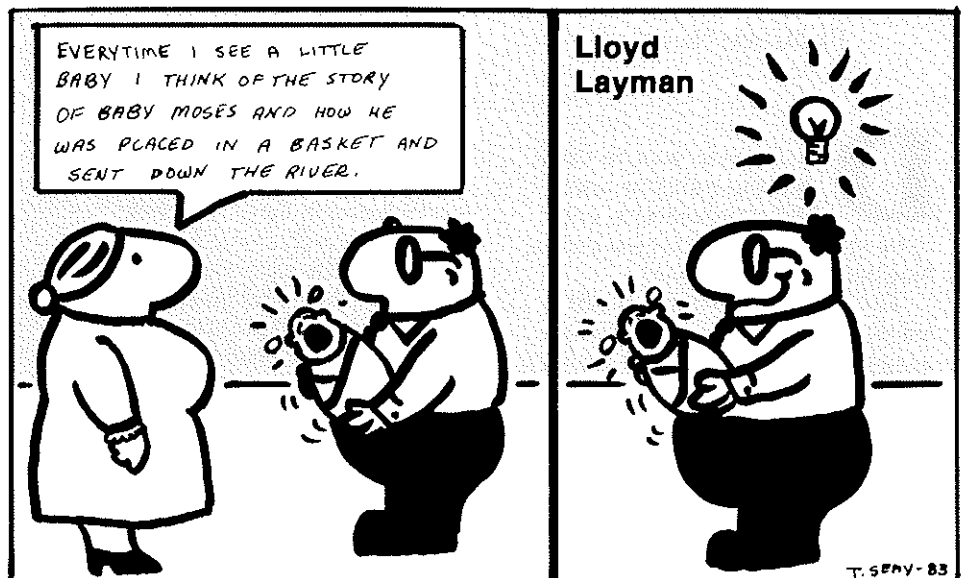
You've given me charge of a Christian church. I'm probably a shock to those who were used to a fine preacher like Brother Warner, but they are doing a good job accepting me.

Last Thanksgiving, neither they nor I imagined that I would be their pastor. As you know, I don't know how it all happened, but I accept it as your sovereign will. I'm happy and my family is happy. For all that, I am thankful, Lord.

Thank you Lord for mercy. It would be devastating if I didn't believe that you have forgotten my sins. Make me ever sensitive to the spirit of Christ Jesus who supplies abundant pardon.

I'm not done thanking you. But then, I'll never be. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Floyd Wolfenbarger pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Russellville, Arkansas.



By Paul Creech

Alone In France

“What do you mean, I’m going to France alone?” That was the bad news after learning the good news that I’d been accepted as a 1983 summer missionary.

I was elated to go, of course, but this thing about going alone troubled me. Knowing there must be a reason for it, I kept the thought to myself.

Even though I was alone, summer missionary work with Tom and Patty McCullough, FWB missionaries to St. Nazaire, was rewarding. The major lesson I learned was that loneliness is not all bad. It has its advantages.

Perhaps that confrontation with loneliness was preparation for future service.

The loneliness began on the inside almost immediately, bothering me most when I laid down to sleep. It was a dull ache knowing that all the summer missionaries serving in France had a partner, except me. I tried my best to keep it concealed, but it must have showed sometime. Even missionaries get lonely.

At first, I resented being alone. But it did not take long to see that it was best for me at this time. Those who are alone seek companionship, and the best companion is Jesus; He sticks closer than a brother.

I began to fill my vacancy with Jesus, and life moved back on balance again. Amazing—we never seek Him until we have a problem only He can solve or a need only He can fill.

Even Moses had to spend time alone and away from his family while he prepared to lead God’s people. David spent time alone doing menial work while he drew closer to God. And Paul was hidden away for three years in Arabia, free from distractions, before he burst upon the New Testament scene.

Jesus went through self-imposed loneliness during the most crucial times of His life—the wilderness, Gethsemane, Calvary.

—Another Dimension To Summer Missionary Work—

On the other hand, my problem was that I had a wrong attitude toward loneliness. Loneliness was not the problem. It can be the most rewarding time of life. It all depends on what we do with it. Instead of seizing the opportunity to draw near to God, I chose to concentrate on the bad situation I thought I was in.

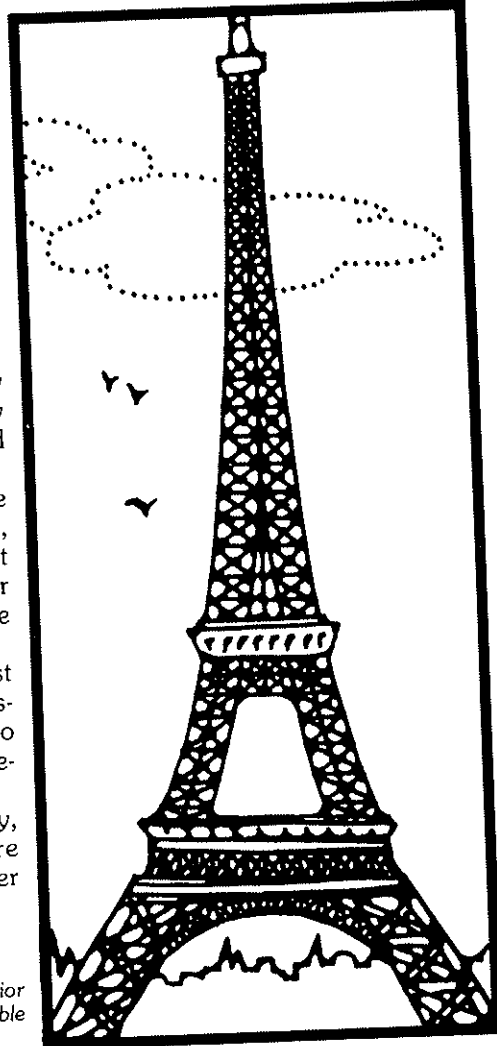
About six weeks into my experience, I received a letter that opened my eyes to the good side of loneliness. I realized that I was wrong to see only the bad side. So I began to shift my eyes from myself to my Savior and things got much better.

What worked for me will hold true for you. Take your eyes off yourself, place them on Jesus, and you will not see “loneliness” because Jesus is your life. Jesus said He would never leave us or forsake us.

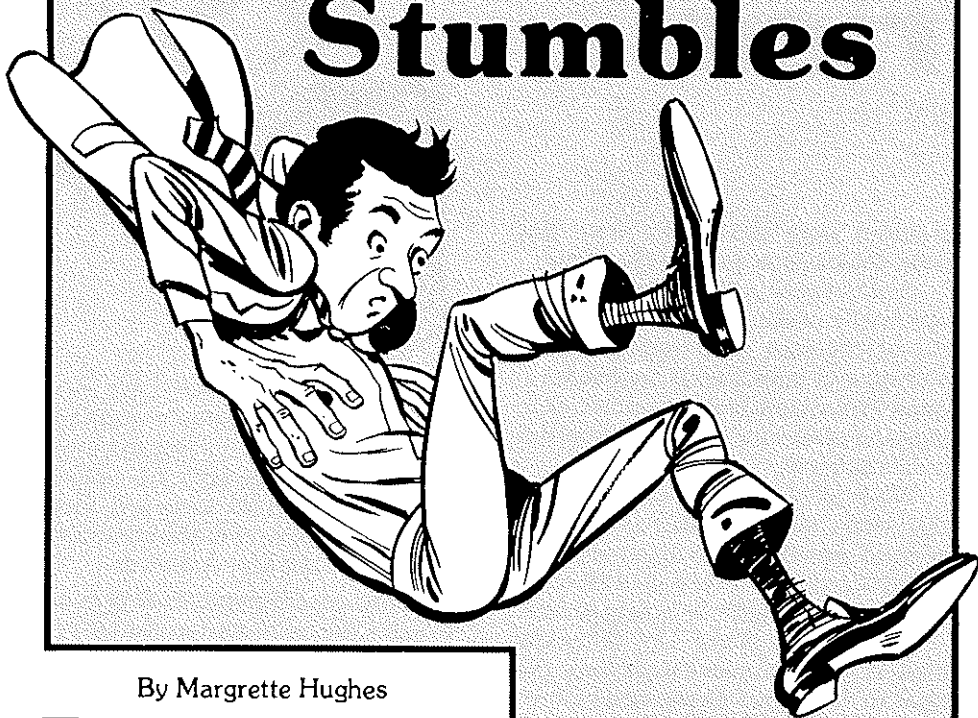
I now realize that it is probably best to send couples to the field as missionaries. If for no other reason, to prevent the harmful aspects of loneliness.

