

DECEMBER, 1984

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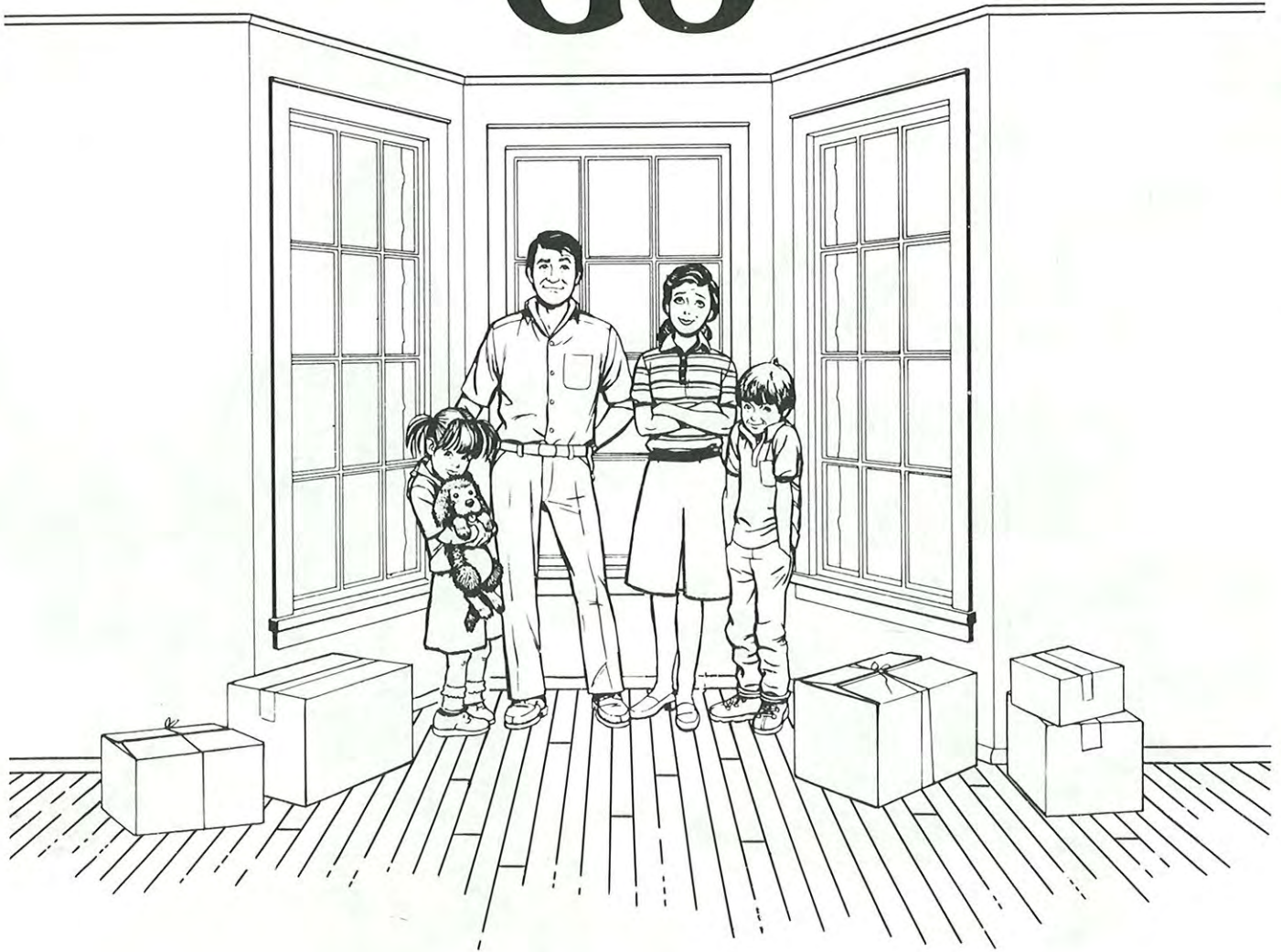
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# Landing on “GO”



By Brenda Evans

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**W**hile whizzing around a Monopoly board recently with my noisy 12-year-old son taxing me for landing on Park Place, I realized that Monopoly is like being a minister's wife. Both require a lot of moving around, racing from square to square, landing here, jumping to there, then moving on again.

Of course, frequent moving is not just a ministerial lifestyle. Each summer thousands—ministers' families, government employees, missionaries, corporate and military personnel—pack their treasures, tape their emotions and call the moving van. Last year one family in five moved either across town or across country.

But no one says it's easy. After all, moving disrupts long and satisfying attachments to people and places. And most of us don't like being torn

apart on the perforated lines of our lives.

## **Moving Still Hurts**

My friend Angie moved last summer. Her husband's corporation gave him two weeks' advance notice. It was a big order. Angie's emotions did not meekly queue up in response to the corporate directive. Nevertheless, she boxed the china, wrenched herself from everyone and everything she loved and drove away—angrily.

I understand about Angie. I've also been angry about moving, and sad. A few times I've been confused. And at least once I tried to tell my husband that I wouldn't go with him when the moving van came.

I remember how our small son came into our room in the night crying, "Mommy, I want to stay home. I don't want to go away." I understood the trembling of his body, the fear in his voice. I wanted to stay home too.

I'd never minded parsonages before. But those nights with a move staring us in the face, my child crying against my breast and a cold wind blowing in my heart, I developed a contempt for living in another split-level next to the church, another home from which I might be ejected in 10 years—or five.

