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# Contact



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# *Politics and The Local Church*

By Daniel W. Parker

**P**olitician—one actively engaged in politics: often used with implications of seeking personal or partisan gain, scheming, etc. (Webster).

Christian—a believer in Jesus as the Christ: having the qualities taught by Jesus (Webster).

These seemingly contradictory ideologies are in the minds of many, irreconcilable.

“A politician is an animal who can sit on a fence and yet keep both ears to the ground.” Anonymous

The term “politician” is probably derived from the Greek word *politarchos* meaning “city-ruler.” The term appears twice in the Bible (Acts 17:6, 8), where it is translated “rulers of the city” or “city magistrates.”

Therefore, it appears to be a Macedonian term and its use conforms to Luke’s consistent practice of using correct terminology.

When a Christian deals with a subject or problem, he should ask, “What does the Bible say about that?” Then finding a satisfactory answer will begin with what the scriptures set forth concerning the issue.

## **God and Government**

Within our changing society exists two groups of people known as the

church and the state (government). Regardless of efforts to maintain a separation of the two entities, there remains a great amount of overlap in the membership of these groups.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

This amendment was intended to prevent the federal government from establishing a national denominational church like that which existed in England. It was designed to protect against state-established or state-preferred denominations. In 1791, over one-third of the 13 colonies had established churches.

*How involved should the church get in the political world?*

The forerunners of conservative Christianity in the United States, men such as Roger Williams, Thomas Hooker and William Penn, were among the leaders shaping the American political system.

However, the desire to include God as an active participant in governmental decision-making did not originate with our spiritual forefathers—nor even in the mind of man. The original concept came from the mind of the Creator of man.

From the beginning, God’s design was to be recognized as the Supreme



Authority. This sovereign authority of God was expressed in legal terms to Adam. Adam's law-breaking disobedience was a personal affront to God.

Man's rebellion gave notice that alternatives to the will of God would be considered and followed if immediate gratification was received. The ability to make decisions was now influenced by sources other than God.

God's purpose in creation was that men should control the created order and live in harmony with each other. When sin entered with its divisive influence, men ceased to contribute to each other's welfare.

God's written law and the law of conscience have two functions: 1) redemptive in that it shows men their sin in order to turn them to the Savior, and 2) restraining men from reaping the consequences of their own sinfulness.

The term "nation" may allude to a primitive jungle tribe or a highly sophisticated community in a technological society. A "government" may be the totalitarian regime of a fascist or communist dictatorship or that which has freedoms of a democracy.

All governments have a fundamental characteristic—the common submission of a community to law. There is an organ of government, and that government exercises authority over those under its jurisdiction.

The Old Testament Israel shows a nation under God in a special relationship. Even though other nations rejected belief in the God of Israel, the authority of their rulers was entrusted to them by that same God (Romans 13:1).

People scheme, plot and destroy to gain power. Warring nations change boundaries and replace one form of government with another. However, God still controls. The scriptures affirm this (Daniel 4:17, 25; Jeremiah 27:6; Daniel 5:28; II Chronicles 36:22; Isaiah 42:28; Matthew 22:15; Romans 13).

Governmental authority is granted to man, but leaders are held accountable for all actions (II Samuel 23:2; II Chronicles 19:6; Psalm 2:10-11; Proverbs 20:28; 29:4, 12; Isaiah 10:1; Colossians 4:1). God's purpose in ordaining the power of government is to restrain evil and punish wrongdoers (I Peter 2:14a).

Some contend that the church has a political role and should exercise power by influencing governmental policy. But the New Testament describes a three-fold task for the church: 1) to preach the gospel (II Timothy 4:2a), 2) to edify believers (I Corinthians 14:3; II Corinthians 10:8; Ephesians 4:11-16), and 3) to lead men to worship the living God (Acts 14:15; I Thessalonians 1:9; Hebrews 10:31).

## Politics and the Pulpit

As the church leader (pastor) views government, he should see it in a positive as well as negative light. Government's role is the public good (I Peter 2:14b). Submission is rendered as a responsibility (Titus 3:1), and as the will of God (I Peter 2:13-16).

*Should politics be preached from the pulpit?*

There are recorded instances when political rulers were rebuked by messengers of God—Samuel/Saul (II Samuel 15:23), Nathan/David (II Samuel 12:7), Ahija/Jeroboam (I Kings 14:6-10), Jehu/Baasha (I Kings 16:1-3), Elijah/Ahab (I Kings 18:17-18; 21:20-22), Elisha/Jehoshaphat (II Kings 3:13-14), Shemaiah/Rehoboam (II Chronicles 12:5), Hanani/Asa (II Chronicles 16:7), Azariah/Uzziah (II Chronicles 26:16-18), Daniel/Belshazzar (Daniel 5:22-23), John the Baptist/Herod (Mark 6:18), Paul/Ananias (Acts 23:3).

Note that only two references are from the New Testament. John the Baptist lost his head as a result of his rebuke, and Paul felt compelled to apologize for his outburst against the high priest.

The king in Old Testament Israel was not merely the head of the civil administration or the commander of the army, he was the representative of the kingly rule of God, "the Lord's Anointed."

When a godly man ruled and the people were led into submission to the law, there was unity between the tribes and peace and security against potential enemies from other nations. Rebellion against God brought division, plagues, famines, war and, finally, banishment from the land.



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## **POLITICS** (from page 3)

During Christ's earthly walk, we see the final days of the transition from a theocratic state to a secular government.

The principle seen in the Old Testament and taught in the New Testament is that the message from the pulpit is "prayer" for leaders and not preaching against government. Prayer for those in authority is designed to lead toward "a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2:2).

## **Churches and Candidates**

During a recent congressional election, only 38 percent of voting-age Americans took the time to vote.

Upon returning to the U.S., Viet Nam POW Colonel Norris M. Overly sensed a "certain malaise in the air, a frustration of bigness of government, universities and industry, a conviction that the individual is being ground down before the onslaught of civilization, an inclination to escape, retreat to the simpler life, to be self-centered and let someone else shoulder the load—to drop out, cop out."

The Gallup Poll a few years ago found that 57 percent of Americans could not name their congressman and 81 percent could not cite a single thing he had done. Ralph Nader asserts that Americans know more about entertainers and football players than about their elected representatives.

A survey of voting habits in a major city during a four-year period revealed that only 17 percent of the Protestant ministers went to the polls, while 99 percent of the tavern-keepers cast ballots!

*Should a church endorse a political candidate?*

Although the ruler in Israel was involved in both civil and spiritual leadership, there are illustrations of godly persons and their attitudes toward Gentile and pagan governments.

Joseph accepted a position of authority in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, and Mordecai (Esther) in Persia. They believed they were there due to the providential intervention of God. Naaman continued to serve the king of Syria, and Obadiah remained in the

palace of Ahab in the apostate northern kingdom.

New Testament examples include the Ethiopian eunuch, Cornelius the Roman Centurion in Caesarea, Sergius Paulus the Proconsul in Cyprus, and the jailer in Philippi.

During biblical times, no writer envisaged the type of government found in the Western democracies today. Paul lived under an authoritarian regime where the subject's duty was to obey.

In a democracy, the power supposedly rests in the people themselves acting through their elected representatives. These office holders are placed there by the vote of the people.

The church is to endorse "righteousness." Candidates for public office run on promises to perform. The candidate who has lived the lifestyle that is more nearly right should be supported by individual voters. If God's mind is sought, the Holy Spirit should be able to guide correctly, leaving out political party preferences.

If a Christian decides to enter the realm of politics or seek public office, let him be motivated by Christian principles of service. Special problems may be encountered, such as the lust for power, the unfair smirching of opponents, underhanded and sometimes dishonest methods employed, and even deceit for the sake of advantage.

Daniel O'Connell wrote, "Nothing is politically right which is morally wrong." Yet it is in the darkness that light is needed, and salt is to be used where corruption is likely.

When a Christian enters politics, it should be primarily as a citizen, not as a representative of a church lobby. His convictions will be influenced by Christian faith in truth and right and should be strengthened by the fellowship of the church.

Conservative John Conlon has said, "The Lord's command to go into all the world is vocational as well as geographic. We Bible-believing Christians have been asleep at the switch, thinking Christian influence of the past carries on to this generation."

Conlon believes Bible prophecy teaches the world will get worse until Christ returns. "Until then," he says, "we are responsible to get Christians into office. We've misinterpreted Paul's command to 'come out from them and

be separate' to mean 'eat, meet and retreat.'"

Conlon further laments, "We have been sending our best young people to Africa, Latin America and Asia as missionaries, while socialists and humanists have been sending their best into politics, education and communication here at home."

A veteran campaign aide and lobbyist asked this question, "Why don't we put our hands on Christians we think should be in politics, ask them to run, and if they consent, help them get elected?"

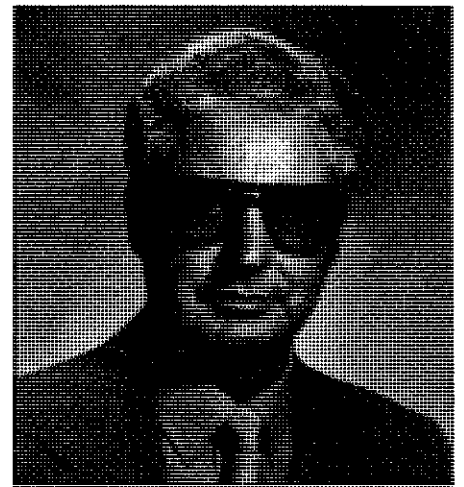
## **Conclusion**

Within the Reformation, the Anabaptist group insisted on separate spheres of church and state. Their belief was that the church receives God's special grace and He governs through those He ordains and endows with gifts of the Spirit. The state was in the realm of God's common grace which had been extended to all men.

Government of today, although of divine authority, will only reflect Christian standards as the individuals holding office in that government exercise Christian values.

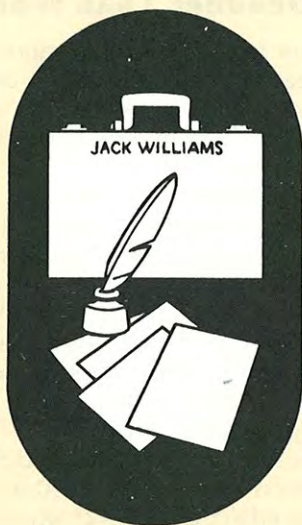
The church's primary aim is not improving the social order, but the salvation of men. Unregenerate people can be restrained by legislation, but not regenerated. Social improvement should come as men are made new by a redeemed relationship with Jesus Christ. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Daniel W. Parker is superintendent of schools in Oilton, Oklahoma. He was formerly president of California Christian College, and pastored in Idaho and California.*





## Briefcase



# Fire in The Garden

Beyond the wasteland of education without faith, the garden of knowledge again flourishes and stretches across the horizon toward forever—verdant, inviting, alive.

But the only way to reach the green horizon is through the desert with its heat and doubt. Believe me, it's worth the trip.

**To be honest**, some who enter education's desert never emerge. Others enter but quickly retreat to rudimentary learning, unable to reconcile the joy of first truth with the searing desert winds.

They hesitate, unwilling to challenge the desert, perhaps afraid that, unlike the rudimentary garden which ended in the sand, they'll discover that the paralyzing heat has no end.

Refusing to risk what they know they have and can trust, they bargain to live in a child's world of learning. The fear of confrontation and ridicule chokes their ambitions.

**However, others dart into** the torrid zone believing that education is more than a child's garden, more than a vacuum of barrenness.

For these, the desert heat shrivels all but absolute truth. They invite the blowing winds to sift their prejudices and preconceived notions. They take their bearings from the stars. They push on spurred by an unquenchable inner flame.

Then one day, purged by refiner's fire, they burst from the desert as suddenly as they entered it. They no longer fear the sands. They mastered that which enslaves their peers. Theirs

is a life-tested faith, an education that flourishes on agreement but can survive on principle.

**They grapple with** questions spawned by the despair of those whose hopes lie wilted in the desert. They do not hide from life like naive garden children. Neither the taunts of the former nor the fears of the latter can dissuade them.

They understand that some cannot cope with life except in the garden of rudiments. They also understand that sun-blind desert pilgrims cling as tenaciously to their doubts as do garden dwellers to their one-dimension absolutes.

We all must live in the garden of learning. The difference is how we choose to exist—desperate clinging to a child's toy version of life, flaunting barrenness and calling ashes roses or discovering beauty in the garden rudiments, health in the desert's heat and the balanced blending beyond both where neither dominates but truths from each propel one toward ultimate knowledge.

**Be a learner** with all the risks rather than a child with another's hand on the rudder of your soul. Choose the pressures that tear at your very fabric rather than accept untested truth simply because you agree with it or ignore other truth to please peers and so live an untruth.

Come, tramp with me through the green garden of learning. Let's walk through the beauty and the fire together. ▲

**E**ducation at its best is a garden with new life and vitality bursting from everything we touch. Fiery truths and vibrant principles splash underfoot in a paradise of promise and vigor.