So the next time you feel lonely, remember that as a Christian you are not alone. Take this time to get better acquainted with your Lord. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Paul Creech is a senior ministerial student at Free Will Baptist Bible College.



When A Brother Stumbles



By Margrette Hughes

In a day when spiritual casualties reach almost epidemic level, my heart is disturbed and broken. I am saddened when our best men and women succumb to the snares set for them by Satan.

Yes, their sins disturb me. But what troubles me most is how fellow Christians react to those who stumble and fall. I am reminded of the nature of fish.

We have an aquarium at our house. Long before I become aware that one of my fish is weak or sick, the other fish know it. Instead of rushing to aid the sick fish, they launch an attack.

They pick and nibble at the weak fish until they kill him. Then, worst of all, they enjoy the feast. They eat the dead fish, and if he is not removed quickly from the tank, his bones will be picked clean.

We witness this same process among Christians. At the first sign of weakness we begin to pick. It spreads like wildfire, especially if it involves a minister, missionary, or their wife.

Telephone wires hum and the bad news spreads across the denomina-

tion. And worst of all, we seem to enjoy the feast. We somehow confuse this sin with the sinner, and instead of attacking the sin and praying for the sinner, we attack the sinner.

Not many of us would overcome an illness if our doctor confused us with our disease. If, instead of attacking our illness, he attacked us, we would have a difficult time recovering.

This is what Jesus was trying to teach us when He encountered the Pharisees and the woman taken in adultery. I am convinced that Jesus hated the woman's sin. He did not approve what she had done.

But at the same time, I am just as convinced that He loved the woman. She was the reason He left heaven and came to this sin-cursed world to save. This love affected how He dealt with her.

He would have been popular with the religious leaders of the day had He condemned her to death. But after all,

He had not come to gain popularity, but to seek out the lost.

I've pondered many times what Jesus wrote. Since no woman commits adultery alone, it may be that some of her accusers had been her secret partners in this act of sin. Perhaps Jesus had simply written dates, times, and places. In any case, they all left one by one. Then instead of condemning the woman, Jesus forgave her and sent her out a new woman with the command, "Go and sin no more."

How unlike this attitude we approach the sinner. Our spiritual pride becomes our worst sin, and we love very few people back to God.

I've learned from experience that all of us have weaknesses. You may not know yours, but just as the other fish sense the weakness in a fellow fish, Satan knows your weakness.

He waits until your most vulnerable moment to launch his attack. It may surprise you to find that you are overcome and fall into a sin you thought would never be a problem.

There was a time in my life when I felt there was no excuse for the child of God doing things he shouldn't. I had little patience with those who had problems with alcohol, tobacco, etc.

But Satan knew my weakness, and I (who had seen God answer prayers for me and work miracles in my life) found myself beset by fierce darts of doubt. "This is ridiculous," I would tell myself. But I was powerless to overcome and escape my pit of darkness.

I needed understanding, prayers, and love. I was fortunate; I was given these sustaining graces. Many fellow Christians are not that fortunate.

Those who should support, pray for, and love them, instead condemn and ostracize them. They find themselves powerless to overcome their adversary, and they stumble and fall.

Then again, and worst of all, we enjoy the feast. Somehow it makes us feel a little more spiritual if we condemn the fallen one. Instead of contempt for the sin and love for the sinner, we condemn the sinner.

Sin is terrible, and may we never condone it. But may we, at the same time, understand the heart of God and act as Jesus would act. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Margrette Hughes is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, where her husband, Larry, pastors.

Wake Up America!

By Eddie Moody

Does America need awakening? Our country is turning from the biblical principles upon which it was founded.

On November 11, 1620, a brave group of men and women known as the Pilgrims signed the Mayflower Compact—the beginning of a nation founded on biblical principles. From around the world, people came to America for religious freedom.

In the Declaration of Independence, our forefathers recognized the fact that man had a creator. Benjamin Franklin requested prayer at the Constitutional Convention. George Washington prayed in the snow at Valley Forge. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address recognized America as a nation under God. Our Pledge of Allegiance includes the words "One nation under God."

Is this still true today? Biblical principles were taught at one time in our public schools. The Bible was read and

children were allowed to pray. But now, things have and are changing.

Just last year in North Carolina, the motorist's prayer was removed from the official state road map. Religious statues and monuments are being removed from state parks. Biblical teachings and prayer have been outlawed in public schools.

While all of these things have been declared "unconstitutional", homosexuals are allowed to teach in public schools and offer their way of life as an example of a lifestyle for young people.

It's time to Wake Up, America! How is it that homosexuals have the right to do as they please, while Christians are regulated and prevented from exercising their constitutional rights?

Homosexuals are allowed to meet freely on state university campuses, while Christians are denied the right to hold prayer meetings on those same campuses.

It's time to Wake Up, America!

Our forefathers seem to have been godly men. I don't think they would have wanted our constitution interpreted the way it is today. Do these people believe our forefathers would have approved of what is going on today? Or is it that they really don't care? It's time to Wake Up, America!

Crime is on the rampage. Criminals claim that their constitutional rights are violated. What about their victims' rights? We shut ourselves behind locked doors and barred windows. That is where criminals should be. It's time to Wake Up, America!

If America does not wake up soon, it may cease to be a free nation. We may lose the rights we enjoy. It's time to Wake Up, America!



Today, many abortions are performed with taxpayer's money. Couldn't this money be put to better use? America slaughters 1.5 million babies a year. How long will God tolerate the slaughter of the innocent? It's time to Wake Up, America!

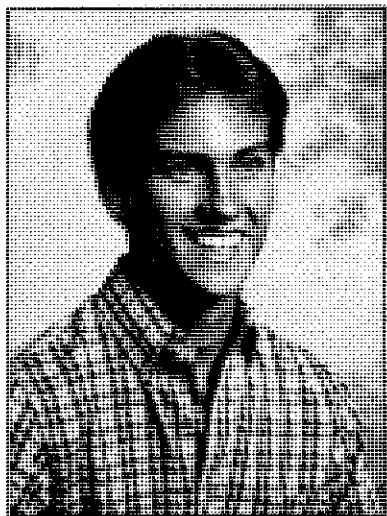
County governments now give us the right to decide if we want liquor-by-the-drink. At the same time, many thousands of people lose their lives on America's highways each year because of alcohol. More people have been killed due to drunk driving than in all America's wars combined. It's time to Wake Up, America!

On our money the words "In God We Trust" are printed. Are these words true today? On the back of a dollar bill, a pyramid is printed with an eye over it. This is said to symbolize our nation's being built under God's supervision. Is that true today? Are we still building a nation under God's supervision?

Something must be done. God will not allow our nation to continue on the path it has chosen much longer. We must change this nation's course. We must wake up this nation. We must fight to bring decency back to our nation.

We must Wake Up, America, before it is too late! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Fifteen-year-old Eddie Moody is a 10th grade student at Bethel Christian Academy. He attends Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, Kinston, North Carolina.





FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

EVANGELIST CONDUCTS GUYANA REVIVAL

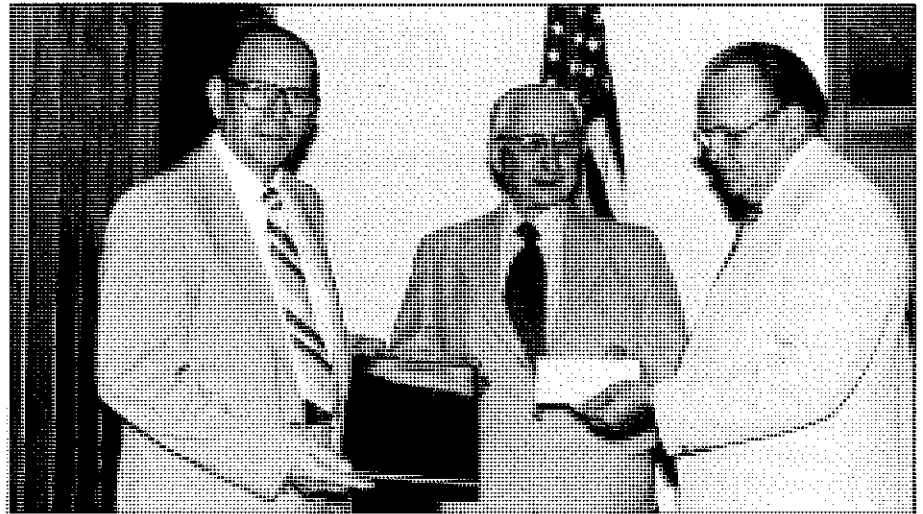
PEDRO, OH—Free Will Baptist Evangelist Calvin Evans reported 177 public professions during an eight-day August crusade in Guyana, South America.