I wanted a permanent place. A pile of boards arranged into four secure walls set on a clod of soil that I could never be dispossessed of. And one of those nights I decided to tell my husband that I wouldn't move. I decided that tomorrow I would tell him. And I prayed that I could.

But in the light of a new day I couldn't say the words about not moving. Instead, when he asked about the brown bags under my eyes, I mumbled something about being awake most of the night. After that, I prayed less frivolously.

And outwardly I prepared for the move. I filled, labeled and stood boxes in all the corners of our house. Made necessary phone calls. Wrote out postal service forms. Inwardly I was still unprepared.

Then just two days before the move, like a butterfly breaking from its chrysalis, my rebellion against yet another move—and into a parsonage at that—flitted away. I praised God for its going.

I felt as if the Lord had taxed "the last grain of sand and the remotest star," as Oswald Chambers said, to bring me that surprise gift of grace.

## You Are Not Alone

Hurting because of a move is nothing new to frequent movers, and sudden grace doesn't always come to carry us through. Sometimes, our hurt must simply be *worked out*.

Judy Hammersmark is one of those who counts on physically working through the emotional pain of a move.

"As a child, when my family returned home from a vacation, I used to kiss the walls of my bedroom," says Judy. She is now a frequent mover and finds emotional therapy in boxing up the family treasures and sorting through the years of junk.

Scraping a three-month growth of mildew off the bathroom shower, making curtains for the new home, and scrubbing dirty linoleum is a savior of sorts. With body and mind physically occupied, negative emotions about the move have less room to run rampant and take charge.

The Lord used a similar approach in scripture when He directed a move, a change or a turning upside down in relationships. Often He verbally picked up His people by the scruffs of the neck, booted them in the backside of their emotions and told them to get themselves going.

"Now arise and do it," He said to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Peter, Paul.

Another way of saying it is: You will feel better emotionally if you get up and do what you know you should be doing. Stuart Briscoe would probably call it experiencing a sense of rightness in return for doing our duty.

## You Can Cope

But whatever the hurt of moving, it isn't always relieved through physical work or even through a special work of grace. How then do we cope?

Marion L. Jacobsen who has moved several times says the bottom line in surviving a mobile lifestyle is trust. "Accept your inability to foresee what God will do . . . Trust God to fill empty places in your future."

Daring to trust means daring to take risks. Ask movers of other centuries—William Carey, Mary Slessor, Benjamin Randall. For them, trust meant walking off the edge with God while believing that He would secure their next step, their next move. The alternative was fear—spiritually crippling fear.

Dr. Claire Joyce Lehr, family life specialist at Ohio State University, believes a mother lays the pattern for trust or for fear.

"A mother's attitude is one of the most important factors in helping her children feel good about changes," Dr.

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# **"GO" (From page 3)**

Lehr says in reference to moving. Mother is the lap of the family, so to speak. The place where children and husband fall for consolation, encouragement, example in accepting forward orientation and changes of all sorts. If a mother holds back in fear, her family will undoubtedly fear, too.

A mother I know agreed to move but mourned detachment from home

territory throughout a whole year. The new people she lived among were "strange" and "unfriendly" by her standards. And so she hung back, took no risks, made no hard efforts at developing new and enriching relationships. After a year, she and her family returned "home."

Certainly moving tears holes in our lives and leaves empty spaces where friends should be. But God can be

trusted to mend those holes and fill the gaps with new stones in the fence. He has an infinite variety of relationships in mind for us.

During one of our pastoral moves, we arrived moving van, dirt and sweat at our destination only to be met by a troop of Christians offering gifts of love: fried chicken, muscles for the unloading, information packets, fellowship. It was easy to see how God would rebuild our lives in the new place.

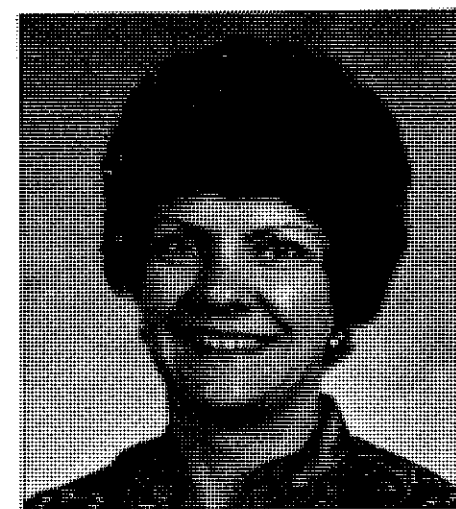
Another move, there was no troop. Those few who came seemed shy and stingy with friendship. We trusted God to supply shining stones for restructuring our lives. He did.

Psalm 32:8 which I first discovered in college has kept me willing to risk trusting Him through many moves. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding . . ."

In my fear, my ignorance, my stubbornness, I have needed that word from the Lord to remind me that living by faith is living a trusting lifestyle, taking risks, daring to move on or daring to stay. Trusting Him to rightly arrange and re-arrange the geography of our lives.

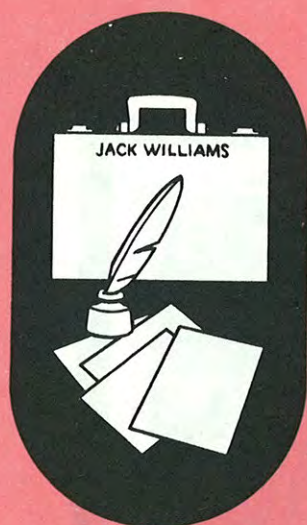
Mrs. Jacobsen says it best: "Moving to a new phase of life is like coming to a river. We can either go across or we can let the river become a limit."