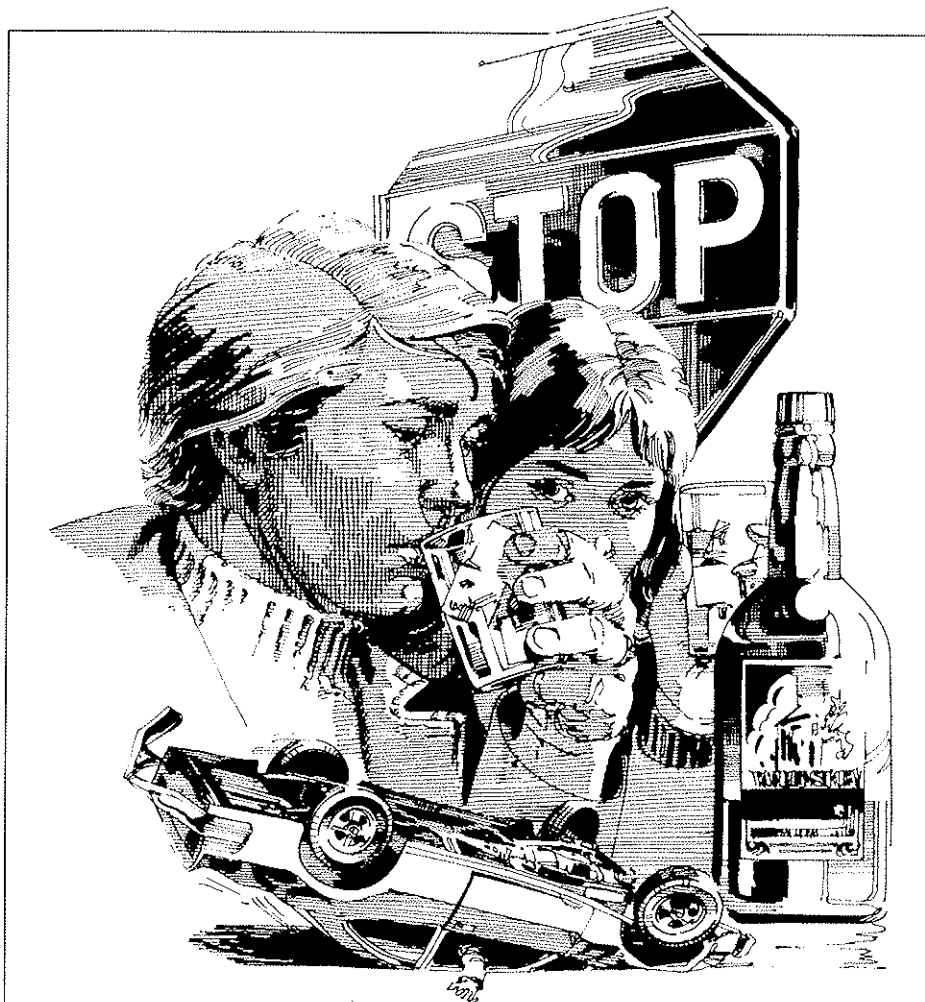
But deeper in the garden wait the sands of testing—stern, unyielding, devoid of mercy—to sneer at learners and consume faith. A super-heated desert floor that sucks the juices of life.

The unwary who carelessly invade the barrens sometimes lose their way, compromise their faith, part with their innocence and ultimately fall prey to cynicism and fools' questions.

**There is a way out**, of course, but many never discover it. They exist in the heat, secretly despising the fresh educational garden they think betrayed them to the scalding emptiness.

Because so much has been said about the seekers abandoned in the sands of humanism without compass or hope, the timid choose to believe that education is nothing more than a garden of rudiments. Their unfortunate counterparts see the end of education as eternal tramping across the sand, the carrot of absolute truth dangling like a mirage one tantalizing step away.





# Let's STOP Drunk Driving

By Mickey A. Kirkland

**I** remember coming home from a revival meeting that night. It was well after midnight when I pulled into town and saw a car leave a parking lot headed in the wrong direction on a four-lane highway.

The woman in the car failed to turn on her lights. She pulled out in front of a Volkswagen that was doing 55. The head-on collision turned the Volkswagen on its side with an 18-year-old victim under it.

Rescue workers came to remove the metal and try to free the girl under the car. They'd called to her but received no reply. "Maybe she's unconscious," one said to another as they worked frantically to free the victim.

Finally, they pulled her mangled, bloody body from the wreckage. She was dead! No movement, no breathing, no weeping—only the lifeless corpse of a beautiful young lady who should have had her entire life ahead of her, and would have, had she not been the victim of a drunk driver.

The young girl was on her way to attend Bible College, where she would prepare to go to the mission field. God's work hindered again by the liquor devil of alcohol!

## Deadlier Than War

More tragic is the realization that the deaths claimed by drunk drivers are commonplace with little or no prevention. They happen almost 30,000 times a year.

More people died between 1900 and 1969 because of drunk driving than from every battle or war America fought from 1775 to 1969—which includes the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-America War, World War I, World War II, Korean War and Viet Nam War.

In fact, there have been 1,777,678 Americans who died in United States highway accidents from 1900 to 1969, compared to the 1,170,421 who died in all the wars from 1775 to 1969.

## Touches Every Home

On the average, Americans kill three and injure 80 others every hour of the day. Each day, drunk drivers kill 72 Americas and injure 1,920 others.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that this will never happen to you, because safety experts maintain that one out of every two Americans will be victimized by a drunk driver during his lifetime.

Survey after survey proves that drunk driving is out of hand and still remains pessimistic as far as much control is concerned. Sixty-five percent of all drivers that have been killed had been drinking. Seventy-six percent of all fatal accidents were charged to the cause of drinking.

Automobile insurance rates are skyrocketing, and insurance firms place the major blame on drinking drivers. This is not necessarily drunk drivers, but not sober drivers.

Judge Raymon Berg of the California Municipal Traffic Court has found that 80 percent of those arrested in his jurisdiction for driving while under the influence of alcohol were social drinkers, not alcoholics.

People from all walks of life are drinking and driving. It is not just one racial, social or age crowd. Adults and youth as well are to blame.

America has an epidemic of teenage drunk drivers. One-third of all traffic fatalities involve teenagers.

## Why The Deaths?

Why does this social evil continue? The answer is simple: We tolerate it. Alcohol is so interwoven into our nation's social and economic fabric that until recently, drinking and driving was an almost untouchable political issue.

The general public has either been unaware of the extent of the problem or just ignored it. It's time to get involved and stop this senseless slaughter on our nation's highways.

Beyond ignorance is the reasoning that says Christians should not be involved with social issues. Our Christian life is based on eternal principles drawn from God's Word. It's evident we must get involved to defend the principles we say we believe.

Listed below are some scriptural reasons why every Christian has a right and mandate to be involved:

- Any intake of alcohol is sinful (Leviticus 10:9, Proverbs 23:20, 29-35).
- Drunkards die and go to Hell (I Corinthians 6:10; Galatians 5:21).
- We believe in the sanctity of human life (Genesis 1:27; Proverbs 6:16-17).
- We have a responsibility to work for justice (Proverbs 21:3; Isaiah 1:16-17).

## You Can Help

What can we do about this terrible tragedy?

### THE INDIVIDUAL

First of all, we should become personally sensitive to the extent of the problem. We ought to be the leaders in raising the awareness of the public to such moral issues and set the trends and the attitudes concerning it.

We cannot do this if we are ignorant of the facts. We must educate to tell the truth to every citizen about alcohol's inherently harmful nature and the destruction and damnation it brings in the lives of millions who use it.

Educating our people must begin in the pulpit. Abraham Lincoln once said, "The nation's greatest builder is her pulpits." We cannot and must not give

way to any doctrine or philosophy that will eventually lead to social drinking.

Gallup polls indicate that two-thirds of all evangelicals abstain from drinking. That means 50 out of 150 evangelicals drink liquor. We certainly need an old-fashioned revival on morality!

### THE GOVERNMENT

The second step in stopping drunk driving is to work to reform our nation's laws governing drinking and driving. We have learned the hard way that we should deal with alcohol as we do other harmful drugs. After all, it's America's number one drug problem.

Fundamentalists will not want to be identified with some committee that might associate with cults or a conglomeration of all types of denominations or any liberals, but we could form a Fundamentalist Forum and voice our concern and opinion. And we should.

In the past, our nation has been very slow to pass effective laws restricting drunk driving. Since February 1, 1982, states have passed tougher laws to receive additional federal highway safety funds.

The laws must include certain requirements in order to qualify: they must say that anyone with more than one-tenth of one percent blood-alcohol concentration is intoxicated; they must suspend the driver's license of first time offenders for 90 days and one year for second offenders, and they must require a 48-hour or longer jail sentence or 10 days of community service for repeat offenders.

Up until now, many police have been reluctant to arrest drunk drivers because they feel the courts will not do justice to the cases. The structure is changing but must be changed more. Too many people feel that if they are caught the penalty will not be severe, if there is a penalty at all.

We should write letters, make phone calls, participate in demonstrations and do everything within our power to encourage state legislators to adopt the guidelines established in the recently passed federal legislation.

Support efforts to raise the legal drinking age from 18 to 21. Twenty states have already adopted this as a law, but there are 30 others that should do so.

Support any direct activities such

as the Traffic Violations Bureau Operation, REDD (Report Every Drunk Driver), MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), SADD (Students Against Driving Drunk) and other worthy organizations.

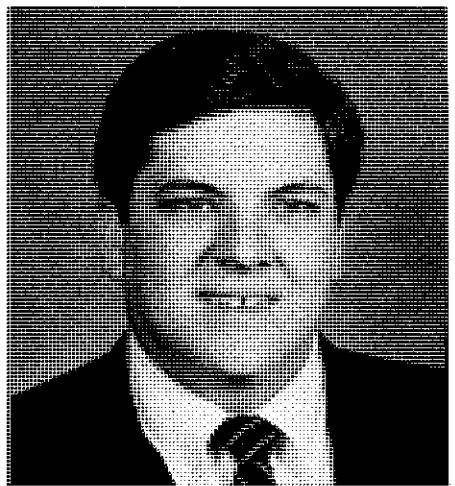
This writer feels that those guilty of taking a life because of drunk driving should be tried for manslaughter and pay the penalty subsequent to it. Driving drunk is no different than loading a gun to murder: It is an act of the will, an act that can be controlled. If he is not tried for manslaughter, he has received a license to kill.

### THE CHURCH

A third step in bottling drunk driving should be for Christians everywhere to minister to those directly or indirectly affected by it. George Gallup said, "In no other area could churches of America be of greater help than in dealing head on with the crisis problems of drinking."

The church can do several things to minister like comfort grieving, surviving members after an accident, show compassion and concern enough to win the alcohol user and abuser, and continue to sound the warning of the dangers of alcohol.

Let's talk about you! Most individuals involved in trying to curtail drunk driving didn't volunteer in the beginning, but were stirred to do so through a terrible tragedy that affected their lives. I pray it'll not take that for you to get involved. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Mickey Kirkland pastors Lighthouse Free Will Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama.

# Home Missions— Strategy for the Future

By Roy Thomas

**O**urs is the most challenging period in church history. While we possess an abundant supply of money, materials, methods and men, we also face the largest number and the most complex and troubled group of people who ever lived. Almost everyone has either financial problems, family problems, physical problems or psychological problems.

The United States population is increasing at both ends of the human spectrum. The birth rate is up from 1970, and the life expectancy rate is the highest of this century—74½ years.

This means that more people will be here for a longer time. Through its Evangelism and Church Growth Division, the Home Missions Department plans to assist existing Free Will Baptist churches to reach these masses.

## Sunday Schools

Each church must get a vision of the people in its community and seek to reach every age level. Although some say that the need for Sunday School is past, the Home Missions Department continues to instruct missionaries to build their congregations through the use of Sunday Schools.



H. Armstrong Roberts



The Sunday School, if organized for the purpose of evangelism, provides the workers and organization to reach people of all ages.

If we are to have pastors, missionaries and Christian workers in large enough numbers to reach the masses of this generation, people must be reached at a young age.

Although it is thrilling to see those who have experienced deep sin accept Christ, many times their past forbids their meeting scriptural qualifications for pastors and missionaries. So we must reach them before that happens.

## **Buses and Christian Schools**

Two ministries are available today to assist churches in reaching children and enlisting them for life-time service in Free Will Baptist churches. These are the bus ministry and the Christian school.

Home Missions plans to provide the materials for an effective evangelistic bus ministry and the encouragement and motivation for churches to keep them going. Our churches should not have to go outside the denomination to acquire these tools.

It takes strong churches to maintain Christian schools and bus ministries. A growing church concept is instilled in each home missionary so that strong Free Will Baptist churches can be built. If Free Will Baptists are going to make an impact on today's society, we must have some churches that will become large.

## **Population Shifts**

We are experiencing a population explosion, but we are also experiencing a population shift. A century ago, 95 percent of America's population was rural. Today, 75 percent of the population is urban.

This shift in population has caused large cities to spring up. Four of the 10 largest cities in the world are now found on this continent—Mexico City, New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago. Other cities such as Denver, Phoenix, Seattle, Atlanta and Houston are growing by leaps and bounds.

One-third of the American population lives in 25 cities. It is the opinion of some that if present trends continue, by the year 2000 nine out of every 10

Americans will live in these 25 cities.

This poses a real problem to Free Will Baptists because we are still primarily a rural denomination. It is difficult for our churches to grow because they continually lose people who move to the cities to find work.

Free Will Baptists lose the majority of these people because we do not have churches in the cities where they move. A Free Will Baptist family could live in any of the large cities just mentioned and be 50 miles from a Free Will Baptist church.

Since our churches are not located where the vast majority of the people of the country live, it is impossible for us to reach them.

The Home Missions Department will continue to send men to the growing cities of the nation to plant churches. We call upon every denominational agency, every pastor and every member to assist with this effort.

If we are going to have the resources to minister in the areas of education and foreign missions, we *must* plant churches where most of the people are living now and where almost all of them will be living in years to come, unless Jesus comes first.

## **New Ideas**

Every national home missionary is supported by financial support from friends and churches. No home missionary has ever failed to receive his check because of insufficient funds. Since this plan has worked so well, the Home Missions Department plans to continue to work in this way.