Evans, headquartered in Pedro, Ohio, led an Evangelistic Outreach team of four evangelists to Guyana where 15 meetings were held near Georgetown in small churches and in a government school.

Overcoming small crowds at first and general skepticism, Evans said the closing service attracted 700 persons with 100 responding during the invitation.

Of the 177 professions of faith, 156 were for salvation and 21 for rededication. Thirty-three were led to the Lord on the streets through personal witnessing. Most of the converts came from Hindu and Moslem backgrounds.

Evangelist Evans said the new Christians were furnished free Bibles and enrolled in Bible correspondence courses and a Christian guidance program.



Editorial Staff (L.) Ralph Staten and Tennessee Promotional Director Raymond Figg

FORMER MODERATOR OBSERVES 50 YEARS IN MINISTRY

KNOXVILLE, TN—Reverend Ralph L. Staten, former moderator of the National Association, celebrated 50 years in the ministry this August.

Reverend Staten, 72, was honored on August 21 by members of Wooddale Free Will Baptist Church, Knoxville, where he pastored 12 years before retiring in 1977.

During the evening service, the congregation sang hymns selected by Brother Staten. He was presented with an engraved gold pocket watch. After he preached the evening message, members paid further tribute to Brother Staten with a supper in his honor and presented him with a money tree and other gifts.

In his early ministry, Reverend Staten pastored as many as five

churches at one time. From 1943 to 1977, he pastored "full time" churches in Arkansas, Alabama, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Staten has served extensively on state and national boards. He was moderator of the Arkansas State Association in 1946 when that group petitioned for membership in the National Association.

He has authored four publications including the widely-read booklet "Perseverance in Preservation," a defense of the Free Will Baptist position on the possibility of apostasy.

Staten is a regular contributor to denominational publications. He last spoke at the National Convention in 1982 during the Pastor's Dinner.

We regretfully wish to make it known that Reverend Allen L. Helms of Hillsboro, Missouri, is no longer a member of good standing with the St. Francois District Association of Missouri Free Will Baptists.

Done by the order of the association while in session on July 30, 1983.

Arthur E. Jenkerson, Clerk
St. Francois District Association
Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists



newsfront

(continued)

ARKANSAS PUSHES 'CHRISTIAN UNITY' THEME

CONWAY, AR—Nearly 500 delegates and visitors registered at Camp Beaverfork August 16-18 as the 86th annual Arkansas State Association met using the conference theme of "Christian Unity."

Moderator Carl Cheshier, re-elected for his seventh consecutive one-year term, guided the voting delegation, which included 105 ministers, through one of the smoothest business sessions in recent history.

Delegates amended the state constitution, shifting responsibility of operating the Christian Supply Store, a \$175,000 per year business, from the promotional director to the state Executive Board.

Agreeing with a resolution passed by the Executive Board, delegates refused to accept the four churches from the River Valley Association into the state association, citing disagreement with the River Valley Association's practice of ordaining divorced

persons.

State budgets topping \$706,000 were approved, including \$140,000 for the Cooperative Plan, \$175,000 for the Christian Supply Store, and more than \$125,000 for the State Missions and State CTS programs.

Auxiliary President Linda Harvey reported 1,031 members in 78 local auxiliaries. The group registered 203 during their one-day meeting. This year marked the 30th session for state auxiliary convention.

The 9th annual state Master's Men convention attracted 91 men to Bowen's Cafeteria in Conway to hear Department of Retirement General Director Herman Hersey speak. Officials reported 400 members in 36 chapters. New officers elected included Tommy Rogers (president) and Ronnie Fowlkes (senator).

The Master's Men agreed to raise \$2,500 for a public address system at Camp Beaverfork. Central Association

gave a \$500 check to the three Fowlkes brothers who plan to go to Brazil and assist Free Will Baptist missionaries in a construction project. Half of the \$627 Wednesday evening missionary offering was also designated for the Fowlkes brothers.

Three Arkansas pastors—Kevin Francis (Jacksonville), Larry Cook (Greenwood), and Robert Spencer (Glenwood)—and CONTACT Editor Jack Williams preached sermons on the conference theme "Christian Unity."

Music for the association was provided by state youth who participated in the music and arts competition.

State CTS Director Jim Pursell reported that in five weeks of camping activities at Beaverfork this summer the camp housed 1,130 campers. During that time there were 112 conversions and 182 rededications.

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE ENROLLS 467

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College enrolled 467 students from 29 states and seven foreign countries for the fall semester, according to Registrar Charles Hampton.

The 467 total includes 10 students enrolled in the Graduate School. It does not include 33 students who are enrolled, but are not taking classes for credit.

The most students from one state is

North Carolina, with 83. Tennessee has 82 in the fall FWBBC student body. Indiana is third, increasing its number of students from 17 last fall to 32, an increase of 88 percent.

Ministerial students total 99, with another 66 preparing for missionary service.

By classes, there are 153 freshmen, 102 sophomores, 98 juniors, 72 seniors, 32 special students and 10 graduate

students.

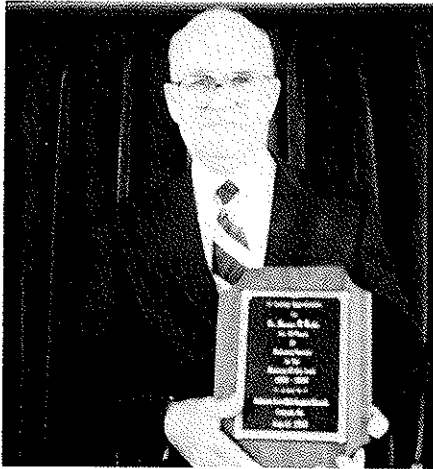
President Charles Thigpen says, "Our fall enrollment is larger than we expected, even though it is down from last fall. We are pleased with this enrollment. There is an excellent spirit among the students. We have never had a better school opening than we had this year."



ENROLLMENT BREAKDOWN BY STATE

Alabama	31	Kentucky	12	South Carolina	16
Arizona	1	Louisiana	1	Tennessee	82
Arkansas	8	Maryland	1	Texas	9
California	5	Michigan	17	Virginia	25
Delaware	2	Mississippi	10	Washington	4
Florida	15	Missouri	21	West Virginia	10
Georgia	19	New Mexico	1	Wisconsin	1
Idaho	1	New York	1		
Illinois	24	North Carolina	83		
Indiana	32	Ohio	11		
Kansas	1	Oklahoma	1	Foreign	12

GEORGIA PASTOR CELEBRATES 50 YEARS IN MINISTRY



COLQUITT, GA—Friends, relatives, and colleagues gathered in Bellview FWB Church, Colquitt, on July 17 to help Reverend Damon C. Dodd celebrate 50 years in the ministry.

Reverend Dodd, who is interim pastor of Bellview, was honored with an engraved plaque and a tea while Mrs. Dodd received a dozen long stemmed roses.

Brother Dodd was born in Flat River, Missouri, February 14, 1916. He answered the call to preach in 1933. He attended Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he was one of the four members of the first graduating class in 1944.

He earned the Th.M. degree from Pioneer Theological Seminary, Rockford, Illinois, and did further graduate work at Peabody College for Teachers, Northern Baptist Seminary, and the University of Georgia. He earned the D. Min. degree from International Bible Seminary and the honorary D.D. degree from Southern Bible Seminary.

In addition to pastorates in Missouri, Tennessee and Georgia, he has served as denominational executive secretary (1949-1953) and director of the Home Missions Department (1953-1957).

Dodd has authored several books including *The Free Will Baptist Story* and *Marching Through Georgia*. He has served as missionary to Cuba (1945-1948) and taught in Christian Worker's Institutes.