If God places us on the square marked "Go," let's move out and cross over. ▲



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Mrs. Brenda Evans is a free-lance writer who resides in Ashland, Kentucky.

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# Crossing the White Line

**J**ust before Christmas last year, I was driving back to Nashville one Sunday afternoon from an out-of-town engagement.

I saw them in the road while I was still a quarter-mile away. Northbound traffic on the two-lane blacktop had already stopped when I braked the Volkswagen about 30 feet from them.

Tumbling across the highway with the nonchalance of landowners among sharecroppers, six hound puppies had brought traffic to a halt.

Every vehicle on the road stopped. Three cars, a pick-up truck and an 18-wheeler stacked up on the south side of the pups. Behind me, a half-dozen vehicles slowed and stopped.

The long-eared puppies frolicking across the white lines were oblivious to any danger or the traffic jam.

**That's when I** noticed it. The silence. Nobody honked his horn. Every driver was content watching the cute puppies. It was Christmas, but nobody was in a hurry.

Maybe, like me, they were remembering warm thoughts from childhood triggered by the wobbly-legged comedians rolling in the highway.

Finally, one fellow good-naturedly got out of his car and shooed the puppies home. Smiles creased every face as the frisky pups somersaulted down the embankment and traffic started up again.

There's a good feeling about stopping to watch puppies play between the white lines, and helping to shoo

them home. Their innocence and naturalness call us back to a simpler time in our lives.

**But my smile faded** when I remembered a place 10 miles back down the road where nobody stopped. A dozen or more teenagers were parked in front of a tavern. They were drinking. Like the puppies, they were oblivious to danger as they strayed across society's white lines.

Nobody tried to send them home. Maybe we've discovered that it's easier to shoo home straying puppies than straying teenagers. And less threatening.

Frolicking puppies don't bite. Straying teens and their unconcerned parents sometimes do.

Young puppies know when somebody else is in charge. Young adults often don't.

Everybody knows when a puppy is somewhere he shouldn't be. There seems to be confusion over the matter concerning teenagers.

Everybody feels qualified to help the puppies off the highway. Very few seem to know which way to advise the teens to go.

Everybody feels responsible to shoo the puppy. Sometimes nobody will be responsible for the teen.

**I felt pretty good** about seeing the puppy and teenager parallel, until I remembered—I didn't stop at the tavern where the teens were either. Maybe I was too concerned that somebody would think I stopped for the wrong reason.

Perhaps it's time more of us adults ran the risk of being misunderstood in order to get the teens in our neighborhood out of harm's way as they try their wings and tremble in the twilight zone between childhood and adulthood.

As a parent, it seems strange to me that somebody would bring my dog home if he strayed from the yard but would turn his back on my children and walk away.

**Most adults have** a pretty clear idea of what's off-limits to teenagers. It doesn't take much effort to caution, to suggest alternatives, to chide gently, to quietly point them homeward or churchward.

One hundred thirty years ago Josiah Warren warned, "Children are the creatures of example—whatever surrounding adults do, they will do."

Jesus said the law and the prophets hang on two great commandments, one of which is "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:38-40). That commandment also includes my neighbor's children.

If you love your neighbors' children, your neighbors will love you. The next time you see some teenager stepping across the boundaries, remember that he needs your example more than he needs your criticism.

Teenagers are like warm puppies—give them a kind word and they'll follow you home. And if you smile when you ask, they'll probably follow you to church. ▲

# God's...



# Gift of Christmas

**A**dam and Eve were created in sinless perfection, in the image and likeness of God. God gave them clear, step-by-step directions for their continued holiness and purity in Genesis 2:7-9, 15-17. They had everything they needed for life and happiness.

However, by chapter three of Genesis that perfect, holy creation of God had fallen from sinlessness to sinfulness. That once-beautiful creature was marked with an ugly scar, an eternal scar across his soul—sin.

That day as Adam and Eve ate of the fruit God had forbidden, the peace and tranquility of earth and heaven were shattered. God promised in Genesis 3:15 that He would provide the Seed of the woman who would restore sin-scarred humanity to its once holy and perfect condition.

Misunderstanding the promise of God, women through the centuries birthed sons expecting them to be God's promised Gift. But God had not promised the "seed of the man" to crush Satan. He had promised a miracle child—one born without a human father.

Thus we read in Galatians 4:4, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

Christmas is a blessed time, a season for giving. At Christmas, I am reminded how we enjoy exchanging gifts in our family.

However, another thought occurs to me. God gave this fallen race a holy reason to celebrate. God gave us the gift of Himself in Jesus Christ our Savior!

## **The Gift of the Virgin Birth**

God fulfilled His promise to Adam, Eve and the human race when Jesus was born of the Virgin and laid in Bethlehem's manger. Jesus was not born as other children. He had no earthly father. He was born, not according to the laws of nature, but according to the promise of God.

With the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden, the entire human race fell into sin. The gift of the virgin birth guarantees that Jesus Christ was born sinless

and pure. It guarantees the deity of our Lord.