## **INVOLVEMENT**

But if we are going to step up the pace in starting new churches, we must use some new approaches. Most district associations could support a joint project worker and put a church in a growing city either in its area or elsewhere. The Church of the Nazarene denomination, composed of 5,000 churches, set a goal of 1,000 new works in 1984 (one church for every five existing churches).

Some state associations could adopt a state where Free Will Baptists have no churches and send missionaries to that state. Some local churches need to reproduce themselves by mothering a church.

## **RETIRED WORKERS/ TENT MAKERS**

Some men who have their income secured could go to a needy city and start a new church. Others who have a trade could go as "tent makers" and begin churches. Others who speak foreign languages could begin churches among the millions of immigrants and ethnic groups in our land.

The matter is so urgent that we *must* use every available means to put churches in the cities of America.

## **LOAN FUNDS**

Property and buildings in the cities will become more expensive and make church establishment cost much more. Every possible assistance must be given to enable mission churches to get adequate facilities. The Home Missions Department plans to do more than ever to assist missionaries in this area.

Our Church Extension Loan Fund is already helping and will be of more benefit as people catch the vision of using their savings to build churches and draw interest simultaneously.

## **LIBRARY/CONTRACTOR**

The Home Missions Department plans to establish an architectural plans library. Plans can be kept on file so that copies could be mailed to churches, and a willing architect could approve the plans, which would save new churches thousands of dollars.

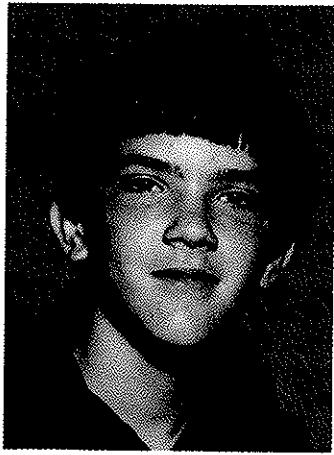
We hope that Home Missions can have a contractor to move from missionary to missionary and lead the men of the church in building programs. Some Master's Men chapters could go to new cities and assist with the construction of church buildings.

The task of evangelizing the paganistic society that has grown up in America is enormous. But if we pool our efforts and resources in an all-out effort to place a Free Will Baptist church within reach of every family in America, we will succeed here in our nation and everywhere else as well.

But if we fail here, we will fail everywhere else! Won't you help put "A Missionary In Every State For A Church In Every City!" ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Roy Thomas is general director of the Home Missions Department.*





By Mark Hampton

**O**f all the things God has given me, I am most thankful for three. They are my family, a house to live in and food to eat.

My dad makes a living so that the whole family can enjoy the benefits like clothes to wear, books to read and occasionally dining out.

My mom cooks our meals, washes our clothes and helps my sister and me with schoolwork we don't understand or are just too lazy to attempt.

My sister, the youngest in the family, always has confidence in me when I am discouraged.

Our basement leaks anytime we have a good hard rain. Our heat is always needing fixing. But when it rains or when it is cold, the house provides a shelter. Russians have a waiting list for houses. Some Chinese live in cardboard houses. But when we looked for a house to buy, we found an insulated brick house we could afford.

We don't eat like Andrew Carnegie, but I have never gone to bed on an empty stomach, except when I have chosen to do so. At least once a month I eat my favorite food, either at home or at a restaurant. We have a big Sunday lunch and six supper meals every week. We always have some kind of junk food around the house even though we all know that it's bad for us.

After stopping to think about what I'm most thankful for, I'm very grateful that God has given me so many wonderful things. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Mark Hampton, 14, is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The high school freshman plays soccer, basketball and a trumpet.*

By Deborah J. Taylor

**I'm** not real sure when it happened, but one day I came to the realization that my parents loved me, they cared, they were wise, they were wonderful! My parents hadn't changed, but I saw them through a new perspective—I was now a parent.

Growing up in a family of five girls is a unique experience. Our parents always had plenty of love and understanding, although sometimes the understanding came through the end of a switch.

One always had the opportunity to defend herself and one was innocent until proven guilty. Yet when justice was rendered, it was mete for the offense. If we were ever punished

unjustly, Mom or Dad would be the first to say they were sorry.

When I was small, I had to face the fact that God had chosen Dad for a special purpose in life. He wasn't home much during our formative years, but we always knew he was Dad and that his love was with us even when he couldn't be.

Our spiritual welfare was of main importance to him. Oh, he always saw that our physical needs were met, but he wanted us all to know "his God" and to love Him.

God knew that because of His will in Dad's life we would need a mother who could be both mother and father if necessary. The need arose quite often. She never once grumbled or complained to us girls.

## I'm Thankful . . .



H. Armstrong Roberts



We were never allowed to lay out of church. As long as we were at home, we went to church (without exception). Always encouraged to question spiritual matters and church activities, we knew where questioning ended and unnecessary criticism began.

We were always allowed to comment about Free Will Baptists, but never allowed to tear them down. Maybe that's why I have such a great love for our denomination. Dad encouraged us while we were yet small to seek out God's will for our lives and surrender to that will.

Mother was usually silent when it came to us girls making decisions about our spiritual lives. She knew it would be between God and us.

I look at others and see unsaved

parents, parents who were converted later in life or parents who just don't care, and I thank the Lord for the parents He gave me. Major decisions in my life have been easier because I had them to help and advise me.

Maybe being a parent myself has opened my eyes. Then again, maybe it's because God has asked the same of my children's father as He asked of mine—surrender to preach the gospel. For that which opened my eyes, whatever it may have been, I'm thankful. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Deborah Jernigan Taylor is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Wilburton, Oklahoma, where her husband, David, pastors. She is a graduate of California Christian College.*

By Shirley Hutchinson

**W**ind and snow flurries marked a cold Saturday evening. The small country church glowed with candle light, and I vowed "till death us do part." Wedding guests retreated, photography was completed and we were left to reflect.

While my groom admired the altar flowers, I stood about mid-aisle gazing at him, wondering, who is this man?

This annoying question plagued me for some time. After all, could I reconcile a short, whirlwind courtship and hasty marriage proposal to wisdom? My prayers for guidance in this matter and how the answer had come seemed irrelevant, almost forgotten.

Turmoil filled early years with personality adjustments—a recession, job layoffs, financial worries, his call to the ministry, and two pastorates, plus my onset of ill health and depression.

A hint of relief came with the decision to relocate to a large city. Surely, lasting employment and change of environment would bring contentment. Instead, temptations and cares

of life intensified. Materialism was not the puzzle's missing piece.

However, before all faith and hope were swallowed up, God moved dramatically through a series of events, rendering me fully surrendered to Himself, His service, and my marriage—led to recall His faithful assurance from the beginning. In realization of His providence, there was no room for doubts and fears.

After 30 years, the wedding scene is still vivid, but one thing has changed. I know this man. He is a servant of God, a preacher, defender and student of the Word, and my channel to Christian Service.

He is my best friend, sweetheart, lover, protector, provider, security and moral support. I can't imagine life without him. He is my life. Without him all else would hold little meaning.

Thank you Lord for my husband. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Shirley Hutchinson is a free-lance writer and member of Fairborn Free Will Baptist Church, Fairborn, Ohio, where her husband, Roy, pastors.*

By Wendell Leckbee

**I'm** thankful for my dad and mom, James and Grace Leckbee of Longmont, Colorado, who gave my life a firm foundation. I did not always do right, but I always knew right.

I'm thankful for a great lady—Katy Clickner of Durhman, Missouri—who

first involved me in church as a 15-year-old boy which resulted in my salvation.

I'm thankful for faithful people who introduced me to a local Free Will Baptist church. This denomination has changed my outlook toward my Christian obligations and has given me a chance to work and develop my abilities for the Lord.

By Kristi Hanna

**I'm** thankful for the friends God has given me. Some people let their friends drag them down, but my friends always cheer me up. They don't pressure me into things that I know are wrong. We work together to iron out our problems.

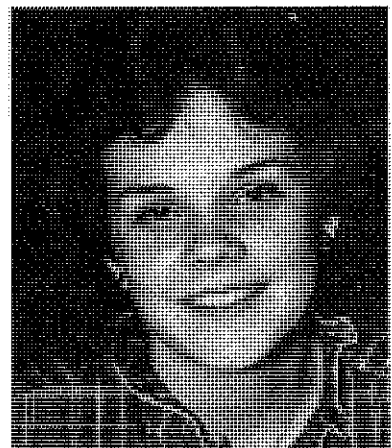
Two of my best friends are my mom and dad. I can talk to them about anything and they always understand. While a lot of kids hate to be near their parents, I'm glad I can have a friendship with mine.

I've seen many Christians get mixed up with the wrong crowd and then don't have anything to do with church. When I started to high school, I was afraid that I'd get caught up with the wrong crowd, but God has given me some great Christian friends at school.

In this last year, our teen group at church has become closer. We have gotten involved with activities the church has planned for us. Through this we've made some lifetime friendships with other church groups.

I believe the kind of friends you have is what makes a person. A good friend will influence you to do most anything. Because of the influence of some of my friends, I've become more involved with the church. Their influence also made me realize that some things are wrong.

There is a saying that to have a friend, you must be one. I want God to give me the ability to be the kind of friend people can trust. I'd like to be a good friend, like the friends God has given me. ▲



*ABOUT THE WRITER: Kristi Hanna is a sophomore at Warren Central High School in Bowling Green, Kentucky. She's a member of Trinity Free Will Baptist Church, Bowling Green.*



## THANKFUL (from page 11)

I've been an active deacon in the North Little Rock church for 15 years. I'm especially thankful for my work with the Master's Men organization. All the way from the local chapter on through the national level, a strong relationship has been formed as we have fellowshiped together.

I'm grateful for my first pastor, Ken Doggett, who taught me so much, and for my present pastor, Ben Scott, who has helped me grow and mature as a Christian.

Another blessing from belonging to a caring church is the fact that both my children, Kim and Shawn, accepted the Lord early in life. My wife, Flora, is everything a homemaker should be and is supportive in all church activities as well as being active herself. I can truly say I'm thankful for people who have influenced my life.

God has blessed me financially in that He has given me the physical strength to hold jobs, and has given me the ability to advance in my field. I'm thankful that I realized early in my Christian life my responsibility to God in giving Him that which belongs to Him. I can testify that God has blessed me as a tither!

I'm thankful for the privilege of working in the Lord's vineyard through the local church, the district, the state and national levels of denominational organization. ▲



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Wendell Leckbee is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas, where he serves as Sunday School teacher, deacon and treasurer. He is moderator of the Central District Association, clerk of the Arkansas State Association and a member of the National Master's Men Board. He served as hospitality chairman for the 1984 National Convention which met in Little Rock.

## Thank You For Your Contributions...



## ... Through the Cooperative Channel

August 1984

### RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	Undesign.	Total	Aug. '83	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 169.00	\$ .00	\$ 169.00	\$ 1,795.48	\$ 8,657.24
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	259.98
Arkansas	.00	4,647.09	4,647.09	3,569.18	30,891.25
California	.00	747.65	747.65	944.72	8,104.17
Florida	.00	1,860.39	1,860.39	3,481.18	12,150.08
Georgia	3,010.48	5.00	3,015.48	2,735.04	25,969.86
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	175.96
Illinois	4,597.95	1,230.15	5,828.10	13,660.75	58,881.73
Indiana	164.85	375.88	540.73	62.54	4,276.45
Kansas	.00	31.24	31.24	412.22	1,604.59
Kentucky	.00	52.40	52.40	220.00	1,469.54
Maryland	.00	90.00	90.00	.00	270.00
Michigan	6,310.78	503.00	6,813.78	3,306.54	37,989.14
Mississippi	.00	739.49	739.49	229.35	5,577.27
Missouri	1,104.97	6,169.47	7,274.44	5,901.44	51,562.82
New Mexico	29.29	4.65	33.94	29.00	860.78
North Carolina	197.55	1,490.09	1,687.64	1,034.00	7,334.94
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	43.11
Ohio	212.00	1,632.00	1,844.00	1,848.18	20,327.35
Oklahoma	23,747.54	9,900.89	33,648.43	34,603.77	259,383.55
South Carolina	394.58	.00	394.58	.00	404.58
Tennessee	226.34	735.39	961.73	483.99	15,026.35
Texas	4,928.11	591.78	5,519.89	8,878.28	41,342.45
Virginia	.00	161.22	161.22	303.66	3,595.08
West Virginia	3,124.99	289.29	3,414.28	3,786.73	36,291.84
Interest	.00	.00	.00	.00	988.07
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$48,218.43</b>	<b>\$31,257.07</b>	<b>\$79,475.50</b>	<b>\$87,286.05</b>	<b>\$633,438.18</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 168.34	\$12,963.85	\$13,132.19	\$11,336.86	\$104,147.54
Foreign Missions	36,927.79	4,207.44	41,135.23	42,676.11	306,981.18
FWBBC	1,321.47	4,207.44	5,528.91	8,095.76	50,877.55
Home Missions	8,298.02	3,292.77	11,590.79	15,765.71	111,106.95
Retirement & Insurance	214.26	2,744.01	2,958.27	3,821.15	22,790.53
Master's Men	44.48	2,378.15	2,422.63	3,180.46	20,802.98
Commission on Theological					
Liberalism	6.08	182.89	188.97	251.36	1,542.33
FWB Foundation	.00	1,097.63	1,097.63	1,659.40	9,230.03
Historical Commission	4.00	182.89	186.89	289.65	1,553.31
Radio/TV Commission	100.00	.00	100.00	180.00	400.00
California Christian					
College	13.35	.00	13.35	12.38	113.46
Hillsdale FWB College	1,120.64	.00	1,120.64	17.21	3,697.32
Southeastern FWB College	.00	.00	.00	.00	30.00
Union Assoc., TN	.00	.00	.00	.00	115.0
WNAC	.00	.00	.00	.00	50.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$48,218.43</b>	<b>\$31,257.07</b>	<b>\$79,475.50</b>	<b>\$87,286.05</b>	<b>\$633,438.18</b>





# Spotlight On South Carolina



*ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Norwood Gibson is promotional director for the South Carolina State Association of Free Will Baptists.*

## South Carolina Free Will Baptists of the Past

By Norwood Gibson

### CHURCH HISTORY

Bethlehem Free Will Baptist Church in Chesterfield County gives evidence that Free Will Baptists are deeply rooted in South Carolina history. It was established in the 1700's by Bud Sweat.