He organized Free Will Baptist Churches in several states, including the churches in Savannah and Albany, Georgia. During the course of his pastorates he has led in building several church plants and at least four church parsonages.

He helped organize Georgia Bible Institute where he served as past president and teacher.

Over the years, Brother Dodd has maintained a busy schedule as a prolific writer and a sought-after conference speaker.

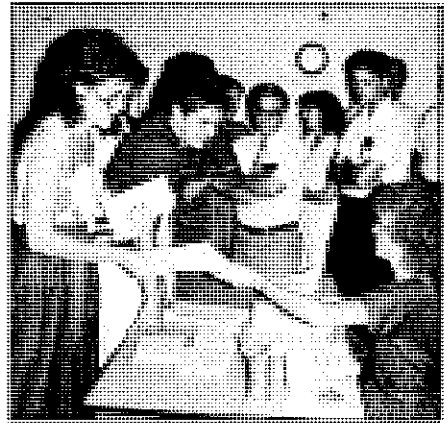
HILLSDALE REGISTERS 175 FOR FALL SEMESTER

MOORE, OK—Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College enrolled 175 students for the fall semester, according to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. This is an increase of seven students over the 1982 fall semester.

Shirley Combs, director of missions, says the annual Hillsdale Missionary Conference is scheduled November 7-9.

The three-day conference will feature five missionaries from Oklahoma who represent Ivory Coast: Elaine Allen, Robert and Judy Bryan, and Mike and Deleen Cousineau.

Home missions will also have a representative at the conference.



NOVELIST, EDITORIAL EXPERT TO HEADLINE 1984 WRITERS' CONFERENCE

NASHVILLE, TN—Christian novelist Janette Oke and veteran editor George W. Knight will keynote Randall House Publications' fourth annual Free Will Baptist Writer's Conference May 11-12, 1984, on the Free Will Baptist Bible College campus, according to Dr. Roger C. Reeds, general director.

Mrs. Janette Oke, Christian novelist, who has authored *Love Comes Softly*, *Love's Enduring Promise*, *Love's Long Journey*, *Once Upon a Summer*, *When Calls The Heart*, and a new soon-to-be-released title will lead seminars as well as serve on a panel discussion-forum. Her titles have sold in excess of 750,000 copies.

The other half of the guest-speaker tandem will be experienced rewriter and author-editor, George W. Knight. Mr. Knight has five books in print: *Church Bulletin Bits*, *Wedding Ceremony Idea Book*, *Church Bulletin*

Bits#2, *Instant Cartoons For Church Newsletters*, and *How To Publish A Church Newsletter*.

Knight served eight years as editor of *Home Life* magazine (circulation 750,000). He also edited *The Deacon* and *Proclaim* magazines. He presently operates his own *Editorial Services* business in Antioch, Tennessee.

The 1984 program format is designed to inspire, inform, and instruct both beginning and published writers, editors, and those interested in the field of Christian journalism.

Pastors, associates, church secretaries, and students will benefit by workshops on *Planning and Producing A Church Newsletter*, *Using Words that Flex Their Muscles*, *Out Of The Fog and Into The Light*, *Rewriting Exercises*, and a *Panel Discussion and Forum*.

In addition, a "hands-on" demonstra-

tion of an electronic word processor will be presented by a representative of a local corporate firm.

The conference will conclude with a panel discussion-forum moderated by Jack Williams, editor of *CONTACT Magazine*. Panel members will include Janette Oke, George W. Knight, Dr. Mary Ruth Wisehart (English professor at Free Will Baptist Bible College), and Dr. Charles Hampton (Registrar at Free Will Baptist Bible College).

A free, descriptive booklet and workshop guide is available upon request. Write to Reverend Harrold D. Harrison, Writers' Conference Director, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, Tennessee 37217.

High school and full-time college students may attend workshops free, but must register.



DEPARTMENT SETS ANNUAL WRITERS' CONTEST

NASHVILLE, TN—The seventh annual Writers' Contest, sponsored by Randall House Publications, will accept entries until March 15, 1984, according to General Director Roger C. Reeds.

Entrants have seven different categories from which to choose.

The contest is designed to: (1) help discover latent talent, (2) give opportunity for the development of known writing talent, (3) provide an outlet for the expression and recognition of creative writing skills.

Deadline for entries is March 15, 1984. Entries must be accompanied by a \$10 registration fee. Send entries and fees to: Reverend Harrold D. Harrison, Writers' Contest Director, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, Tennessee 37217. Checks should be made payable to Randall House Publications.

Free tuition to the Free Will Baptist Writers' Conference is available to each contestant. Meals and lodging are not included. This conference meets on the Free Will Baptist Bible College campus May 11-12, 1984.

RULES OF ENTRY

1. Any member of a church in the National Association of Free Will Baptists may enter.
2. Each entry must be religious in nature and the original, unpublished work of the contestant.
3. Entries must be typewritten; otherwise, they will not be considered. Each typewritten page should have 25 double-spaced lines of

type. Each line should be approximately 70 spaces in length.

The writer's name, address, and category of entry (Short Story, Poetry, etc.), as well as the approximate total number of words in the entry, are to be placed in the upper right-hand corner of the first page.

Please adhere to the requirements listed under "CATEGORIES" as to the length of each entry in the seven categories.

4. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 15, 1984. Those postmarked after March 15, 1984, will not be considered.
5. A contestant may submit one entry each in no more than two categories (the \$10 entry fee is required for each entry); he/she is eligible for first place in only one category. (Please do not send more than one entry in any one category and no more than two entries total.)

All entries become the property of the Free Will Baptist Sunday School and Church Training Department (doing business as Randall House Publications).

6. Winners will be announced in press releases to editors of Free Will Baptist state papers, where applicable, and in *Contact Magazine* and *Scope*.
7. Winning entries may be published in *Scope Magazine* or related periodicals, space, time, and priorities permitting.

CATEGORIES

1. *Exegesis/Sermon*. Each exegesis should develop a passage of Scripture, not to exceed 15 verses in length. Each entry should be at least 10 pages in length but not more than 14 pages. Sermon text and subject are left to the discretion of the writer. Outlining is suggested, but not mandatory.
2. *Short Story*. A short story should not exceed 25 pages in length.

3. *Poetry*. Poetry entries should consist of rhymed or unrhymed verses of not more than 100 lines which develop a central theme or image.

4. *Tract*. Gospel tracts or tracts on special spiritual subjects are acceptable. These should be short enough to be published in the usual tract format; not more than six pages.

5. *Play/Skits*. Not to exceed 14 pages in length, plays or skits should contain plot, theme, dialogue, characterization, setting, suggested set design, and stage directions.

6. *Book*. A book entry may be of any nature as long as it serves a religious purpose. Suggestions include devotional guides, novels, commentaries, guides to practical Christian living, etc. Length should not exceed 50,000 words.

7. *Art/Visuals*. In this category, any one of the following would be acceptable: a photo, painting, drawing, poster, or slides adhering to the main principles of element and design. Each entry must be a minimum of 8" x 10".

CRITERIA

Entries will be judged on the basis of contestant's creativity, composition techniques, originality, expertise of the literary or art form selected, impact, or theme content.

AWARDS

In each of the seven categories the awards are:

- First place—\$25
- Second place—\$15
- Third place—\$10

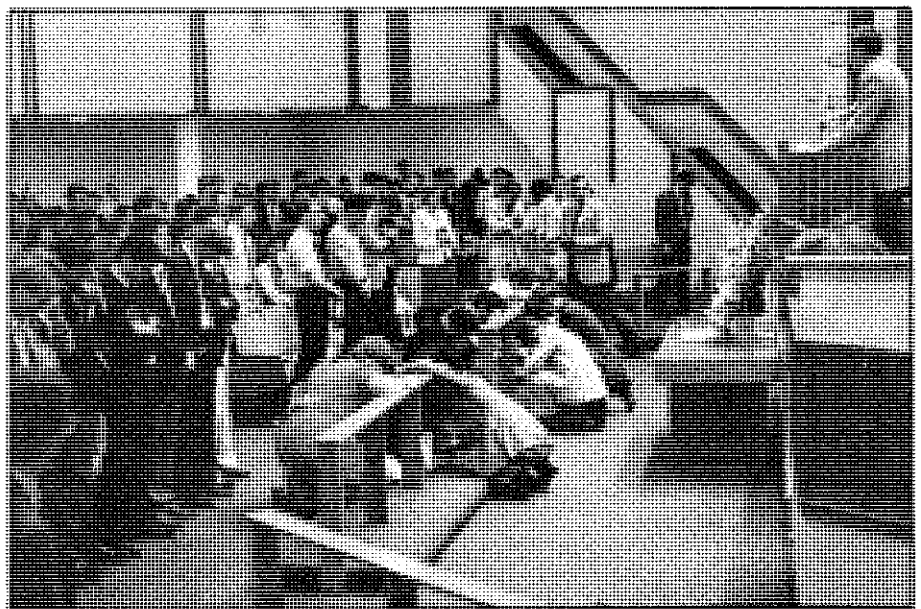
SOUTHEASTERN COLLEGE LAUNCHES FIRST YEAR WITH 89 STUDENTS

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—Southeastern Free Will Baptist College opened its first semester of classes on August 22 by enrolling 89 students.