Every child born has the curse of sin upon him. Not so with Jesus. He was born without a trace of sin. His virgin birth guarantees it. He is that Seed of the woman conceived from the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18) that God promised Adam and Even in Genesis 3:15. So first, the virgin birth guarantees God's Gift to be without sin.

Then, the gift of the virgin birth guarantees that Jesus is "God with us." Matthew 1:23 is a quote by the angel who came to assure Joseph that Mary had not defiled herself and that the baby she was carrying was indeed of God.

The angel quoted Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Matthew 1:23 gives the meaning of the word 'Immanuel'. The angel defines Immanuel as meaning "God with us."

Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 are not alone in assuring us that Jesus is God in human form. While there are many scriptures on this subject, II Corinthians 5:19 sums it up beautifully telling us, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

The virgin birth is God's guarantee that Jesus Christ is God in the human body to take up residence among lost and sinful people just like us.

What a blessed gift and what blessed reason to celebrate Christmas.

## **The Gift of A Sinless Life**

When God gave His Son, He identified Himself forever with the human race. But man needs more than a good example. Sinful man needs a sinless man who can enter into the presence of a Holy God for us. Jesus is that sinless Man!

While the virgin birth guarantees that Jesus is God in the flesh, we now note that Jesus is also truly man. We're admonished in Philippians 2:5-6: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

How many of us have ever done a thing and then afterwards were ashamed of having done it? Not so with Jesus. How many have said a thing that later we wished we hadn't said? Not so with Jesus. How many have had thoughts and suddenly realized how thankful we are that others can't see our thoughts? None of these things were ever true of Jesus our Savior.

Everything in His life was exactly as it should have been. There was never time when He needed to be sorry for words, actions or thoughts. He was perfect.

His friends declared Him to be faultless (Hebrews 4:14-15). His enemies had to concede that He was without fault (Mark 14:55).

The gift of His sinless life means that we do not have to remain bound by sin. The sin of skepticism and unbelief, the sin of fear and doubt may be washed away.

The drunkard can be sober; the harlot can be pure. The liar can be honest and the thief trustworthy. The unstable and undependable can be faithful and dependable. The gossip may tame his tongue; the murderer may love those he has hated. The mean, vile and wicked can be lovable and merciful.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. (II Corinthians 5:17).

The gift of His sinless life shows us what we can be if we will meet God's terms. A Christmas celebration indeed!

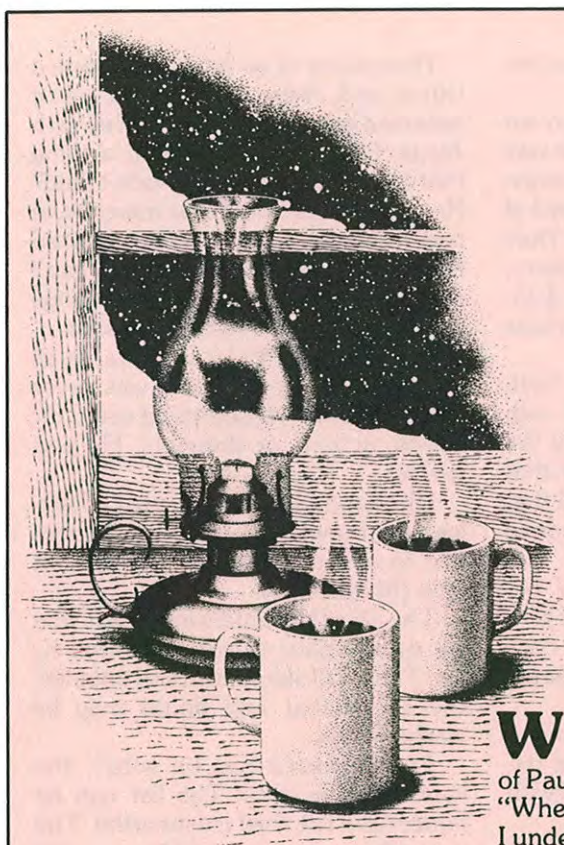
## **The Gift of the Cross**

Sin is a fact that cannot be denied. The results of sin are seen and felt all around us in our homes, schools, communities, nation and the world.

Isaiah said it in 53:6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

But in spite of all the sin and blackness and horror hidden in the human heart, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).





# Christmas Memories

By Bob King

**W**hen I think about what Christmas means to me I am reminded of Paul's words in I Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

I was the first son of a poor farmer, the second of eight children. Therefore we didn't have the things that go with Christmas for children except candy and fruit.

My parents were poor but they did the things during Christmas that made us kids excited. Stockings were hung along the mantle above the fireplace. My dad would take the iron poker and scar the soot in the chimney to indicate that Santa did in fact come down the chimney.

He would then escort us kids around the house to the base of the chimney to pick up fruit which Santa lost out of his bag as he tried to get into the chimney at the top. All this really got us excited about Santa and Christmas.

But when I grew up and learned who Santa really was, I lost interest in Christmas until I was saved and learned the true meaning of Christmas. Then I enjoyed the Christmas programs at the church and the Christmas songs.

It was not until I began to preach and pastor churches that Christmas took on its full meaning to me. Since we have no children, it was not until then that children really became a part of Christmas for us. The bright faces of children in the church made our hearts glad with them at Christmas time.

After all is said and done, at age 74 and after 30 years of study, preaching and pastoring, Christmas is truly CHRIST. Christ in me (and you) the hope of glory. ▲

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Bob King is a retired Free Will Baptist minister. He is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Russellville, Arkansas.