Originally named Morning Star Free Will Baptist Church, the name was changed and chartered in Chesterfield on October 26, 1876, as Bethlehem Free Will Baptist Church.

### CONFERENCE HISTORY

The South Carolina Conference (not state association) is probably the first and oldest organization in the state. The cover of the 1984 minutes bears the inscription, "The Minutes of the 165th Year." According to this, the conference dates back to 1819.

### STATE ASSOCIATION HISTORY

Recently, I read in some research material on Free Will Baptist history

that a state association was organized in 1912. Information about its existence and duration was not given.

The current State Association dates back to 1943. A preliminary meeting was held in the early summer of that year at First FWB Church in Darlington.

The organizational meeting and the first official session took place September 10, 1943, at Whitney FWB Church in Spartanburg. Local conferences represented were Beaver Creek





## SPOTLIGHT (from page 13)

Association, S.C. Conference, Eastern Conference, Rock Fish Association (no longer exists), and Pee Dee Association (no longer exists). A total of 18 churches were listed.

The first record of any organized state ministries is found in the November 1947 minutes. The minutes record field secretaries for the Orphanage Work, Christian Education, Home and Foreign Missions.

The 1948 minutes reveal the addition of a promotional secretary and evangelist. In 1949 the Free Will Baptist Home For Children and a retirement program were established.

### State Association— Currently

#### NUMERICAL STATISTICS

The State Association is now comprised of six local conferences representing 112 local churches and five mission works. An estimated total membership is about 15,000, with an average Sunday morning attendance of about 10,000.

We have 195 ordained and licensed ministers, and six missionaries serving on four foreign fields.

#### MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT

##### CTS BOARD

This body gives direction and supervision to state level Church Training Service competitive activities.

#### YOUTH CAMP

This is a two-week camp for ages 7-11 and 12 through teens. It is usually held the first two weeks in August at a rented state camp facility. More than 200 campers attend each year.

#### MINISTERS RETIREMENT

This program is funded by individual, local church and conference gifts. It provides financial assistance to retired ministers or their widows, who are in need. Fourteen checks in the amount of \$45 each are sent monthly to 11 widows and three ministers.

## HOME FOR CHILDREN

South Carolina FWB Home for Children is located in Turbeville. It is currently serving 26 children.

## POSTON BAGGETT LOAN FUND

This loan fund affords financial aid for students attending Free Will Baptist Bible College. It is interest and repayment free while the student remains in school and maintains an academic "C" average. Upon leaving college, six percent interest is added and a repayment schedule effected.

## HOME MISSIONS REPORTER

Home mission church planting is now done totally by local conference boards and individuals. The state reporter gathers information about this activity for an annual report to the state meeting.

## FOREIGN MISSIONS

Promotion of foreign mission participation and financial giving is done through the state promotional office.

## POP WILLEY MISSIONS OFFERING

This is an annual fund-raising event for home and foreign missions. It is primarily designed for the Christmas season, with emphasis on giving a Christmas gift to Jesus Christ by giving to missions.

The name honors Free Will Baptist pioneer missionary to Panama and Cuba, Thomas H. "Pop" Willey. Funds totaled \$21,000 in 1983.

## MASTER'S MEN

There are some strong local church Master's Men chapters. Our state organization is weak.

## PROMOTIONAL OFFICE

The state has a full-time, salaried promotional director. He promotes participation in and financial giving to every aspect of the state association. Numerous services are rendered to the local conference, local church and ministers.

## THE INFORMER

This is the official state publication edited and published by the promotional director.

## WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

Five of the state's six conferences have district auxiliary organizations. The districts make up the State Woman's Auxiliary Convention which meets annually in March.

From the local church to the state level, our women are efficient, effective and productive. They render an invaluable service.

### State Association— Future

Many of our people share my belief that South Carolina Free Will Baptists stand on the threshold of our greatest hour for service to the cause of Jesus Christ and to our people. To take advantage of the challenge and opportunities before us, a number of things are being considered.

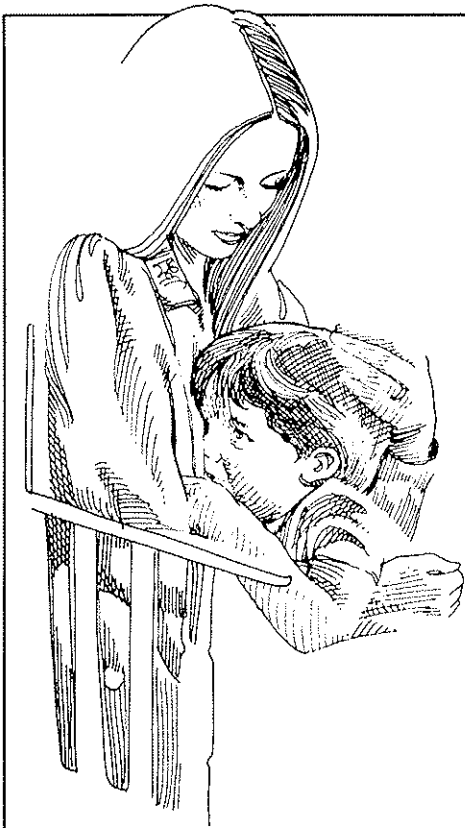
- A means to enhance personal and mass soul winning.
- Helps to build strong, supportive fundamental churches which will practice holy living.
- Training opportunities for greater leadership and teaching abilities.
- Feasibility of establishing a State Home Missions Board
- Study of a financial giving plan, which will encourage financial giving by all churches, and support for all conference, state and national ministries.
- Establish a state office and bookstore
- Facilities and a program to give care to our disabled and retired people.

We are indeed an extremely diverse people in the area of music, methods and practices. However, the Lord is strengthening us through love and unity based upon our relationship with Jesus Christ and Free Will Baptist doctrine.

We praise God for the faithful men and women who brought this great work to our hands. We are grateful for what the Lord is doing in us, for us and through us. We pledge to pass on to our future generations a stronger more effective Free Will Baptist work for Christ.

May all glory be given to our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ▲





## “I’ll Give Him Away.”

By Maurilio Amorim Jr.

**I’m** sure you’ve heard this statement: “Behind a great man there is a great woman.” I’m not a great man or a famous artist, but there’s a great woman in my life who helps me be the man I am. Her name is Luiza Maria Munhoz Amorim—my mother.

One Sunday afternoon as our family sat around the dinner table, some of my Christian friends joined us in a casual conversation. It was a time of joy and at the same time sadness.

Joy, because we were together and it was a beautiful day; just as if God painted the skies different colors that day and gave the birds new songs to sing. The sad part was that it would be the last Sunday I’d spend with my family before leaving for the United States to attend Free Will Baptist Bible College.

I recall vividly, as if it were today, a friend asking my mother, “Mrs. Amorim, how do you feel about your

son going away from home for so long?” As long as I live, I’ll never forget her answer.

Though my mother was not a Christian, she told us this story: “One night when Maurilio was a baby, he started to cry and to pull one of his legs. I thought it was a muscle spasm that would soon go away. But as the hours passed, he got worse instead of better.

“In my desperation, unable to reach my husband, I took the 10-month-old baby to the hospital by myself. After the doctor examined him, I knew something was wrong. The doctor gave me a large list of medical tests that Maurilio must have, then told me in a sad and still voice that it might be very serious.

“When all the tests were finished, the doctor called us in again. I did not know what to expect; I did not want to know. Again the sad and still voice spoke to me. I felt as if all the piety of the world surrounded the white walls, and all the mothers of the world with their children were so happy outside, ignoring my desperation.

“Finally, the doctor spoke, ‘Mr. and Mrs. Amorim, your son has Poliomyelitis. All the exams were positive. I double checked them; I am sorry.’

“My husband and I left the hospital in tears not knowing what to do. On our way home I could not help but see the happiness of the children who played on the streets, while in my lap the only thing I saw was a crippled little baby wearing braces as a banner of his fate.

“My husband and I sought other doctors, hospitals, clinics—all in vain. We were beyond hope in the human terminology. But I knew that there is a God, and that if He is great enough to create this world, He is able to heal my son. In the quietness of that moment, I promised if He would heal him, I would give my only son back to Him.

“During our last visit to the doctor’s office before special treatment was to begin, the doctor insisted on checking his reflections one more time. As the little rubber hammer hit his leg, it jumped! I told the doctor that he hit the wrong leg. He tried the other one; it jumped too!

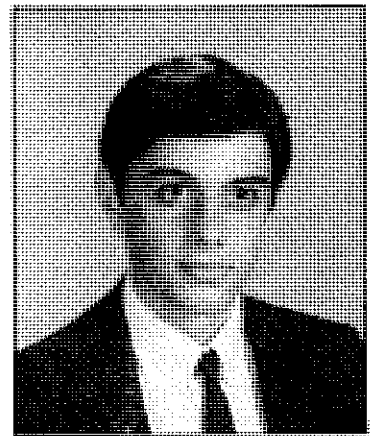
“I burst out crying not knowing what to say. The doctor was as surprised as we were. Finally, the doctor destroyed all Maurilio’s files and told us, ‘Go home, you have a healthy baby.’

“Today, 18 years after this incident, God called my son to serve Him, and I’ll gladly give him away.”

That afternoon, as some of us wiped away the tears, the sun shined stronger as if God heard the story and wanted to make that moment unforgettable. Six months later my mother was saved. She accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior.

I am a happy son! ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Maurilio Bruno Amorim Jr. is a junior at Free Will Baptist Bible College. The 20-year-old Brazilian was converted in a youth camp in Brazil.*







By Jack Stallings

**T**he central truth of Christian doctrine is the Triune God. This God is one and yet three. There is but one God and yet there are three personalities which comprise that entity.

There are "three distinct persons in the one divine essence." Those three persons are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The subject of this article is the third person of the Holy Trinity—the Holy Spirit. Obviously, an article of this scope cannot give comprehensive treatment to the subject.

The consideration shall be limited to two basic aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. These aspects are the personhood of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

### Person of the Holy Spirit

Consider this fact: the Holy Spirit is a *person*. While most Christians objectively know that the Holy Spirit is a person, they have trouble subjectively conceiving of Him as such, being conditioned to refer to and think of Him as "It."

The "It" may have a capital "I", but is "It" nevertheless. This has been exceedingly harmful. As long as the Holy Spirit is conceived of as "It", He will remain an impersonal force or influence rather than a personal being with whom one may communicate and fellowship personally.

Most people conceive of the Father and the Son as persons with no difficulty. The very name "Father" conveys personhood. The events of the Old Testament reveal God to be a person in the fullest sense of the word.

While many Old Testament verses refer to the Trinity rather than the Father alone, they are usually thought

of as applying to the Father and serve to reinforce the personhood of the Father. Jesus displayed a personal conception of the Father in His prayers and statements which made it natural for Christians to follow His example.

The incarnation brings the personhood of the Son into sharp focus. Jesus was unmistakably, inescapably a person. The fact, force and impact of His personality are obvious.

The situation, however, is quite different in regard to the Holy Spirit. His personhood remains blurred. He is thought of more as a force, an influence or a presence than a person. Many perceive the Holy Spirit as but an inspirational influence of Christ that continues to stir men after His death and ascension.

The Holy Spirit is just as much a personal being as are the Father and the Son. He is in every way equal in power and majesty. However, the lack of anthropomorphic identity for the Holy Spirit causes men to, somehow,



# GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

consider Him separate and different from the other two members of the Trinity—not quite so completely God-like as they.

Actually, the Holy Spirit, with no anthropomorphic dimension, most accurately represents the essential nature of the Godhead which is that of pure spirit. Yet since it is difficult for men to understand the personality of a purely spirit being, they tend to conceive of Him in non-personal terms.

This impersonal conception of the Holy Spirit is a great tragedy for it robs men of fellowship with that Being who should be their most intimate friend and helper, that One whom Jesus called "the Comforter."

Dr. R. A. Torrey spoke succinctly here, "If the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person and we know it not, we are robbing a Divine Being of the love and adoration which are His due. It is of the highest practical importance whether the Holy Spirit is a power that we, in our ignorance and weakness, are

somehow to get hold of and use, or whether the Holy Spirit is a personal Being . . . who is to get hold of us and use us. It is of the highest experimental importance . . . Many can testify to the blessing that came into their lives when they came to know the Holy Spirit, not merely as gracious influence . . . but as an everpresent, loving friend and helper."

## Ministry of the Holy Spirit

Now, let's consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit. There are many activities ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the following selective summary will convey an accurate representation of the Holy Spirit's activity.

### INSPIRATION

The Holy Spirit so superintended the apostles and prophets as to preserve them from all error in producing an absolutely infallible and authoritative communication of God's will and truth to mankind. Since the Holy Spirit produced the scripture, it ought to be seen as the primary source of communication from Him.

Subjective "revelations" should not be allowed to override the official voice of the Holy Spirit. Christians should read the Bible as a personalized communication from the Holy Spirit. They should feel very close to Him as they read His words.

### INCARNATION

The Holy Spirit wrought the miracle of the Virgin Birth and supervised the whole process of bringing *Immanuel* to the earth to live among men and provide for their redemption.