School officials said a revival spirit marked opening sessions and continues to be the major thrust of classes and daily chapel services.

Of the 89 students who enrolled, 51 are dormitory students. The group includes 30 ministerial students, 29 teacher education majors, eight missions majors, two who plan to work as youth pastors, and 20 others who are undecided about their course majors.

The college plans a conference on soul winning and church building for April 1-4, 1984. Speakers will include Evangelist Joe Ange, Pastor Dale Burden, and Home Missions Director of Evangelism Connie Cariker.



First FWB Church, Farmington, MO, is sponsoring a two-day "Focus On Preaching" conference, November 15-16, according to Pastor **James McAllister**. The conference will include 10 sermons by speakers Evangelist **Willard Wilcox**, FWB Executive Secretary **Melvin Worthington**, Missouri Promotional Secretary **Clarence Burton**, and the host pastor.

A new educational building has been completed by members of **Sharon FWB Church, Vilonia, AR**. The 1,344 square-foot structure was built on a pay-as-you-go basis. **Ronnie Whitten** pastors.

First FWB Church, Youngstown, OH, had 22 rededications and two conversions during a fall revival, according to Pastor **Joe Rager**.

A 60-hour Bible reading marathon in September enabled members of **Northside FWB Church, Stockton, CA**, to raise \$3,000 for their Christian academy. **Richard Kennedy** pastors.

Two members of the **Rocky Mount FWB Church, Rocky Mount, NC**, began a rest home ministry this fall at Heritage Retirement Center in the city. **Bobby Joyner** and **Pat Joyner** present a gospel message and a time of singing for the residents at the home. **Glenn Hill** pastors.

Georgia Youth Camp Director Willie Martin says 100 campers attended during the Georgia Union, Little River and Ogeechee Camp session. Martin says "35 campers were saved, and no one left the camp without rededicating his life."

Home Missionary to **Great Bend, KS**, **Gary Elder** said 65 people attended the first service in Great Bend. The first

five services averaged 39 in attendance and resulted in four conversions, four rededications, and two baptisms.

New Home FWB Church, Mt. Pleasant, AR, has grown from an average of 60 in attendance in 1981 to average of 100 in 1983. Pastor **Gary Mitchner** said the group began construction of a 1,400 square-foot educational wing to include six classrooms and a large nursery.

Victor Neuenschwander is the new manager of the Christian Supply Store in **Moultrie, GA**. The bookstore is owned by the Georgia State Association. The Neuenschwanders (Victor and Charlene) have more than 30 years experience in retail selling, managing, and bookkeeping.

More than 400 California youths attended camp at **Watsonville** and **Badger, CA** in late June. Officials report 74 decisions for Christ among the campers.

A local business firm in **Wabash, IN**, donated two desks, a copier, and other items to **Emmanuel FWB Church, Wabash**. Pastor **Brian Atwood** said that in addition to using the donated equipment, the church has also begun a tape ministry to assist in community outreach.

Norma Goodall heads up a ministry to the deaf in **First FWB Church, Bakersfield, CA**. She says that in the first six months of the program, numerous deaf children from the city attended the classes, and most of them accepted Jesus as their Savior and were baptized. **Claudie Hames** pastors.

Zion FWB Church, Corpus Christi, TX, renovated the church building this summer. The renovation included upholstering pews, recarpeting floors, and paneling walls. Pastor **Rudd** led the remodeling operation.

North Carolina Promotional Secretary **Tom Lilly** says he has moved the state's promotional office to facilities in the Suburban Mart near **West Smithfield, North Carolina**. The office suite comprises more than 700 square feet and includes two offices, conference room, and a snack area.

Pastor **Jimmy Carrington** of **Mt. Olive FWB Church, Plymouth, NC**,

turned the first shovel of dirt at groundbreaking ceremonies for the construction of a new parsonage.

Garner FWB Church, Garner, NC raised more than \$1,000 for missionaries **Tom** and **Nancy Hughes** when the couple was at the Garner Church for a special Tom and Nancy Hughes Day. Pastor **Luther Sanders** said Tom Hughes preached twice on that Sunday and Nancy gave her testimony.

Thanks to the outstanding work of the local Master's Men Chapter at **Mount Carmel FWB Church, York, SC**, the group completed an 1,800 square-foot fellowship hall with a zero balance owed on it. **John Cody** pastors.

Pastor Rick Messer reports six conversions during the summer at **First FWB Church, Topeka, KS**. Members of the congregation also pitched in and put a new roof on the church.

And just in case you're interested—a few months back this column carried two stories about **Randy Scott** of **First FWB Church, Star City, AR**. At that time, Pastor Scott had managed to shoot a deer with his bow and arrow and subdue a snake that was crawling down the aisle in his church toward the altar. Well, it has happened again folks. This time, Brother Scott was preaching in a revival service at **First FWB Church, Tuckerman, AR**, when sounds of cracking and popping were heard and somebody smelled smoke. The congregation was hastily evacuated and the church sustained \$30,000 in damage. And he seems like such a nice lad! ▲



Green Tree Bible Study



Robert E. Picirilli

II Peter 2:10-17

The Perverse Way of False Teachers

False teachers are always abroad, Peter has assured us of that (2:1-3). Now he launches into an impassioned description, in ceremonial language that flows without break through verse 17.

A Fleshly Walk (v. 10a)

This clause introduces and summarizes the whole description. See the picture: they follow where flesh leads, and that is to a lust for things that pollute.

Arrogant Blasphemy (vv. 10b, 11)

Despise (Greek *kataphroneo*, think down) means “look down on.” Government here is really “lordship” and almost certainly means Christ’s: they hold in contempt the Lordship of Christ.

They are audacious and selfwilled, unafraid (literally, do not tremble) when

blaspheming “dignities”—actually “glories” (Greek *doxai*), probably meaning the glorious things of Christ.

Verse 11 adds a perspective uncommon in scripture: the strong and mighty angels of God would not be so arrogant as these; they would not even bring a blasphemous judgment against them!!

Ignorant Destruction (vv. 12, 13a)

Peter compares dumb beasts born to be captured and destroyed. So these false teachers plunge headlong in their ignorant blasphemy toward destruction.

In the Greek there is play on words: “in their corruption they shall also be corrupted.” Verse 13a adds: “thus receiving the wages of unrighteousness.” The spiritual fraud they practice produces appropriate pay!

Revelling in Corruption (vv. 13b, 14a)

These lines are debatable. Some take the adultery as physical: fleshly

false teachers “riot” (debauch themselves) by day, always seeking unstable believers to seduce sexually, even when participating in the church’s fellowship meal.

Others understand this to mean spiritual adultery: fleshly motivated false teachers are always seeking—even during the church’s love feast—for unstable members to seduce with spiritual error and unfaithfulness to the truth.

Either way, the main points are the same. They are well practiced (exercised) in their foul craft. In outward fellowship, they secretly delight in falsehood. They are spots that defile the purity of the church’s life. Immature Christians beware!

Cursed in Self Seeking (vv. 14b-17)

The last two words of verse 14 lead into the next thought: the false teachers share, with Balaam, the curse of one who forsakes the truth for unrighteous gain.

Balaam, oft remembered in scripture, wanted to curse Israel for pay.