## GIFT (From page 7)

When Jesus bowed His head to dismiss His spirit and die on Calvary, He was taking your place and mine in death. That places every one of us under the death penalty, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

But God commendeth His love to us—God sent His love together with us; God recommended His love to our favorable attention; God entrusted His love into our hands—in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

The gift of God at the cross purchases our salvation. When Jesus died on Golgotha's ugly brow, He purchased forgiveness of sin and cleansing from sin.

God's gift at the cross provides us salvation from sin and eternal life in Heaven. Indeed we have reason to celebrate Christmas.

The gift of the virgin birth guarantees that God has come to live among sinful men.

God's gift of a sinless life promises us deliverance from the power and penalty of sin in our lives.

God's gift at the cross brings us forgiveness and cleansing from sin. Jesus paid our sin debt on the cross and reconciled us to God.

*Who is He in yonder stall,  
At whose feet the shepherds fall?  
Who is He in deep distress,  
Fasting in the wilderness?*

*'Tis the Lord! Oh, Wonderful story!  
'Tis the Lord! The King of Glory!  
At His feet we humbly fall,  
Crown Him! Crown Him Lord of all!*

▲ **ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Millard Sasser serves as moderator of the Missouri State Association and as Missouri's General Board member. Brother Sasser pastors Trinity Free Will Baptist Church, Bridgeton, Missouri.

**T**he Maestro called the choir members and told them they were to appear in a special concert. Preparation would be rigid for this would be their most important presentation ever given.

Each choir member promised faithful attendance at the rehearsal sessions. The music was one of a kind, and none of them had ever seen the composer.

Each section of the large choir had its own rehearsal time. The sopranos fine-tuned their voices so that they sounded like one full, resonant voice amplified many times. The tenors blended their notes, especially the high ones, so that their tones seemed to float on the air.

The altos sang their words in harmonious accord with such distinction that notes and words sounded like a perfectly cast bell ringing in the night. The skilled basses softened their tones but retained the deep foundation for the sopranos, tenors and altos.

Their performance would be such that not one note of discord could be sounded. The supporting musicians were guided through intense rehearsal—playing their strings and blowing their horns so that there was perfect harmony and syncopation.

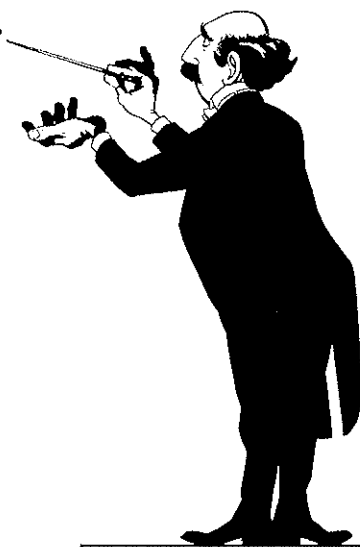
Rehearsals continued week after week, the Maestro determined that no weakness would appear in their presentation. The choir and orchestra members caught up in the spirit of his directing, pushed themselves to the limit of their talents.

They were told that the intense performance must not affect their expressions in using their gifts. They were to develop their perfection so that smiles of satisfaction radiated from their faces. Their eyes were to shine with delight and their hearts to understand and feel the message they sang.

The Maestro's demands were never taken as a burden or too severe to accept. Each practice session became more exciting. There was a blending of voices and a merging of feelings which bonded them into one group.

From the beginning there had been an air of secrecy about the concert. They had been told that they would travel a great distance and that this would be a one-time presentation.

# The Maestro's Concert



By J. Reford Wilson

They had not been given a date nor told the place.

It did appear that their booking agent had problems with some of the details. Other groups seemed to be preferred for the larger concert halls.

London, Vienna, Berlin, New York and Paris had no openings. The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. was not available. The La Scala in Milan, Italy did not think their music appropriate, and no invitation came from Carnegie Hall.

**O**ne evening the agent called the Maestro and told him that all was ready. The Maestro called the choir and orchestra members and told them to make ready for their trip. Eagerly each one came ready to make this the greatest performance ever given.

The pre-trip rehearsal swelled with sounds harmoniously woven into a beautiful tapestry of music, the singers and musicians caught up in a series of chords of ecstasy. As the session ended, the agent quickly appeared and announced they were leaving im-

mediately. In fact, they would travel tonight.

It was a beautiful evening. The stars shone with brilliance like diamonds flung against the blackest velvet. They passed through many large cities and through the countryside; they felt the calmness of the night.

The caravan stopped and they found themselves in an open amphitheater. Where was the concert hall? The audience? These were not questions asked in disdain but in sincere curiosity. Nearby a campfire glowed and gathered around it were the silhouettes of a few men.

**S**uddenly the night was filled with light and the Maestro with his baton lifted toward the sky gave the signal. The amphitheater of the Judean hills rang with the sound of music. With voices more beautiful than ever, they blended in perfect harmony.

The men on the hillside heard, "Glory to God in the highest and on



## CONCERT (From page 9)

earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." This would be the first and only performance of this concert.

The world was desperately in need of the message the angelic choir sang that night in Judea. Politically corrupt—injustice, greed and bribery prevailed. Morally destitute—drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, crime rampant, marriages crumbling like cookies. The Herods were puppets in the hands of wicked Roman caesars. Religiously, sham and hypocrisy overshadowed the few faithful. There was no peace and hope was an illusive dream.