### REGENERATION

The miracle of the New Birth is performed by the Holy Spirit. The miracle of salvation is performed on the souls of men by the Holy Spirit upon the condition of faith in the finished work of Christ. The knowledge that the Holy Spirit performed the action of saving him should help the Christian to feel a personal love for the Holy Spirit just as he does for Christ who died to make his salvation possible.

### EDUCATION

The Holy Spirit instructs the Christian in both truth and holiness. The Christian is guided and instructed as he submits himself in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

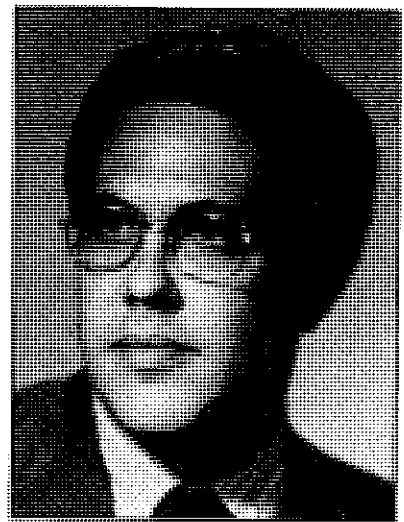
Well did the hymnist pen, "Holy Spirit, faithful guide, Ever near the Christian's side." The Christian should feel a particular closeness to the Holy Spirit who is guiding and instructing him day by day.

### VOCATION

The Holy Spirit calls and empowers the Christian for service. The Holy Spirit does not just do His work *through* the Christian, but He works *in* the Christian to enable *him* to do His work.

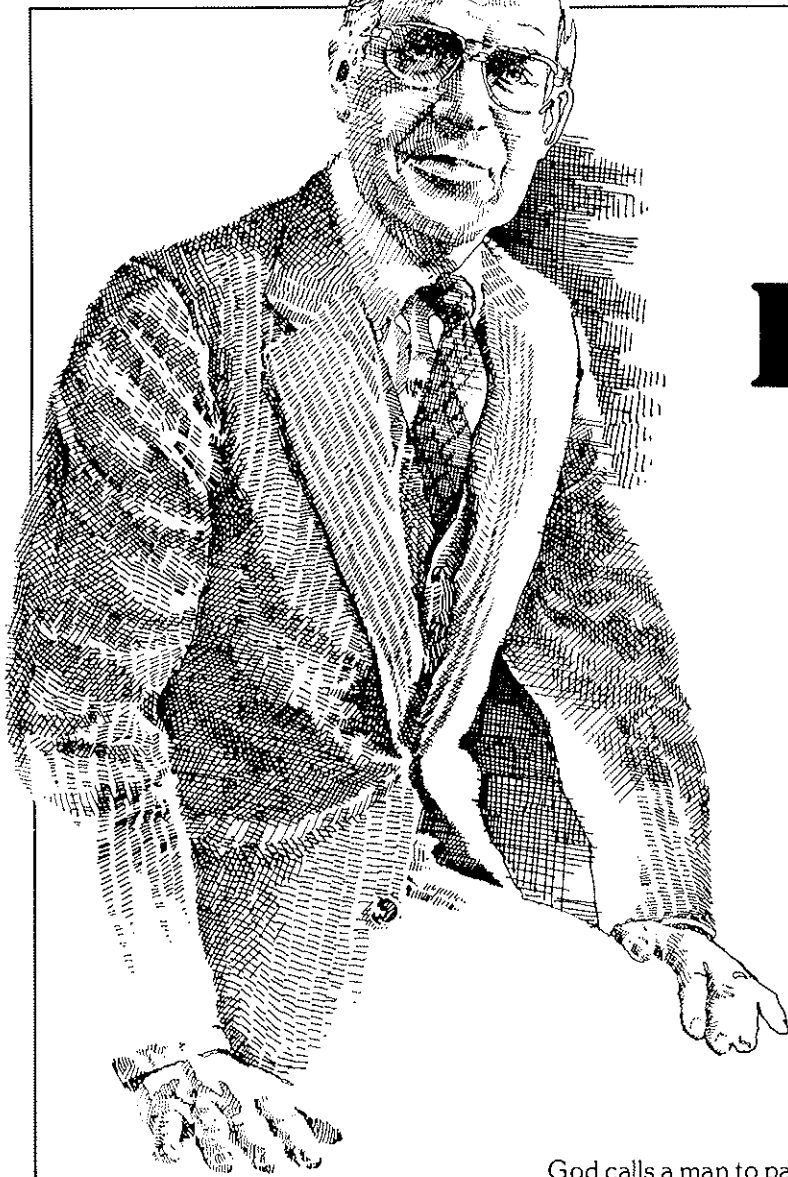
It is helpful to think of such verses as Philippians 2:13 as speaking specifically of God the Holy Spirit. The Christian is indwelt and infilled by the person and power of the Holy Spirit.

God the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity with whom Christians have the most direct contact, and yet He is the one for whom many feel the least affinity and affection. We need a renewed emphasis upon the Third Person of the Trinity in the teaching and preaching of the church. Christians need to come to love this Person and value His on-going work in their lives. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jack Stallings pastors Collinswood Free Will Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Virginia. The 40-year-old minister has two degrees—Bachelor of Arts, Free Will Baptist Bible College, and Master of Divinity, Covenant Theological Seminary.





# PLEASE Respect the Pastor

By Herbert Waid

**L**eadership is a lonely profession. Other job hazards are: vulnerability to criticism from multiple sources, high risk of being misunderstood, apt to be labeled power hungry, more often than not thought of as lazy.

Why would a man expose himself and his family to this kind of no-man's-land living? In some leadership professions financial gain or prestige might lure one. But leading a local Free Will Baptist congregation, quite frankly, lacks much mass appeal.

Let me share what I think thrusts men into Free Will Baptist pastorates—God's calling.

God calls a man to pastor. The man prepares. A congregation acknowledges God's hand on him and invites him to exercise his calling with them. He then becomes the leader of their flock.

In my position with the Georgia State Association of Free Will Baptists, I am in touch with scores of pastors at any one time. I am appalled at the pain inflicted on many God-called men by their own parishioners.

I know of young and older men, formally educated, who have been wounded by their congregations. Some, I am afraid, may be lost to the ministry.

Some church members seem to gain a diabolic delight by treating the man they called to teach and lead them, in unkind ways they would not treat friend or foe.

Part of the reason behind this behavior may be because people know they can act unchristian toward their pastor and still expect him to respond in a kind Christian way to them.

For instance, some may lash with a noxious gossiping tongue, all the while knowing such behavior is beneath their pastor. He will not give "in kind" back to them. They are safe.

Meantime, his ministry can be destroyed if his people do not see through the sinister plot.

Politics in the church can wound the shepherd and scatter the flock. A few disgruntled members (it is always a few; if they were many they would not need to work so hard against the whole) can keep their telephone lines humming and wreak havoc in the church if the majority allow themselves to be duped.

Inference of pastoral wrong-doing and outright lies can be spewed out

# The Sin We Defend

By Floyd Wolfenbarger

**I**t ruins more marriages than adultery. It destroys more relationships than slander. It robs of more happiness than liquor. It kills more preachers than burn-out. It destroys more churches than worldliness. It is the most virulent evil in the world.

What preacher has not performed an autopsy on a dead marriage to discover that love was eaten away by resentments? Show me a dead church, and I'll show you live resentments. Point out a grim soul for whom joy is a distant memory, and I will point to infectious resentment that has crowded out his praise.

The danger of resentment is magnified because it's so skillful in justifying itself. We think if our resentment has a justifiable cause that we may legitimately go on resenting.

In fact, we often feel that we ought to be resentful and we would be foolish to stop. We protect our resentments like a rotten tooth, yelling loudly when a breath of fresh air hits it, but refusing to let it be pulled.

Jesus must be our example. He never condoned sin, but He never

stooped to resentment. He refused to resent His *enemies*, and heaped coals of fire upon the head of the wife who resents her husband, the son who resents his father or the Christian who resents his brother.

How can we do away with it? We can remember that we are servants and make of ourselves "no reputation." We can frankly confront others rather than allow imagined slights to nurse our bitterness.

We can look at the cross of Christ who "opened not His mouth", but said "forgive them, they know not what they do." We can remember to have more sympathy for others and less self-pity filling our minds. Jesus said as He bore the cross, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children."

Most of all, we must stop justifying our resentment and get on with doing God's work for which we have been chosen. ▲

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

without fear of having to prove the truthfulness of any statement, for it is not being said in public but in confidence.

Also, once a reckless accusation has been made, the burden of the proof for innocence often falls on the victim. Shame!

By the way, the pastor's hands may be tied by the gullibility of his people, but remember that God hates the gossip and make no mistake, He will punish the gossip who harms His anointed pastor.

One of the prevailing themes of scripture is, "Keep your malicious hands off God's anointed." That goes for malicious tongues as well.

David honored this biblical principle when he spared the life of Saul, his enemy, because Saul was anointed king.

Paul honored this principle when he apologized to the High Priest, his enemy, for speaking harshly to him

while not knowing he was the High Priest.

Beware—Old Testament time, New Testament time and present time—God's principles are unchangeable and valid.

As true a picture as the above is of several of our churches, thank the Lord, this is not a picture of all Free Will Baptist congregations. But please be careful. Although we are not all guilty of base behavior toward our pastor, any of us could be.

Most of our people are predisposed to believe their pastor rather than the consistent trouble-maker, the one who axed the last pastor, bloodied the nose of the pastor before him and shot out of the saddle the pastor before that.

By far, most of our congregations love and respect their pastor and follow his teaching and leadership.

Don't you wish all our congregations would! ▲

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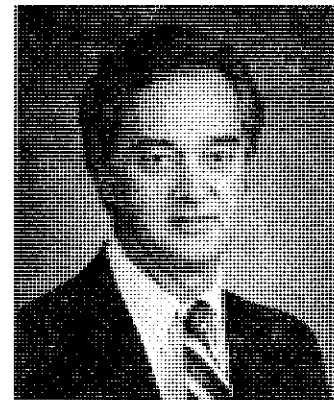
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*ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Herbert Waid is Executive Secretary for the Georgia State Association of Free Will Baptists. This article is reprinted by permission from the September 1984 Georgia Promotional BULLETIN.*





FREE WILL BAPTIST

## newsfront

### MARILYN PRITCHARD JOINS CONTACT STAFF

NASHVILLE, TN—Free-lance editor and proofreader Marilyn Pritchard was named editorial assistant for CONTACT magazine in late August, confirms Editor-in-Chief Melvin Worthington.

Pritchard, a Johnston City, Illinois native joined the CONTACT staff after returning to the states in June from Ivory Coast, West Africa where she served a year as a missionary aide.

Miss Pritchard, a 1974 *cum-laude* graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College, brings seven years' experience as a free-lance editor and proofreader to the magazine. She has edited five books including major works by Tennessee State University education dean, Dr. Douglas J. Simpson.

She served as proofreader for the 1980 *Free Will Baptist Treatise* revision. She published two articles in denominational publications, a 1981 article in CONTACT for which she furnished original artwork, and a 1984 program in *Co-Laborer* magazine.

Marilyn was employed as cashier at Free Will Baptist Bible College, 1974-1983. She is a member of Cofer's Chapel FWB Church in Nashville.



### LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE TO EXAMINE CHURCH GROWTH

NASHVILLE, TN—More than 100 state moderators, promotional officers and denominational officials from 25 states will gather in Nashville, December 5-7 to discuss church growth at the annual Leadership Conference, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington.

Dr. Worthington said that 12 plenary sessions will highlight the three-day conference. Ten of the sessions will focus specifically on church growth models, strategies and problems.

Missouri pastor James McAllister will deliver a series of three lectures on the scope, strategies and stabilization of growth.

Oklahoma moderator David Sutton will speak twice on promoting and

praying for growth plans. North Carolina pastor Randy Cox speaks twice Friday morning concerning growth problems.

South Carolina pastor Earl Hendrix will address the conference on resisting pride in growth. Free Will Baptist Bible College Dean Robert Picirilli keynotes the opening session Wednesday evening regarding growth measurement and models.

Each participant will receive a Leadership Conference notebook containing outlines, lists of denominational agencies and state leaders.

Dr. Worthington said the theme for the 1984 conference was determined at the State Leaders Luncheon in Little Rock, Arkansas, by the state officials.

### HILLSDALE LAUNCHES LIBRARY/CLASSROOM BUILDING

MOORE, OK—Groundbreaking ceremonies for a new 10,500-square-foot Library/Classroom Building were held September 7, at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, according to President Edwin Wade.

The \$640,000 masonry and steel structure includes 4,500 square feet of library space with the remaining space allocated for classrooms and faculty offices.

Hillsdale College raised more than half the construction price before

breaking ground. During the nine-month construction period, fund raising will continue with the goal of being debt-free at completion.

A large crowd of friends were on hand at the groundbreaking ceremonies including the College Board of Trustees; Dr. J. A. Leone, chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; representatives from Missouri, Texas, Kansas, Arkansas and New Mexico; and the city of Moore.



Hillsdale President Edwin Wade turns first shovel of dirt. President Wade is flanked by (L.) Brad Holdeman (KS), Board Chairman Ray Gwartney, Oklahoma State Regents Chancellor J. A. Loone, and Okla. Executive Secretary Lonnie DeVault.



## 421 ENROLL FOR FALL CLASSES AT FWBBC, GRADUATE SCHOOL

NASHVILLE, TN—As registration closed in September, Free Will Baptist Bible College Registrar Charles Hampton reported 421 students enrolled in the undergraduate and graduate programs.

The number of undergraduates is 417 with four enrolled in the graduate program for ministers.