Though his "madness" was temporarily hindered by a dumb donkey speaking in human voice, he went on to earn the wages of wrong that he didn't really seek.

False teachers err from the right way (literally, "the straight way") for the same reason and earn the same unpleasant reward.

Verse 17 makes two points about this. For others, the effect of false

teachers is like a spring one thirstily seeks only to find it dry; or like black clouds that produce darkness and destruction rather than refreshing rain. For themselves, the effect of their teaching is that the blackness of eternal darkness has reserved them space.

What do we learn from all this? That false teachers are inevitable, and inevitably resist the Lordship and glory of Christ Himself. That their presence in

the church's fellowship is a pollution that should not be tolerated.

That the flesh's natural desire for indulgence and gain is one of their basic appeals. That the end of such ways is the way of eternal death. Most of all, that spiritual immaturity leaves one an easier prey for those who deal in such deadly deceit.

So read again Peter's first two chapters. ▲

Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



Lorene Miley, *I Looked For A Man*
(Nashville: Randall House Publications,
1983, 203 pp., paperback, \$4.95)

This month I have the privilege of reviewing a book written by another Free Will Baptist. The book tells the story of Dr. LaVerne Miley, pioneer medical missionary.

Dr. Miley served almost 20 years in Doropo, Ivory Coast in West Africa. During that time he established a medical clinic and hospital which provided basic medical care to people who had never had contact with modern medicine.

The results of Dr. Miley's ministry cannot be measured in medical terms alone. He was a missionary who never

lost sight of his primary objective—bringing people to personal commitment to Christ.

This book is written from the unique perspective which only a wife has. Mrs. Miley reflects an understanding of her husband's character and personality which does much to increase the appeal of the book.

Dr. Miley is presented as a man who is quite human with strengths and weaknesses. Yet, there is something different about him. He is a complex man, but he has a trust in God which is simple and complete.

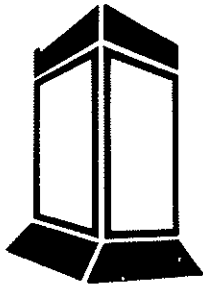
Although the author does not emphasize it, the book clearly shows the strain that missionary service places on the missionary and his family.

Mrs. Miley paints a descriptive picture of life in the back country of Ivory Coast. She shows the fear, anxiety,

and superstition which grip primitive peoples. Even a simple understanding of health, nutrition, and sanitation can make such a difference in the way the people live. Of course, the One who makes the most difference is Jesus Christ. Only Christ can eradicate the most basic problem of all, the power of sin.

This book shows that the foreign missionary is still an essential person in the work of the church. It is unlikely that the people of Ivory Coast would have heard of Christ without the work of Dr. Miley and others who were willing to go and serve. The role of the foreign missionary is changing, but he is as necessary today as he has ever been.

This is a book I enjoyed reading. It will long occupy an honored place on my library shelf. ▲



The Free Will Baptist Pulpit

Joseph R. Wallis, Pastor

Five Points Free Will Baptist Church
Washington, North Carolina

God's Men Before The Flood

Genesis 5:1-8, 19-32

INTRODUCTION

God has His men in every age as witnesses upon the earth to those who are lost. Genesis 5 is a history of those who loved God from Adam to the Flood.

The mixing of the godly line of chapter 5 and the ungodly line of chapter 4 led to the flood. When the people of God, the salt of the earth, mix with the world, we lose our power, purpose, and protection of God.

I. ADAM (Genesis 5:1-2)—A Man of Death

- A. "For in Adam all die"—I Corinthians 15:22
- B. This is one of the saddest chapters in the Bible. It is like walking through a graveyard, and it is all because of Adam. Seth was born in the image and likeness of his father Adam, and Adam died (5:5) and Seth died (5:8) and we all die.
- C. This chapter teaches that no matter how long you live, you will one day die. Methuselah lived almost a thousand years, yet he died. He has been in eternity 5000 years.

II. SETH (Genesis 5:3-7)—The Influence of a Godly Man

- A. The influence of Seth upon his son (4:26)
- B. Because Seth took a stand for God and taught his family the same, we find men like Enoch and Noah in years to come. Our influence on our children now will reap its benefits in generations to come. If my church is to be a witness to God in 50 years, it will be because of our efforts to reach the youth of today.

III. METHUSELAH (Genesis 5:21-22, 27)—The Mercy of God

- A. Adam lived until Methuselah was 243 years old. Noah lived until Abraham was 53 years old, and Methuselah lived 600 years with Noah. This is important and shows the mercy of God.
- B. Methuselah means "when he dies then it shall be sent." Methuselah lived 600 years with Noah, and Genesis 7:11 says that the flood came in the 600th year of Noah.
- C. God said that as long as he lives I'll spare the earth, but when he dies, it shall be sent. Every year he lived showed the the mercy and longsuffering of God, and God, not willing that any should perish but that all should come unto repentance (II Peter 3:9), allowed him to live to be the oldest man who ever lived.
- D. But one day this man died and notice what happened (Genesis 7:11).

IV. ENOCH (Genesis 5:21-24)—Holy Walk of a Dedicated Believer

- A. The Decision of Enoch (5:21-22).
It happened at the birth of the child Methuselah. Isaiah was affected by the death of King Uzziah, and Enoch was affected by the birth of his son. Until that time there is no record of him walking with God. It may be due to the prophecy God gave in connection with his name, "when he dies it shall be sent."
- B. The Dedication of Enoch (5:22).
He walked with God for 300 years. The original language here indicates there was no break in it.
He is a rebuke to our generation who says they cannot live for God. He lived before Pentecost, without a Bible, without gospel hymns and books, in the days before the flood with all the apostasy and evil doings. Yet he was not hindered by the spiritual deterioration of his time and what God enabled him to do, God can enable us to do.
- C. The Dependence of Enoch (Genesis 5:22a).
He walked with God. What does this mean? It means it was a walk of faith (Hebrews 11:5). It was a walk pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6). It was a walk of steadfastness (Amos 3:3).
- D. The Disappearance of Enoch (Genesis 5:24).
He was not, for God took him. Hebrews 11:5 adds something that Genesis five does not include—"that he was not found." That tells me that he was missed. Let us walk for God so as to be missed. Our example, testimony, help, service, prayers ought to be missed.

V. NOAH (Genesis 5:28-29; 6:1-9)—The Safety Found in Christ

- A. The ark was a God-planned salvation—The cross was God-planned.
- B. The ark was an adequate salvation—The cross is all we need.
- C. The ark was a free salvation—The cross is free.
- D. The ark was the only salvation—Jesus said I am The Way (John 14:6).

CONCLUSION

We need to prepare for death, influence the next generation for God, seek the mercy of God, walk a dedicated walk in our generation, and seek the safety as found in Christ for ourselves and for others.

And as one sign along the side of the road once put it, "We need to wake up, sing up, preach up, pray up, pay up, stay up, and never let up, or give up, or back up, or shut up, until the cause of Christ in this world is built up."



ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

A Thanksgiving To Remember

“Only two days until Thanksgiving,” squealed Megan as she and Marty walked home from school. “I can’t wait to see Grandma and Grandpa Lane.” Mr. Lane’s parents lived on a farm in Iowa, and the twins loved visiting there.

“And I can’t wait to get out of school,” sighed Marty thinking of the two-day vacation.

It was a crisp November day, and the twins hurried home. “Hi, Mom,” said Marty. “Can we go out and play?”

“Sure,” Mrs. Lane replied. “That is, if you don’t have too much homework.”

“Oh, it will only take a minute,” said Megan. “All we have to do is make a list of things we’re thankful for, and I can think of a hundred already.”

“That’s good,” said Mrs. Lane. “The Lord wants us to appreciate His blessings.”

Marty, Megan, and Jeff played in the fall leaves until suppertime. As they were eating, Mr. Lane asked each family member to name something for which he was thankful.

“I’ll begin,” he said. “I’m thankful that the Lord loves us and that He died on the cross so we could be saved.”

“Me, too,” said Mrs. Lane. “And I’m thankful for my wonderful family.”

“Your turn, Marty,” said Mrs. Lane.

“I’m thankful for good food to eat,” said Marty as he forked another piece of fried chicken. “Also for a warm house to live in.”

“And I’m thankful for my parents, my brothers, my friends, and my church,” began Megan. “And clothes to wear, and dogs and cats and horses, and blue skies and clouds.”