Is our world any different? Corruption in local, state and national affairs. Drunkenness has become a national priority of concern. Morals lowered to awful depths when premarital live-in and homosexuality become accepted life styles; when one of the most wicked and obscene characters can mock the courts and declare himself a candidate for the presidency of the United States.

How can a nation "under God" ignore the ban on reading the Bible and prayer in its schools and permit books of profanity and obscenity to be required reading? Can one believe that "godly" America legally destroys 1½ million babies a year by abortion?

Internationally, atheistic Communism threatens to enslave more and more with its tyrannical powers (Why do people flee from rather than to Communist countries if Communism is so great?). A nuclear holocaust frightens a world with total destruction.

It is not the United States nor even Russia that I fear so much with nuclear weapons, but rather the possibility that terrorist groups may soon possess them and hold the world hostage. Where is our peace, our hope?

"Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. Which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend J. Reford Wilson pastors Butterfield Free Will Baptist Church, Aurora, Illinois.

## Thank You For Your Contributions...



## ... Through the Cooperative Channel

September 1984

### RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	Co-op	Total	Sept. '83	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 89.00	\$ .00	\$ 89.00	\$ 645.97	\$ 8,746.24
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	259.98
Arkansas	.00	3,622.34	3,622.34	4,163.36	34,513.59
California	.00	831.71	831.71	1,022.76	8,935.88
Florida	.00	1,392.17	1,392.17	1,175.93	13,542.25
Georgia	3,132.49	13.75	3,146.24	3,554.49	29,116.10
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	175.96
Illinois	7,795.55	2,584.84	10,380.39	.00	69,262.12
Indiana	139.00	800.55	939.55	.00	5,216.00
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	179.50	.00
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	412.65	1,604.59
Kentucky	.00	525.60	525.60	750.00	1,995.14
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	270.00
Michigan	2,692.09	1,570.36	4,262.45	3,083.60	41,001.59
Mississippi	.00	148.20	148.20	1,308.16	5,725.47
Missouri	1,374.24	7,672.86	9,047.10	6,107.50	60,609.92
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	13.64	860.78
North Carolina	268.50	275.00	543.50	655.00	7,878.44
Northwest Assoc.	.00	10.00	10.00	.00	53.11
Ohio	340.00	4,517.00	4,857.00	1,264.48	25,184.35
Oklahoma	22,391.72	8,924.27	31,315.99	30,200.40	290,699.54
South Carolina	100.00	.00	100.00	.00	504.58
Tennessee	135.00	151.54	286.54	313.00	15,312.89
Texas	.00	.00	.00	3,722.78	41,342.45
Virginia	.00	127.74	127.74	92.30	3,722.82
West Virginia	2,370.74	105.45	2,476.19	11,140.98	38,768.03
Interest	.00	.00	.00	.00	988.07
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$40,828.33</b>	<b>\$33,273.38</b>	<b>\$74,101.71</b>	<b>\$69,806.50</b>	<b>\$706,289.89</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 44.68	\$13,164.34	\$13,209.02	\$10,566.31	\$117,168.52
Foreign Missions	29,646.41	4,625.08	34,271.49	37,273.73	340,430.92
FWBBC	1,691.09	4,625.08	6,316.17	5,700.13	57,121.97
Home Missions	7,545.46	3,619.65	11,165.11	8,851.57	122,215.91
Retirement & Insurance	43.35	3,016.38	3,059.73	2,975.29	25,803.47
Master's Men	26.58	2,614.17	2,640.75	2,570.52	23,403.18
Commission on Theological					
Liberalism	7.15	201.08	208.23	202.55	1,747.44
FWB Foundation	1.00	1,206.52	1,207.52	1,354.13	10,418.82
Historical Commission	5.01	201.08	206.09	201.14	1,756.28
Radio/TV Commission	400.00	.00	400.00	.00	800.00
California Christian College	16.68	.00	16.68	15.49	130.14
Children's Home	.00	.00	.00	80.15	.00
Hillsdale FWB College	1,390.92	.00	1,390.92	15.49	5,088.24
Southeastern FWB College	10.00	.00	10.00	.00	40.00
Union Association, TN	.00	.00	.00	.00	115.00
WNAC	.00	.00	.00	.00	50.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$40,828.33</b>	<b>\$33,273.38</b>	<b>\$74,101.71</b>	<b>\$69,806.50</b>	<b>\$706,289.89</b>



# The Missionary

By Ruth Bivens



## Who Missed Lunch

**H**oward Gage is a man of simple faith. His God is in charge of the universe, lovingly cares for His children, and works all things together for their good.

After pastoring churches 20 years and making three trips to West Africa as a missionary builder, Howard still considers himself "just a plow-boy preacher." But, throughout the Free Will Baptist denomination he is loved as a quiet, gentle man who trusts God and is prone to whistle while he works.

His message of Christ is livable. He speaks in terms that people understand, and has been heard to admonish his congregation: "Walk straight. When in doubt about the direction your life is taking, check out the landmarks. When you are sure you are on the right track, march on."

Those words of advice became a sermon in action one hot African day when Gage was late for lunch.

It was Thanksgiving season 1971. Gage had just finished a carpentry job for missionaries Robert and Judy Bryan and the two couples decided to take a day off to picnic and hunt for holiday game.

They chose a camp spot in an isolated area 80 kilometers from

Bouna on the Komoe River. It was dry season. The wilderness was covered with scrubby trees, small mounds of dry grass stubble and pocked with dried elephant tracks. Land travel was slow and difficult.