Faculty and students participated in opening events at the college's 43rd year, August 27-September 2. Forty students rededicated their lives to Christ in the first Sunday evening campus service. Reverend Bob Shockey, campus pastor and Christian service director, led the service and preached on the Christian's heart.

President Charles Thigpen observed: "Even though the college enrolled 10 percent less than a year ago, there was an excellent spirit of enthusiasm and expectancy among the students. With more than 400 eager, alert students, we have a great group to train



*Students leave chapel during opening exercises of FWBBC's 1984-85 school year.*

and educate. There is tremendous potential for the work of the Lord in this student body."

Students hail from 26 states and seven foreign countries. Their ranks include 86 seniors, 80 juniors, 113 sophomores, 124 freshmen and 14 special students. There are 95 ministerial students and 63 missions students.

Registrar Hampton said that 291 are returning students and 126 new students. The student body consists of 210 male students and 207 female

students.

Enrollment by state is as follows:

Alabama	26	Missouri	18
Arizona	1	New Mexico	1
Arkansas	14	New York	2
California	2	North Carolina	65
Delaware	2	Ohio	12
Florida	14	Oklahoma	1
Georgia	22	South Carolina	15
Idaho	1	Tennessee	70
Illinois	28	Texas	6
Indiana	30	Virginia	13
Kansas	1	Washington	2
Kentucky	11	West Virginia	11
Michigan	24		
Mississippi	15	Foreign	10

## NATIONAL RETREAT ATTRACTS 1,400 WOMEN

ASHEVILLE, NC—Ten seminars built around the "To Know Him And To Make Him Known" theme challenged more than 1,400 Free Will Baptist women from 21 states and five foreign countries who attended the third national Woman's National Auxiliary Convention retreat September 6-8 at Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, North Carolina.

Seminar leaders focused on making Christ known as lover, through prayer, through the Word, through suffering and six other seminars ranging from senior citizens outreach to home Bible studies.

Ten missionaries participated in a five-scene dramatic production, "Only One Life," depicting missionary commitment at youth camp and following one missionary from her initial call to her return to the field from furlough. The group included missionaries from

Brazil, France, Ivory Coast, Japan and Uruguay.

Ventriloquist Jan Arnoldi and "Chester" led morning devotionals.

Veteran FWB missionaries Laura Belle Barnard, Mabel Willey and Ethel Whaley sparked the crowded seminar and plenary sessions. Other leaders included Odessa Ledlow (AL), Betty Hill (VA), Mildred Daniel (TN), Frances Poston (SC), Norma Teague (TX), Billie Sexton (TN) and Kay Hampton (TN).

The group gave a \$3,826 missionary offering. Beverly Welch (NC) directed a 150-voice choir in singing "Set My Soul Afire."

One scheduled seminar speaker, Mrs. Eunice Edwards of Missouri, was forced to cancel her trip because of a heart condition. Retreaters signed a giant get-well card and sent it to her.

## CONTACT WINS AWARD

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CONTACT Magazine took first place honors in the Evangelical Press Association's 1984 Higher Goals in Christian Journalism awards for a three-color cover, according to EPA Executive Secretary Gary Warner.

The winning entry was the June 1983 cover depicting the 1983 National Convention theme, "Considering The Covenant." Nashville artist Dean St. Clair designed the cover.

Judge Lester Goodman described the winning cover as "fine, rich, sophisticated and elegant. The illustration is particularly good."

The Evangelical Press Association seeks to promote Christianity and influence Christian journalism. The Association includes almost 300 Christian publications across America with a combined circulation of more than 20 million.



# newsfront

(continued)

## SOUTHEASTERN ENROLLS 133, EMPLOYS TWO NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—Southeastern Free Will Baptist College enrolled 133 students for the fall semester, including 125 full-time students and eight night students, says Dean Lorenza Stox.

The classification breakdown is Freshmen—69, Sophomores—36, Juniors—11, Seniors—7, Special—2, Night—8.

Dean Stox praised God in that the budgeted figures for tuition income reflected an anticipated enrollment of 125 students.

Reverend Raymond Coffey, former pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church, Hot Springs, Arkansas, joined the staff as a full-time professor this

fall. He will teach Bible and theological trends.

Reverend Rick Rasberry, associate pastor at Collinswood Free Will Baptist Church in Virginia joined the staff as part-time professor. He will teach speech and English.

The college's Tip-off Basketball Tournament is scheduled November 29-December 1. Eight teams from FWB Christian Day Schools will participate in the event.

The first game begins Thursday, November 29 at 2:00 p.m. The championship game will conclude by noon, Saturday, December 1. Teams have opportunity to play ball as well as participate in various activities on the Southeastern campus.

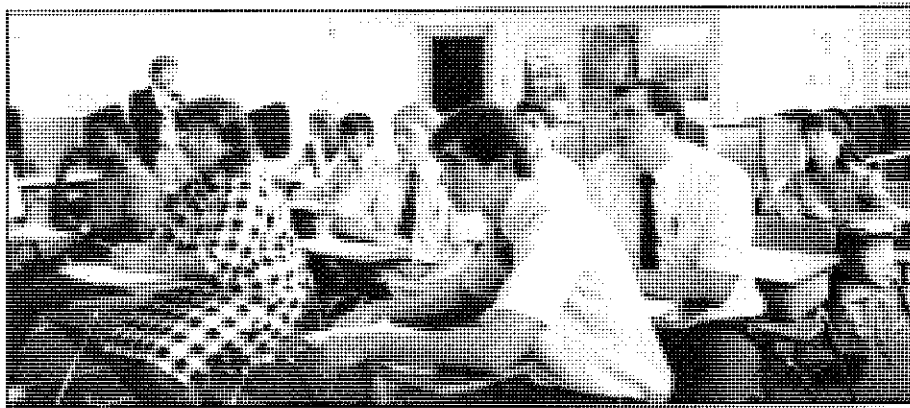
## CALIFORNIA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ENROLLS 18 NEW STUDENTS

FRESNO, CA—Eighteen new students enrolled at California Christian College for the fall semester bringing total enrollment to 31 plus seven night students, reports Academic Dean E. T. Hyatt.

The group includes 15 ministerial students and three foreign students—one from West Africa and two from Laos. Dean Hyatt said the school plans to enroll a Nigerian student in January.

Hyatt observed, "We are thankful for God's blessing and look forward to a good year."

Eight CCC Students will graduate next May—three with the Associate of Arts Degree and five with the Bachelor of Science Degree. The enrollment and projected graduation represent the largest new student enrollment in 10 years and largest graduating class since 1976.



Students register at California Christian College.

## RANDALL HOUSE TO PRINT SPANISH CURRICULUM

McALLEN, TX—Randall House Publications will begin publishing Spanish language Sunday School curriculum in 1985, says General Director Roger Reeds.

The new curriculum line will be printed under the name of *Casa Randall De Publicaciones*. Randall House opened offices in McAllen, Texas, where former missionary to Cuba, Lucy Lima, will direct the editorial process as managing editor.

Information about these materials may be secured by writing to Casa Randall de Publicaciones at 413 Nolana, McAllen, TX 78501 or Randall House Publications, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, TN 37217.

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE MAKES SECOND DEBUT

NASHVILLE, TN—*Depth*, the daily devotional guide published by the CTS Department 1962-1973 makes its second appearance with the Spring Quarter, 1985.

According to Roger Reeds, general director of Randall House Publications, *Depth* will follow a new format based on a practical, doctrinal, inspirational and denominational emphasis each quarter.

The publication will be uniquely Free Will Baptist. Denominational prayer requests for home and foreign missionaries, Bible Colleges and other agencies will be listed daily.

The compact 4" x 7" pocket size will make it portable yet permit the print size to be large enough for older adults.

It will be listed on the Spring Quarter, 1985 Randall House order blank. Churches are encouraged to order enough copies for each family. Individual subscriptions are also available.

## Currently . . .

Members at **Trinity FWB Church, Greenville, NC**, adopted a \$151,000 church budget in September. The group also began a graded choir program under the direction of Pam Martin and Beverly Welch. **Leroy Welch** pastors.

For the more than 6,000 Free Will Baptists who prayed without ceasing for five days during the National Convention in Little Rock, you'll be glad to know that the Lord both heard and answered your prayers. Illinois pastor, **J. Reford Wilson**, was snatched from death's door in mid-July by the prayers of thousands of Free Will Baptists. He was buoyed by many letters, cards and telephone calls from across the nation. Pastor Wilson left the hospital on August 5, extremely weak, but definitely on the mend. He planned to return to his pulpit by October 1. Wilson said, "The Lord has done some wonderful things in my life during this illness and I praise Him for His all-sufficient grace."

**Randall House Publications** announced a new series of church growth plans called Attendance Booster Clubs. The clubs will be organized in five levels—the 100 Club, the 200 Club, the 300 Club, the 400 Club and the 500 Club. Churches who achieve their goals will receive a plaque and eventually be featured in *Growing* magazine, a publication of Randall House.

Pastor **J. C. Morgan** said dedication services were held September 16, for the new family center building at **Lawnwood FWB Church, Tulsa, OK**. State Executive Secretary **Lonnie DeVault** preached the dedication service. The family center building was constructed on a three-acre tract adjoining the church. It includes 11 classrooms, an office, kitchen, a full gymnasium, bleacher section and assorted storage rooms.

**Dr. R. Laird Harris** delivered a series of Graduate School lectures at the **Free Will Baptist Bible College Graduate School** September 5-7. Harris presented two series of lectures—one series focused on biblical inerrancy and the other focused on quotations from the prophets in the New Testament. Dr. Harris is an outstanding Old Testament scholar who taught 45 years at Faith Theological Seminary and Covenant Theological Seminary.

**CONTACT** welcomes the newsletter from **First FWB Church, Wilburton, OK**. **David Taylor** pastors.

Evangelist **Tim York** plans to launch a crusade effort across America to reach college age students. The **Louisa, KY** based evangelist says he hopes to work through area churches in college towns who will unite in an effort to reach the collegians.

Pastor **Don Guthrie** of **Harrah FWB Church, Harrah, OK**, reports four conversions in the new church. Pastor and lay people made 115 personal contacts in the community during August.

A 1984 Free Will Baptist Bible College graduate, **Charles McKinney**, moved to **British Columbia in Canada** and started **Friendship FWB Church**. In case you want to write him, his address is 2661 Victoria, Clearbrook, BC V2T 2T6. Phone (606) 859-9314.

The **WNAC** has published a 24-page booklet titled *Gift Ideas for Missionaries*. The book is divided into five major sections—What to Send, How to Send, Where to Send, The Missionary on Furlough, and Missionary Provision Closet. You may order a copy from WNAC at P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, TN 37202 for 75¢.

Pastor **Winston Sweeney** celebrated 25 years at **Fellowship FWB Church, Kingsport, TN**, on September 16. Tennessee Executive Secretary **Raymond Riggs** brought the Homecoming Day message.

Director **James Cox** of **Camp Caleb** near **Paintsville, KY**, says the camp had 25 conversions and 44 rededications during activities this summer. Camp Caleb is one of the most outstanding facilities anywhere in the United States. We commend Director Cox and his staff.

**First FWB Church, Desoto, MO**, broke Vacation Bible School attendance records in August with a high of 255 during the night sessions. Pastor **Charles Miller** said the five-night VBS resulted in many youngsters accepting Christ as Savior. **Sharon Parker** directed the successful school.

Pastor **Grady Runyon** of **First FWB Church, Benton, IL**, has a Monday evening radio program at 6:30 originating from the station in Ava, IL.

The Sunshine Girls raised more than \$1,000 to buy drapes and carpet for the parsonage at **Hazel Dell FWB Church, Sesser, IL**. **Jerry Presley** pastors.

Pastor **David Shores** of **Ina FWB Church, Ina, IL**, said the group purchased property adjacent to the parking lot. Buildings have been removed, the ground leveled and rock delivered for more parking spaces.

The Junior Church at **Mt. Calvary FWB Church, Hookerton, NC**, had wall-to-wall children on August 5 when 90 children showed up for Sunday School and worship. The church recently purchased a Dodge van, computers for their school, a copier and folding partitions for Junior Church. Lightning struck the auditorium roof in June, but the insurance company did replace the roof. **Jim Summerson** pastors.

Pastor **George Lee** of **Victory FWB Church, Goldsboro, NC**, and a number of various civic leaders climbed aboard an Air Force KC-135 in August to visit Whiteman AFB in Missouri and Barksdale AFB in Louisiana. The purpose of the visit was to provide first-hand knowledge of the Strategic Air Command operations according to Col. William O. West.

Pastor **Keith Perkins** said **Hillsboro FWB Church, Hillsboro, OH**, relocated one mile west of Hillsboro on U.S. Route 50W. Since that time, the church reported 19 conversions.

Pastor **Bill Thompson** of **New Hope FWB Church, Chillicothe, OH**, began a radio program this summer on Sunday mornings at 9:30 on Station WCHI.

Pastor **Joe Rager** completed his first year at **First FWB Church, Youngstown, OH**. During that time Rager reported 12 conversions and baptisms with attendance surging from 15 to 60.