“And, of course, I’m thankful for all my grandparents and our car so we can go visit Grandma and Grandpa Lane. I’m just thankful for everything,” she finished, out of breath.

Her parents smiled and turned to little Jeff. “What do you want to thank Jesus for?” asked Mr. Lane.

Jeff grinned, “I thank Jesus for cookies!” Everybody laughed and went back to eating supper. Everybody except Megan. She didn’t feel like eating.

“Megan, aren’t you hungry?” asked Mrs. Lane. “You’ve barely touched your supper.”

“My stomach feels funny,” admitted Megan.

“It’s probably just excitement,” said Mr. Lane.

But later that night the Lanes discovered that Megan’s stomach problem was more than excitement. Megan awoke from her sleep with the worst stomachache she had ever had. “Mama, Mama,” she called. “Come here!”

Mr. and Mrs. Lane ran to Megan’s room. “What’s the matter?” they asked.

“My stomach,” gasped Megan holding her side. “It feels like it’s on fire.”

Mrs. Lane felt of her forehead and said, “She’s burning up with fever. We better call Dr. Hammond.”

The doctor listened as Mrs. Lane described Megan’s symptoms. He advised them to rush her to the emergency room. When they got there, Megan was whisked into an examining room while her parents waited outside. Soon the doctor came out with the news.

“Her appendix has ruptured,” said Dr. Hammond. “We need to remove it at once.”



Merry



Christmas!

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LITTLE LANES (From Page 27)

When Megan awoke the next morning she was puzzled at the strange surroundings. "Where am I?" she asked looking around.

"You're in the hospital," said her mother gently.

"The hospital! What am I doing here?" Megan asked in surprise. "Oh, now I remember. My stomach was hurting bad, and then a nurse said, 'Everything will be all right,' and she put some kind of mask on my nose. What happened then?"

"You were operated on," said Mrs. Lane. "Dr. Hammond took out your appendix."

"My what?" questioned Megan. "I've never heard of an appendix."

"Well, you really don't need it anyway," said Mrs. Lane. "But what you do need is rest. Why don't you try to go back to sleep now?"

Megan was too weak to argue. When she awoke a nurse was bringing in her supper tray.

"Goody," said Megan. "I'm starving." But she turned up her nose when she saw what was on it. "What's this?" she asked her mother when the nurse left.

"It's broth," answered Mrs. Lane. "Broth and Jello is all you can eat for a few days."

"You mean no turkey and dressing, no sweet potatoes and cranberry sauce, no coconut cake and Grandma's chocolate pie?" said Megan in distress.

"That's right, Honey. I'm sorry, but we won't be able to go to Grandma's."

"Not go?" cried Megan.

"You have to stay in the hospital a few more days," began Mrs. Lane.

"A few more days!" screeched Megan. As she tried to sit up, she realized for the first time how sore her stomach was. "I can't spend Thanksgiving in the hospital. What kind of Thanksgiving would that be?"

"Now where's that thankful spirit you had yesterday?" asked Mrs. Lane. "Remember, the Bible says 'In everything give thanks.'"

"Well, it can't mean even in the hospital," said Megan. "Can it?"

"It says in *everything*. It's easy to thank God for the good things—like last night at supper," added Mrs. Lane. "But if you obey God's Word and

thank Him for this bad thing, I'm sure something good will come from it."

Mrs. Lane went to get something to eat, and Megan thought about what her mother had said. She bowed her head and said, "Jesus, I wish I weren't here in the hospital, but the Bible says to give thanks for everything, so I'm thanking you."

When Megan opened her eyes she was surprised to see a little girl in pajamas standing by her bed. "Hi," said Megan. "Who are you?"

"My name's Lisa. I'm in that bed across the room," answered the little girl. "What were you doing?"

"I was just praying," said Megan.

"Praying? You mean to God?" Lisa sounded confused.

"Sure, don't you ever pray?" asked Megan.

"No," admitted Lisa. "I wouldn't know how."

Megan was nervous, but she swallowed hard and said, "Lisa, have you ever been saved?"

"No, what do you mean 'saved'?" asked Lisa.

"It means that Jesus forgives your sins and comes to live in your heart."

"Would Jesus really save me?" asked Lisa.

"I know He would," answered Megan eagerly. "All you have to do is ask Him."

"I know I've sinned, and I do want Jesus to forgive me," said Lisa. "I'm going to ask Him to save me right now."

Lisa and Megan bowed their heads, and Lisa asked Jesus to come live in her heart. Lisa was climbing back into her bed when Mrs. Lane came back into the room.

"Mama, guess what?" said Megan happily. "You were right. If you thank God for even the bad things, He'll make them into something good."

"Why, what happened?" asked Mrs. Lane.

"Lisa saw me praying," started Megan.

But Lisa interrupted. "And when we talked, it made me see that I wanted to get saved too."

"That's wonderful," said Mrs. Lane patting her on the back. "Now Megan, aren't you glad you're in the hospital?"

"Yes ma'am," she answered with gusto. "And now I know what kind of Thanksgiving it's going to be—the best ever!"▲



OUR READERS COMMENT

TELLS BOTH SIDES OF STORY

I enjoy CONTACT very much. I like the fact, that, sooner or later, CONTACT tells both sides of the story.

May God bless as you continue to keep our people informed of all issues.

Reverend Buford Pierce, Pastor
First Free Will Baptist Church
Jacksonville, North Carolina

THANKS FOR THE REMINDER

I would like to comment on the September Briefcase, "Sammy and the White Bible." I really appreciated the story about Sammy. It reminds me of the many people who are out there with no one available with the right kind of help when they need it.

It seems, today, that preachers get so busy with the problems that confront us in the ministry, that we do not have the time we need to help the people who keep slipping.

I hope I will always be forgiving as you were to him, even though there are times that I almost lose patience with those who fall off the same log time and time again.

Thank you for reminding me of the love we should show for everyone.

Reverend Gene Gilbert, Pastor
Little Brown Creek Free Will Baptist Church
New Site, Mississippi

GOOD FROM COVER TO COVER

I really enjoy CONTACT. I believe the July issue was the best ever. All the articles were great. Good from front to back.

Mary Melton
Concord, California

DIRECTORY UPDATE

ARKANSAS

Ray Prince to Old Reyno Church,
Reyno from First Church, Dickson, TN

GEORGIA

W. R. Crowley to Spring Hill Church,
Mauk

Daniel Eason to Ozias Church,
Pearson

Douglas Ferguson to Pine Level
Church, Chester from Piney Grove
Church, Bristol

Willie Martin to Hammock Springs
Church, Donalsonville from Double
Branch Church, Hawkinsville

Jackie Cabaniss to Bethel Church,
Baxley

Wayne Wilson to Double Branch
Church, Hawkinsville from Harmony
Church, Leighton, AL

Murray Giddens to New Enterprise
Church, Brinson

Gary Page to Corinth Church, Alma
from Bethel Church, Baxley

James Ursery to First Church, Jesup
from Emmanuel Church, Columbus

David Griffin to Liberty Church, Way-
cross from Hammock Springs Church,
Donalsonville

Victor Neuenschwander to New
Hope Church, Coolidge from Ozias
Church, Pearson

Benny Smith to Poulan Church,
Poulan

ILLINOIS

Karel Smith to First Church, Niantic
Larry Cook to Bear Point Church,
Sesser from First Church, Greenwood,
AR

Byford Campbell to Salem Church,
Wayne City

Gene Parton to Arnold View Church,
Creal Springs from Oaklawn Church,
Chapmansboro, TN

Owen Ganey to Faith Church, Milan
from First Church, Granite City

KANSAS

Alvin McMahon to First Church, Gar-
den City

MICHIGAN

Ivan Ryan to First Church, Hazel
Park from Arnold View Church, Creal
Springs, IL

MISSOURI

J. W. O'Neal to Amity Church,
Niangua from Cedar Ridge Church, Lone
Lane

James Crawford to Faith Church,
Fair Grove

Steve Burton to First Church, Spring-
field

James Henson to Gardner Church,
Grovespring

William Austin to Liberty Church,
Hartville

Ted Matthews to Macedonia Church,
Niangua

Jimmie Ragsdale to Old Liberty
Church, Fordland from Faith Church,
Fair Grove

Gordon Butler to Waynesville
Church, Waynesville, From Cuba
Church, Cuba

NORTH CAROLINA

Stery! Paramore to Peace Chapel
Church, Washington

John Reed to Prospect Church, Dunn
from West Dublin Church, Warsaw

Larry Combs to Morganton Church,
Morganton from New Hope Church,
Verona

Earl Hanna to Ruths Chapel Church,
New Bern from Trinity Church, La
Grange

Fred McCracken to Trinity Church,
La Grange from Shady Grove Church,
Clarksville, TN