Howard Gage is an experienced woodsman. The son of an itinerant preacher, he grew up in Eastern Oklahoma fishing the streams and hunting the hills and woods for game. He learned early to stalk and track and delighted in carrying home meat for the table.

He has boasted, "As long as the sun is shining, you can't lose me in the woods." However, he was concerned about his young friend's

safety, and cautioned Robert to stay within sight of him.

Since they planned to be back at camp for lunch his instructions were simple. If they should get separated, Robert was to turn with the sun to his back and walk to the river which ran north to south across the entire Ivory Coast. There he would turn left and follow the river back to camp.

Both men knew that getting lost in the wilderness in the tremendous heat with humidity at about 10 percent was serious business. One would quickly dehydrate, go blind, fall and become prey for the vultures. Tales of such deaths were common.

## LUNCH (From page 11)

Howard pointed out an enduring landmark, an enormous black mound of granite a hundred feet high that lay miles to the north. That reference would always help in maintaining a sense of direction while following game.

The men hoisted their rifles and extra ammo and walked north away from the one smooth patch of ground in the area. It was eight o'clock in the morning. They had not gone a hundred yards when they spotted a herd of antelope. They were surprised to find them so close to camp.

The antelopes bolted and scattered like lightning. They followed the tracks for a while then fell back to walking north looking for more game.

About 10 o'clock Howard saw an antelope and quietly moved after it unaware that Robert was not behind him. When Robert saw Howard stalking another animal he decided to turn back. He made his way to the river and went south. Continuing along the bank as instructed, he arrived at their camp around 11:30.

**B**y noon Howard gave up on his antelope and started back to camp. He got his bearings and headed west toward the river, confident that it continued to the sea in a north to south channel.

What he did not know was that the Komoe tends to meander and had lazily turned westward half a mile or so south of him. He walked at an easy gait, watching where he stepped, expecting to see the river bank at any time.

In the back of his mind he was concerned for Robert, not sure if he could keep his sense of direction and find the river. He remembered his careful instructions to the younger man and, glancing northward at the granite rock, felt sure that Robert was sitting in the shade with a Pepsi in his hand at that very moment.

When one o'clock came Howard knew something was wrong. He should have come to the river by then. Again he checked his landmark. The granite mound was still north of him. He was certain that he was traveling west.

If he went back now he would have no idea where to turn south.

His only option was to continue walking west. He yelled and fired his gun. There was no reply. The sun was beaming down and he noticed how thirsty he had become.

Searching in his shirt pocket he took out a package of Roloids he carried for his cranky stomach. He put one in his mouth thinking that it must have some nourishment in it and some salt. As the Rolaid dissolved he walked on concerned that "Willie and the kids are sitting there at the camp now, worried to death."

**T**he afternoon wore on. Howard Gage was in excellent condition for a man 57 years old. He greeted each morning with 50 situps and 50 pushups. He had spent months working in the African heat and his brown skin testified to the fact that little of it had been indoors.

But the heat and lack of water was taking its toll on him. He knew he could die there, but he was not afraid. His faith in the Lord had been tested and proven so many times in his life that he made no cry for help. He walked on assured that God would take care of him that day as always.

The prayer he prayed was his prayer of every day. "Lord, I am a terrible failure without You."

One by one Howard placed the Roloids in his mouth. He noticed that they seemed to be lasting longer as the afternoon sun hung in the west and blazed into his face. Finally he slipped one into his mouth and found his tongue so dry that it lay there like a button.

He crossed well-worn foot paths that went south. "Animal trails," he thought. "Where would they take you if you followed them?"

His feet grew heavy and the ground was rough. With great determination he kept going. Once Howard thought he might have strayed from his westward direction. Walking below tree top level it would be easy to become disoriented.

He climbed a tree and located the granite mound still to his right. He was not lost, he was still going west. Then he discovered that he had company. Several hungry vultures were slowly circling overhead, patiently waiting for him to fall.

**A**round five o'clock Howard's vision began to blur. It lasted briefly. Soon it returned and left again. Each time it lasted longer. He knew that if he stumbled it would be the end.

Again he prayed, "Lord, I am a terrible failure without You," and in quiet confidence, trusted the Lord to take care of him. While his wife and friends prayed fervently and searched frantically, Howard Gage stepped carefully, his heart at peace.

As Howard continued slowly westward with his vision dimming rapidly, the lazy Komoe turned back north and crossed his path. When he realized that he had reached the river he laid his gun on the bank and with new energy, scrambled into the water and stretched out.

While he lay there soaking up the cool water, thanking the Lord for His guidance in bringing him to the river, Howard heard voices. He yelled and a voice answered him in English.

Since the Gages were not regular missionaries, they had not studied French and only picked up a few words in the course of their work. Here at his point of greatest need, in remotest West Africa, Howard found an English-speaking fishing party from Ghana.

The fishermen had been camping several days on the river bank, catching fish and smoking them to take to market. They were breaking camp and offered Howard a ride back to his camp.