### DIRECTORY UPDATE

#### ALABAMA

Harvey Luke to Free Water Church, Guin from Union Chapel Church, Vernon

#### ARKANSAS

Roy Helms to First Church, Hot Springs from Gorman Church, Waverly, TN

Frank Gregory to Mt. Bethel Church, Rose Bud

#### CALIFORNIA

Cecil Spurlock to Clovis Church, Clovis

#### CANADA

Charles McKinney to Friendship Church, Clearbrook, B.C. (new church)

#### IDAHO

Pat Burttram to First Church, Rupert

#### ILLINOIS

Don Hanna to First Church, Green Rock

#### MICHIGAN

Allen Presley to First Church, Benton Harbor

Phil Mutchler to Lansing Mission, Lansing from First Church, Benton Harbor

#### NORTH CAROLINA

Bob Breeden to Mt. Calvary Church, Perryman from Wausau Church, Wausau, WI

#### TENNESSEE

Tim Young to Gorman Church, Waverly from Lansing State Mission, Lansing, MI





## Green Tree Bible Study

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Robert E. Picirilli

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Colossians 1:15-19

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# Jesus Christ—The Preeminent Person

**T**his short passage is packed full of doctrine about the person of Christ. There was a heresy, making inroads at Colosse, that denied the full equality of Jesus with the Father, as God. That fake teaching needed immediate correction. Paul “sings” a hymn of praise that teaches us who Jesus is.

*Jesus Christ as God* (vv. 15a, 19). Two statements, especially, attest the Deity of Christ. First, He is “the image of the invisible God” (v. 15a). An image, in this sense, is a visible representation of something, something that appears. Then Jesus is the invisible God, visibly expressed.

The second statement is the whole of verse 19, that “all the fulness” dwells in Him. If we should ask what that means, 2:9 answers: “all the fulness of the Godhead.” It is very possible that “all the fulness” is meant personally, as a circumlocution for God Himself, and that the verse should read “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in Him.”

*Jesus Christ as Creator* (vv. 15b-17). Paul sets Christ off from creation and makes Him Lord over all created

things. (The heretics probably made Christ a created deity.)

He does this with five closely related points: (1) in relation to creation, Christ is “firstborn” (v. 15b); (2) all things were created by (in) Him (v. 16a); (3) all things were created by (through) and for Him (v. 16b); (4) He is before all things (v. 17a); (5) all things consist—are held together—in Him (v. 17b).

In other words, before the created realm *was*, He *is* (cf. John 8:58). He is, in fact, to be identified as Creator rather than part of the created realm (cf. John 1:3). Over all creation He stands with the priority and authority of the “firstborn” (as used in the Old Testament). He is *agent*, *end* and *upholder* of creation, making it a “cosmos instead of a chaos” (Lightfoot).

There is no doubt: only two categories of existence are possible, creator and created; and Jesus belongs in the former. He is the Creator, Lord over everything created. In light of the Old Testament’s pervasive distinction between the One Creator God and His creation, there could be no stronger indication of Jesus’ Deity than this passage.

*Jesus Christ as Head of the Church* (v. 18). There is conscious parallel between Christ’s Lordship as Creator over the cosmos and His Lordship as Savior over the church. The church was created by His redemptive work, as seen in His resurrection as the “firstborn” (same word as in v. 15b) out from among the dead.

To the church, as to the universe, He is head, beginning and firstborn, “to the end that He might come to be having first place in everything” (as the Greek literally reads).

If ever a passage answered a heresy, this one does. It is equally appropriate for heresies in our day, including that of the Jehovah’s Witnesses who—much like the heretics at Colosse—regard Jesus as a God, a lesser deity not fully equal with the God Father. Paul’s teaching is strong medicine for any diseased doctrinal view that would take away the preeminence of Jesus Christ.

Our Creator, Savior and Lord is none other than the Almighty God, revealed to us in (and as) the person of Jesus Christ. Compare John 1:18, He is certainly deserving the preeminent place in our worship in all our lives.▲



# Don't Lose Your Song

By Bill Gardner

**W**hen God's people get together it is always proper and in order to make melody unto the Lord. In the Bible we find that music is a prelude to praise, prayer and preaching. Congregational singing has always been a part of the worship of God.

The pastor has a responsibility to lead his people in praise, encourage them to pray and instruct them in the Word of God through preaching. He must also be concerned with the music that accompanies these activities.

Perhaps one of the most neglected areas by many pastors is in directing his people toward proper congregational singing. Even if he cannot sing, his responsibility as undershepherd is just as important in this area as it is in leading his people in praise, prayer and the preaching of the Word.

## Pastoral 'Do Nots'

Some pastors actually hinder congregational singing by the things they do. Actions, reactions and expressions are read by the congregation. Here is a list of "Do Nots" for the pastor:

*Do not* make congregational singing seem unimportant. Compliment the song leader and congregation. It

may shock them but watch their singing improve.

*Do not* look around to try to find something else to do. Encourage your people to sing. Even if you cannot sing, hold a hymn book and look at the words.

*Do not* make notes for the announcements. Take note of the message of the hymn. Make yourself aware of hymn stories and authors and pass these on to your people.

*Do not* study sermon notes; if you don't have it by this time, shame on you.

*Do not* have private prayer time; if the song is so unimportant, stop the singing and all pray.

## Four Music Facts

As a pastor, I feel there are several things I must teach my people about congregational singing.

First, congregational singing is a basic part of our service. It sets the mood for the service; it's the foundation for worship; it's not a time filler or unimportant. To eliminate congregational singing puts the church back in the Dark Ages where only the clergy sing and the laity have no song.

Second, congregational singing is biblical. Other articles have spoken to this point. Suffice it to say the biblical

mandate to sing unto God is clear throughout the Word of God.

Third, congregational singing is a blessing. Someone has said, "Music is an expression of the emotion." How often our hearts have been stirred by the singing of God's people. If your congregational singing is not a blessing, then change it.

Note Psalm 137:1-4, when Israel was in captivity, how they lost their song. Perhaps the reason for the loss of blessing is because many of our people are held captive by the world. When your heart is right, congregational singing is a blessing as it accompanies praise, prayer and the preaching of the Word of God.

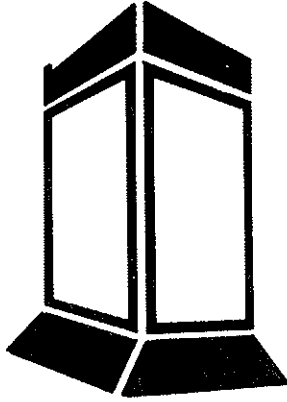
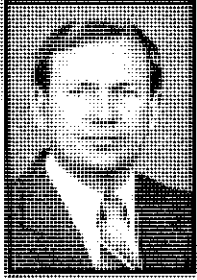
Fourth, congregational singing has a binding effect. We sing and congregational singing binds us together. Some of the fondest memories of my home church is the music, as we sang together and prayed together and worshiped together.

I felt a part of those people. I became so bound to them that even today, though separated by miles and time, they are still my people.

Let me conclude with Proverbs 29:6b, "... the righteous doth sing and rejoice." What better way than through congregational singing. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER:* Reverend Bill Gardner pastors First Bible Free Will Baptist Church, New Castle, Indiana.





# The Free Will Baptist Pulpit

Steve Cannon, Pastor

Good News Free Will Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia

## Naaman the Leper

II Kings 5:1-19

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains one of Elisha's seven miracles. The main character in our text is the illustrious Captain of the host of the King of Syria, Naaman. We are given several insights into the personality of this man:

1. A mighty man of valor
2. A great and honored man
3. He did his country a great service.
4. A good and great man in his countrymen's eyes

"He was as great as the world could make him and yet the basest slave in Syria wouldn't change skins with him" (Matthew Henry). He was a good and successful man . . . but "he was a leper."

1. He knew nothing of Israel.
2. He knew nothing of Jehovah.
3. He was a heathen man serving idols.
4. He was outside God's plan of redemption.

### I. TRAGEDY OF FLESHLY AFFLICTION " . . . but he was a leper" (v. 1)

- A. Disease: Leprosy was synonymous with sin (Lev. 13, 14—"Unclean").
- B. Distress: Naaman suffered social isolation although able to function in public office.
- C. Desperation: Naaman sought a change after recognizing his condition.

### II. TESTIMONY OF HEBREW MAIDEN (vv. 2-3)

- A. Positive attitude toward her own misfortune (v. 2)
- B. Power of her simple witness (v. 3—she became a foreign missionary)
- C. Pledge that Jehovah could deliver through His prophet (v. 3b)

### III. TYPICAL MISCONCEPTION OF RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE (vv. 4-6, 11)

Naaman felt:

- A. Position would grant him favor (v. 5a—official letter from Syrian King).
- B. Possessions would gain him deliverance (v. 5b—approximately \$80,000 of goods).
- C. Power would increase his odds (v. 11—Naaman's pride was strained when Elisha failed to recognize him personally).

### IV. TEST OF COMPLYING TO GOD'S COMMANDS (vv. 8-13)

Naaman's:

- A. Condemnation of God's plan (vv.10-12)
- B. Concept of the method was much different (v. 12)
- C. Council of a good friend proved successful (v. 13)

### V. TRIUMPH OF COMPLETE OBEDIENCE (v. 14)

Naaman:

- A. Released his pride and humbled himself.
- B. Took the step of faith.
- C. Yielded in complete obedience.
- D. Found cleansing and grace.

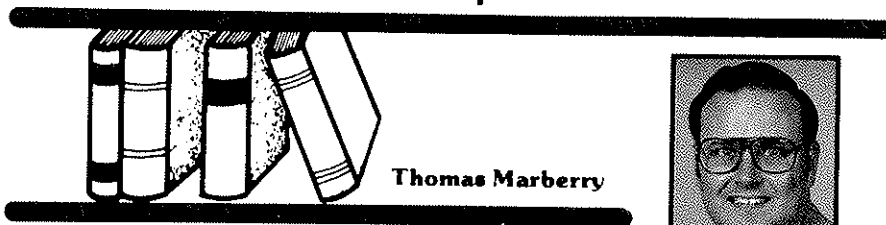
### CONCLUSION

Luke 4:25-27 confirms that many lepers existed in Naaman's day who received no cleansing. Here God's grace and favor expands beyond the household of Israel. Naaman experiences saving faith and cleansing from sin. What a glorious demonstration of God's love and mercy for any and all who utilize the light already available to them.

God's plan is the same today, and faith is the only condition. The object of our faith is the wonderful work of God's dear Son—on the cross, out of the tomb, and up in Heaven. Today God says . . . Wash and be clean

Repent and be pardoned  
Believe and be saved.

## Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



**H. Norman Wright, *Marital Counseling* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983, 426 pp., hardback, \$16.95).**

This work is subtitled "A Biblical, Behavioral, Cognitive Approach." It is a major contribution to the field of marital counseling with much material which may be helpful to the trained, professional counselor. The great value, however, is for the average pastor whose counseling training is limited.

Marital counseling confronts the pastor frequently. Most pastors find that they must do marital counseling whether they want to or not. This is

also a counseling area where the pastor finds some of his most rewarding work. Few things bring more joy than helping to put a battered home together again.

Many Christian couples need counseling at some point in their marriages. Wright notes that "real marital love is an unconditional commitment to an imperfect person." Imperfect people need help in relationships with their mates.

The author makes extensive use of the scripture. He does not attempt any exegesis of biblical passages which deal with marriage; that has been done by others. He allows scripture to determine the kind of marital relationship sought in the counseling process.

Much attention focuses on recent clinical research. As a result of clinical research, we have a better understanding of marital relationships than we had a few years ago.

Wright gives the pastor practical helps in developing and maintaining a counseling ministry. He presents various ways of conducting a counseling session. He gives suggestions on things the pastor should do and on some things he should avoid. He warns the counselor of dangers which may hinder effective counseling.

For example, he notes that a pastor should not get into types of counseling he is not trained to handle. Few pastors have the training necessary to counsel people who have deep-seated emotional and psychological problems.

One of the strongest points about the book is its bibliography. The author recommends many helpful books and cassette tapes for the counselor and the couples he counsels.

This is a good book for pastors and for others involved in marital counseling. While a bit technical in places, it is worth the money. ▲

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## ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

# The Gift of Life

By Donna Mayo

**T**he Lane's den looked like an upside-down fruit stand with sacks of apples and oranges and bunches of bananas and grapes everywhere. Jeff was using two bananas for guns.

"Bang! Bang!" he cried as he shot Marty and ran to Megan.

"Hey, Megan, catch," called Marty as he tossed an orange across the room.

When Megan stretched to catch the orange, she knocked over a bowl full of nuts. The twins giggled as nuts rolled across the floor in every direction.

It was Wednesday night before Thanksgiving, and the Lanes were making fruit baskets for a nearby nursing home.

"I hope the patients have as much fun with these baskets as you all did making them," sighed Mrs. Lane as she sank into an easy chair. "Ouch!" she cried jumping quickly to her feet. The children saw a pineapple in their mother's chair and laughed until their sides hurt.

The twins divided the fruit into six baskets and tied bright ribbons around them. The next morning Mr. Lane and the twins loaded the baskets into the station wagon and drove to the nursing home. The nurse at the front desk gave them a list of patients who had no families to spend Thanksgiving with. Their short visits and simple gifts made the old people happy, and that made Marty and Megan happy.

"It's sad that these folks don't have anybody to spend Thanksgiving with,"

whispered Megan as she knocked on the last door.

"Come in," called an old man who was sitting in a chair reading a book. "What have we here?" he asked excitedly as he saw the youngsters and the fruit basket.

"I'm Megan Lane and this is my brother Marty," said Megan.

"We don't want to interrupt or nothing," added Marty. "We just wanted to bring you this fruit."

"Interrupt?" asked the old man. "Nothing but old folks around here. You don't know how good it is to see some folks who don't need walking sticks to get around."

Mr. Lane laughed. "You aren't a spring chick yourself," he joked.

"No," smiled the man. "My name's Caleb Tidwell, and I'm 92 years old."

"Ninety-two!" gasped Marty and Megan.

"Yep, I know it's hard to believe anybody as handsome as me is 92," chuckled the man.

Marty and Megan spent the next hour talking with him. Mr. Tidwell, a tall black man with snow white hair, had a twinkle in his eyes and a quick smile. He kept the twins on the edges of their seats with his stories and sense of humor.