OKLAHOMA

Allen Moore to Hoyt Church, Hoyt
from Executive Secretary, Texas State
Association

TENNESSEE

Glenn Poston to First Church, Oak
Ridge from Liberty Church, Millington

Wallace Hayes to First Church,
Lebanon

OTHER PERSONNEL

John Neal to Central Church, Royal
Oak, MI as minister of music from
Donelson Church, Nashville, TN as
minister of music



NEWS OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

MISSIONARY SAYS BEING HOSTAGE "BEST EXPERIENCE OF LIFE"

WICHITA (EP)—Presbyterian missionary John Haspels said that his two weeks as a hostage of Sudanese rebels fostered a relationship with natives that he and his co-workers had sought for years. "For me personally, it was the best experience of my life," he said in an interview in Wichita.

During three years of work in the Boma area of southern Sudan, Haspels and his colleagues had been unable to establish close relations with local residents, he said. "But during the first week of our captivity, we were able to develop relations with the local people on a much deeper level than before," he said.

Haspels, 36, said local people concerned about him and four other hostages came to the rebels encampment and spent hours drinking tea and talking. The five hostages were among 11 people kidnapped by the rebels June 24 and 25. Six of the 11, including Haspels' wife and three children, were released June 27.

The rebels, who said they were fighting to free black, Christian southern Sudan from the domination of Arab Moslems in the north, had threatened to kill the hostages unless their demands were met.

But as the hostages read scriptures, a theme surfaced, he said. One of the Bible passages, for instance, said: "Rest in the Lord. Wait patiently for him to act."

The hostages were freed safely during an aerial raid July 8 by the Sudanese army.

Since their return to Kansas, the Haspels family has been getting settled in a house in Halstead. Haspels embarked on a 13-state speaking schedule.

He plans to tell audiences how the hostages believe God's promises came to life for them. One of the examples he gives is the uncertainty of the rescue raid. He said it had been canceled once by a high government official. Even after it got started, another order to abort was issued, he said. "But for some reason, the general in command simply turned off his radio and went ahead," Haspels said.

THINK TWICE BEFORE BECOMING "MAIL-ORDER MINISTER"

WASHINGTON (EP)—Eighty-one persons who became "mail-order ministers" to avoid income taxes have agreed to pay \$1.5 million in back taxes, interest and penalties, the Internal Revenue Service said. The IRS said September 2 that the 81—all of the New England area and all members of the Life Science Church—were among 91 church members who were under investigation as "illegal tax protesters." The remaining 10 cases are pending.

The church, founded by self-styled archbishop, William Drexler, a former Minnesota lawyer, sold mail-order ministries to individuals, claiming that they could avoid federal income taxes by forming a church, taking a vow of poverty and donating all their assets to the church, the IRS said. It said that under the plan the church, which has its headquarters in San Diego, was to pay the personal expenses of the "ministers."

Drexler was convicted in California in 1982 on 26 criminal tax violations, including conspiracy to help others evade tax. He was sentenced to five years in prison and five years probation and fined \$50,000. According to testimony at his trial, he sold the church credentials for \$560 to \$4,000.

The IRS said some of the protesters "became disenchanted" following Drexler's conviction and got accountants to help them resolve their problems with the IRS.

The IRS says contributions to organizations operating exclusively for religious purposes are deductible under the law. But it says holding a church charter and claiming to be a church does not prove that an organization operates for religious purposes.

The Tax Court has ruled in numerous cases that mail-order churches exist for the economic benefit of their founders and not exclusively for religious purposes.



THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

One of the most important passages in the Bible is the interview between Nicodemus and Jesus (John 3).

In order for one to see and enter the kingdom of God, he must be born again or born from above. Spiritual birth is as essential to spiritual life as physical birth is to physical life. Jesus made this very clear as He spoke with Nicodemus (John 3:3, 5).

Four simple truths regarding the new birth are set forth in the third chapter of John.

The Must

The new birth is not optional. The Bible teaches that all men are *dead* in trespasses and sins without the new birth. Genesis three records the sin of Adam which separated man from God. Romans five teaches that in Adam all men died. Ephesians reminds us that when we were unsaved we were dead in trespasses and sins.

Sinners are also *disobedient*. Men do what they do because of what they are.

The person who has not been born again has no natural inclination to serve God or obey God nor any pleasure in doing God's will. His life is characterized by disobedience to God's divine plan.

Sinners are chained by *depravity*. Ephesians 2:3b declares that prior to being born again we were by nature

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children of wrath. Out of man's wicked and depraved heart flows all manner of wickedness.

In light of the sinner's deadness, disobedience and depravity, he *must* be born again to see and enter the kingdom of heaven. He must be changed, given spiritual life. The change which all need to become Christians is clearly and accurately described as the new birth.

The Mystery

Nicodemus did not understand the born again truth. He was perplexed and astonished by it.

Jesus used the wind to explain the new birth. Much about the wind is mysterious and inexplicable. We know neither where it originates nor its destination. We cannot touch or see it. Yet we do not deny its presence. So with the actions of the Spirit in performing the new birth.

The new birth is a *supernatural work*. God does the work to man. He births him from above.

The new birth is a *spiritual work*. The sinner receives spiritual life. God implants something of Himself in man—eternal life. The new birth is a spiritual work done internally which evidences itself in external change.

The new birth is a *sovereign work*. God deals with man and draws man to Himself. God works as He wills and yet never violates the free agency of man. In fact, the new birth is such a sovereign work that God does everything—all man does is plead guilty and accept God's terms.

The new birth is *secret work*. It is a work done internally not seen by human eye, and yet the evidence that the new birth has taken place is clearly seen. Genuine faith, which is the con-

dition for salvation, evidences itself in works.

The new birth is a *significant work*. The man who is born again changes radically in his thinking, his values, his behavior. Men's reforms pale in insignificance before the sweeping new birth principles. God can undo in one shining moment what the ravages of sin have spent decades twisting and perverting.

The Means

The *Sovereign's Word* is the origin of the born again experience. Peter declares, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter 1:23).

The *Savior's work* is the basis of the born again experience. Jesus said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

The *Spirit's wooing* is the means of the new birth experience. The Spirit draws the sinner and when he responds in faith and repentance, the Spirit instantaneously performs the new birth.

Men who sneer at conversions and revivals as fanatical enthusiasm are no better than Nicodemus. Like him, they expose their own ignorance of the Spirit's work.

Vitally related to the new birth experience is the *sinner's will*. Having heard the Word, understood the work of Jesus, and felt the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, the sinner must in faith respond by repenting of his sin and receiving Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

The Marks

The birthmarks of those who have been born again are unmistakably clear in I John. Soundness of doctrine, saintliness in deportment, steadfastness in dedication and sincerity in devotions are but a few. The new birth brings victory, values and virtue to one's life.

Born again people believe that Jesus is the Christ, do not practice sin, do righteousness, love the brethren, overcome the world, and keep themselves from the wicked one.

Joseph Parker said, "A Christian is the best defense of Christianity. We are called not to reformation, but to regeneration."

Can the born again birthmarks be seen in us? One may reach heaven without education, money or rank, but no one enters heaven without the new birth.

J. C. Ryles concludes, "A day will come when those who are not born again will wish that they had never been born at all." Happy is the man who can say "I have been born again!" ▲

The Secretary's Schedule

- Nov. 2-4** Florida State Association
Marianna, FL
- Nov. 4-5** Mississippi State Association
Tupelo, MS
- Nov. 7-9** Tennessee State Association
Kingsport, TN
- Nov. 10-12** Alabama State Association
Florence, AL
- Nov. 15** Preacher's Conference
First FWB Church
Farmington, MO
- Nov. 17** RCMA Board of Directors
Meeting
Detroit, MI
- Nov. 17-19** Georgia State Association
Moultrie, GA

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