"I hate to break this up," said Mr. Lane, "but we really have to be going. Your mom will have dinner ready soon."

"Do come back, you hear?" said Mr. Tidwell.

"Oh, we will all right," said Marty. "You're not even like an old man . . ."

"Marty," said Mr. Lane sternly.

"That's OK," laughed Mr. Tidwell. "I know what you mean, Son. That's because I'm young in here." Mr. Tidwell pointed to his heart. "Now you kids run along and enjoy your Thanksgiving. In 80 years or so you can look back on it and enjoy it again in your memory."

The twins did enjoy their Thanksgiving—mostly because they had made other people happy and met a new friend.

The nursing home was on the way to the grocery store, and during the next few months, Marty and Megan often had Mrs. Lane drop them off for a visit while she shopped. Mr. Tidwell and the twins became good friends.

Mr. Tidwell had an exceptional memory for a man 92 years old. He fascinated the children with stories of his boyhood. He had roamed fields where skyscrapers now stood. He had gone to school where all the children in all the grades met in the same room with the same teacher. He had only gotten to attend church one Sunday a month because the preacher had to take turns preaching at other churches each Sunday.

Mr. Tidwell told them about drawing water from a well, plowing with a team of oxen, studying by the light of a coal-oil lamp, and going to the woods to chop his own Christmas tree.

It was hard for the twins to imagine life without televisions, telephones and indoor bathrooms. A life when milk came from the cow in the shed, butter from the churn on the back porch, and bread from Mama's oven.

Sometimes Mr. Tidwell played his



fiddle and the twins sang. Sometimes they brought him blocks of wood, and he carved beautiful animals and toy cars for them. Marty and Megan learned a lot from Mr. Tidwell—how to play a harmonica and whistle like a bobwhite.

But most of all, they learned that to be a friend you didn't have to be the same sex, the same color, or even the same age.

One day the nurse at the front desk told Marty and Megan that they couldn't visit Mr. Tidwell that day. "I'm sorry, kids, but Mr. Tidwell is very sick."

"What's the matter with him?" asked Megan.

The nurse explained that Mr. Tidwell had a heart condition needing surgery. "We need to implant a pacemaker to regulate his heartbeat, but Mr. Tidwell refuses to have the operation."

"What will happen to him if he doesn't have the operation?" asked Marty.

"I'm afraid he'll die," said the nurse.

"Oh, please let us see him," begged Megan. "Maybe we can talk him into having the operation."

"Well," said the nurse, "it's worth a try. I know he thinks a lot of you kids. But don't stay long and don't tire him."

Mr. Tidwell was in bed asleep when the twins tiptoed quietly in. He was paler and weaker than they had ever seen him. Mr. Tidwell opened his eyes slowly and smiled when he saw Marty and Megan.

"Hello, kids," he whispered.

Megan's eyes filled with tears. "Mr. Tidwell, why don't you have the operation? The nurse said you could... you might die if you don't."

"Now, Honey," said Mr. Tidwell patting her hand. "Don't you worry about that. I'm not going to die one minute before the good Lord's ready for me to."

"But they could help you," argued Marty. "Why won't you let them?"

"I just don't believe in operations. Just ain't natural—taking a knife and cutting into a body. No sir, ain't natural, and they won't do it to me. Besides, there's nothing wrong with my heart. 'Cept that it's 92 years old," said Mr. Tidwell.

No amount of pleading on the twins' part could persuade Mr. Tidwell to change his mind about the operation. Marty and Megan came as often as

they could during the next two weeks, and despite Mr. Tidwell's old heart and failing strength, he never lost the twinkle in his eye or the ability to make the twins laugh.

One afternoon when the twins came in from school, Mrs. Lane met them with bad news. "I'm so sorry to have to tell you this, but the nurse called today and said that Mr. Tidwell died."

Marty and Megan burst into tears. Their mother held them tight and cried with them. When their sobs subsided Mrs. Lane comforted them by reminding them that Mr. Tidwell was a Christian and that now he was in heaven.

"But, Mama, he didn't have to die," said Megan.

"If he'd only had that operation," cried Marty.

"Sometimes people have strange ideas," said Mrs. Lane. "They get set in their ways, and you can't do anything for them, even when you're trying to help them."

"But it's so sad, Mama. They could have saved his life," said Marty.

"I know, darling. It's sort of like trying to help a lost person find Christ. You know they will die and go to hell if they don't accept Him as their Savior. Christ wants to give them the free gift of salvation, but they won't take it."

"Mama, why did he have to die?" asked Megan.

"People die because of sin, but remember," said Mrs. Lane, "he's not really dead, he's just living in heaven."

"But we'll miss him so much," said Marty.

"I know, Honey," said Mrs. Lane putting her arm around his shoulder. "But you've got wonderful memories of the good times you shared with him. You've got the laughter and the stories he told, and they're yours to keep forever. Nobody can take away the things you learned from Mr. Tidwell."

Yes, Marty and Megan had learned a lot from Mr. Tidwell. They had learned about life and laughter and love. But most of all they learned the importance of accepting the gift of life.

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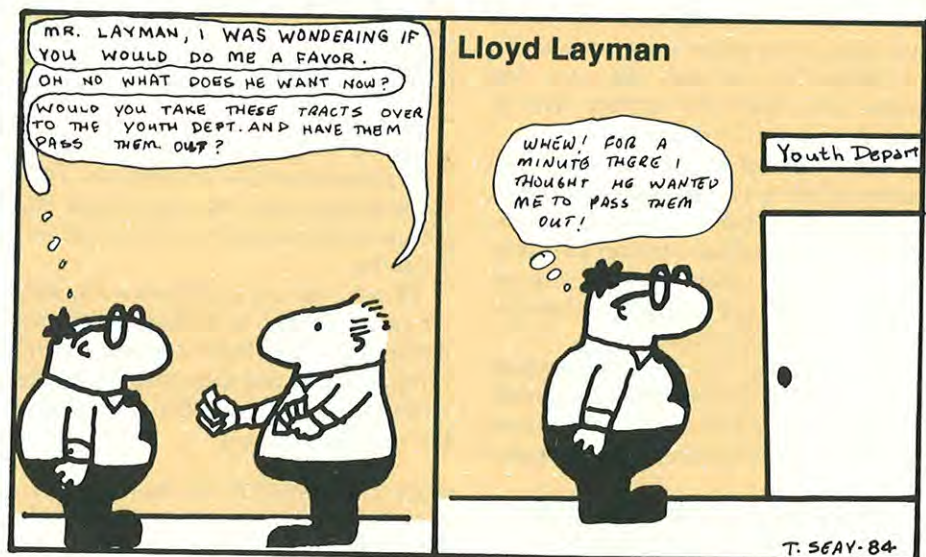
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# Seven Minutes to Empty

By Nancy Smith

**S**eptember 1975—a month of clear skies and unlimited visibility in Middle Tennessee, and a great time for flying. The five of us rented a single-engine plane to try out some of that September sky.

Bright sunshine warmed the runway for our 1:00 p.m. departure time. After what seemed like endless preparation, we climbed aboard the white Cessna and took off from Nashville's Berry Field for the 750-mile cross-state flight to the North Carolina coast.

This was the first trip in a small private plane for my husband, Jim, and me. We found it much different from commercial jets.

Vic (our pilot) and Linda seemed right at home in the cramped plane. Their 8-month-old daughter, Kimberly, bounced happily on our laps.

We had been airborne six hours when Vic tried to contact the control tower in Hickory, North Carolina (our first scheduled fueling stop). By this time the fuel gauge on the Cessna's tank pointed toward empty. Changing weather conditions (cloud cover) interfered with our original course.

We couldn't understand why we weren't able to raise Hickory Tower—that is until an air traffic controller at Asheville Tower answered. He found our blip on his radar—we were south of Asheville—and said we were five miles from Asheville airport. We all breathed a sigh of relief.

But when he repeated himself we learned that we were five zero, that is 50 miles away instead! A radar cross-check through Charlotte verified us to be, in fact, 50 miles from the airport. We were startled to discover how far off course we'd strayed.

It seems that our gyro (a direction-finder instrument) had malfunctioned. As nightfall overtook us, we stared down into a dark, mountainous region below.

Vic had all of us scrambling for the windows searching for runway lights.

We didn't do too well. Each time we spotted what we thought was a runway, Vic would dash our hopes.

We did discover one airport, but the tower informed us that they had no fuel, so at the request of the tower we continued the flight toward Asheville.

Meanwhile, the Asheville control tower was trying to guide us by radio. Our fuel supply was critical. We clung to 10,000 feet, somewhere between earth and God, with hearts pounding, no parachutes and no stepladders.

Could this really be happening? Why? We prayed and then prayed some more.

Suddenly, the lights of the Asheville airport filled the night sky below us. What a relief!

The control tower instructed Vic to land, but being unfamiliar with the airstrip, he had to make two approaches before the Cessna's landing gear grabbed the concrete runway. Oh, how thankful we were to touch that ground in Asheville.

We had the faulty gyro inspected, found the cost too high for repair, and decided to use a compass on the return flight.

The next morning as we flew through the Hickory Tower area, the air traffic controller recognized our plane number and asked, "How much fuel did you land with?"

Vic answered in a low voice, "One gallon." For a Cessna, one gallon of fuel equals approximately seven minutes' flying time.

Sometimes you just know that God has spared your life for a reason. That experience made me appreciate my life and realize how short and uncertain it can be.

When I get my priorities confused, when the Mary and Martha images within me compete for my time, then I remember the day God spared my life and get a new perspective on just why I'm still down here.▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Nancy Smith is a Free Will Baptist who resides in Nashville, Tennessee.*



## THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

**F**und raising for Christian ministries is big business in the Christian world today. A never-ending flood of appeals for funds bombard the servant of God. Churches, Christian colleges, denominational agencies, media ministries all inundate the faithful with urgent appeals to sustain their particular ministry.

Organizations have been formed to help churches and other religious organizations raise funds. Through the use of psychological principles Christians are motivated, sometimes manipulated, to give impulsively.

How tragic when men only support the Lord's work based on crisis or coercive giving through emotional appeals rather than on a theological conviction that stewardship of their time, talent and tithe is the will of God for them.

We believe that both the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His work.

### The Commending

Although tithing is not commanded in the New Testament, the clear commendation is there. The Christian under divine grace cannot do less than the tithe. The New Testament stewardship



# Let's Try Tithing



principle takes for granted that the Christian starts with the tithe as Abraham and Jacob and increases by giving offerings.

While the tithe is not to be exacted by law under the present economy, it, like the Lord's day, is found in the permanent, unchanging facts of scripture. The need for tithing is even more urgent today since the church is to be extended to the uttermost part of the earth.

There is not a syllable in the New Testament, either directly or indirectly, which repeals the law of the tithe. Tithing is to be done by purpose, that is deliberately, systematically, rather than by impulse or intimidation. We are not limited to the tenth. We may give as much as we want!

## The Considerations

*Tithing recognizes ownership.* We belong to the Lord and all we have comes from Him. We give ourselves and then we give our substance. Proper recognition of God's ownership results in tithing.

*Tithing reflects obedience.* Christians manifest their love for Christ by their obedience to Him. Tithing fulfills the minimum requirement in giving. To give less than a tenth is to disregard scriptural principles and practices.

Tithing is to be done lovingly, loyally and literally. Cheerfulness and consistency are the required disposition when fulfilling this duty.

*Tithing reveals our obligation* and is not optional. Christians cannot give less than the tenth. Those who prefer "giving" to tithing have an inadequate understanding of stewardship which is based on the tithe as a minimum. Biblical stewardship begins with the tithe. Offerings should always be above the tithe.

Michael Speer said, "The principle behind the tithe, the recognition of God's ownership of all the life, is still applicable to every Christian. It is basically an act of worship that declares the greatness of God and worth of man when he is obedient to God."

*Tithing results in outreach.* The work of the local church, denominational enterprises and other Christian ministries are maintained through tithes and offerings. What tithes and offerings will not do we do not need.

Joseph Parker declares, "The church should never put itself under obligation to bad men. The people of God should build their own churches, support their own ministries, maintain the whole scale of their operation, without touching the tainted gold of Sodom or the ill-gotten booty of Gomorrah."

Christians should beware of using techniques, tactics and terminology of the world to try to raise funds to finance the Lord's work.

## The Compensation

We err when we give through rivalry, competition and impulse.

Samuel Chadwick capsules the tithing principle, "I think a tithe is a generous maximum for the poor and a mean minimum for the rich. Unless a man cultivates a habit of systematic giving when he has not much to give, he will give little when he is rich."

Tithing—Abraham started it. Jacob practiced it. Moses commanded it. Malachi taught it. Jesus endorsed it. Your denomination believes it. I challenge you to try it! ▲

## The Secretary's Schedule

- October 31-Nov. 2** Florida State Association  
Hollywood FWB Church  
Hollywood, FL
- November 2-3** Mississippi State Association  
Gulf Coast FWB Church  
Gulfport, MS
- November 9-10** Alabama State Association  
Eastside FWB Church  
Dothan, AL
- November 15-17** Georgia State Association  
Norman Assembly  
Moultrie, GA
- November 25-30** Woodstock FWB Church  
Woodstock, OH

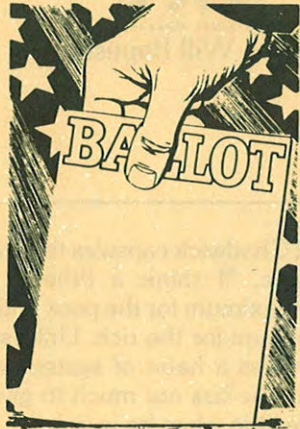


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