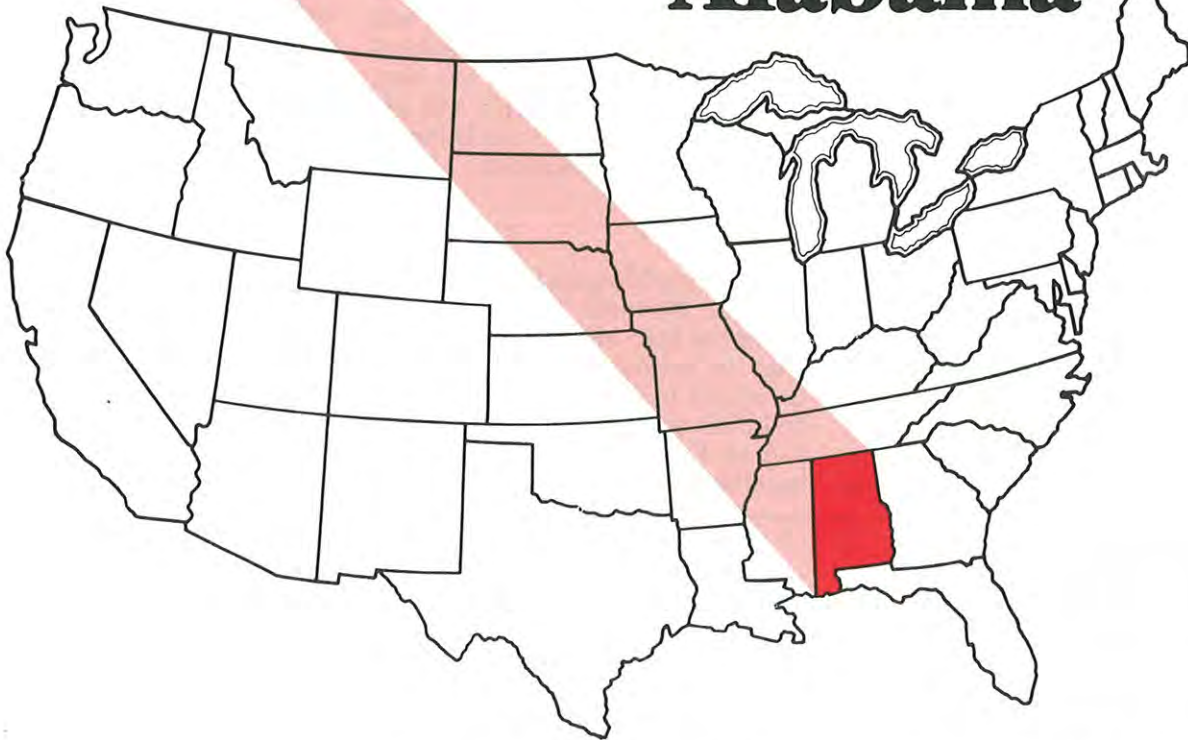
Some might call it coincidence. Not Howard Gage. He knew that God had done it again. Howard had expected it. He had proved Him time and time again.

In safety and in danger, in peace time and in war, in sickness and in health, in poverty and plenty this man's God never failed to meet his needs.

Maybe you should give Him a chance. He can meet your needs too. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Ruth Bivens is the middle child of Reverend Howard Gage. She served two years with the Peace Corps in Bolivia. Mrs. Bivens speaks Spanish fluently and has traveled extensively in South America, Puerto Rico, Europe and Mexico. She is an alumnus of Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. Ruth is also a registered nurse and a free-lance writer.*

# Spotlight On Alabama



ships unload bananas and other fruits from the tropics at the Alabama State Docks in Mobile Bay.

## Historical Review

By Ray Ritch

**A**labama is known as the Heart of Dixie and occupies a central place in the history of the South. The Constitution of the Confederacy was drawn up in Montgomery and Jefferson Davis took office there as president of the Confederacy.

Huntsville, called Rocket City, U.S.A., is the site of the Redstone Arsenal and the Marshall Space Flight Center. Scientists at Huntsville developed many important rockets and space vehicles, including the Mercury-Redstone rocket system that carried the first astronauts into space.

Mobile, at the mouth of the Mobile River, is a busy seaport. Ocean-going

The first Free Will Baptist church was organized in Alabama in 1846 by Rev. Ellis Gore. The Mount Moriah Free Will Baptist Church is located three miles west of McShan. Brother Gore obtained the original doctrinal treatise from Fayetteville, North Carolina. The original church was a one-room frame structure.

The Alabama State Conference met October 30-November 1, 1934, with the Boston-Brilliant Church. Four associations were represented with 79 churches. These churches had 64 ordained ministers and 5,594 members.

When the group met in 1936, it was the Alabama and Mississippi State Association. They convened with the Macedonia Church October 26-29. Present were five associations with 66 ministers and 4,436 members.

In December 1939 the Association became known as the Alabama State Association. It met with the Mount Harmony Church with two associations and four local churches present.

Officers elected at the session included Rev. M. E. Carpenter, moderator; Rev. R. P. Ritch, assistant moderator; Rev. D. G. Jordan, clerk. Other ministers present were Rev. J. L. Lavender, Rev. W. H. Ryland, Rev. Joe Frederick and Rev. E. W. Graves.

In 1963 the Association met in Sylacauga on November 7-9. Present at this session were 12 associations and two local churches, representing 160 churches, 230 ordained ministers, 526 ordained deacons and 15,908 members.

On November 10-12, 1983, the association met with the First Free Will Baptist Church in Florence with 15 associations and one local church reporting.

These represented 185 churches, 317 ordained ministers, 489 ordained deacons and 22,102 members.

## State Agencies

We urge our churches to give through the cooperative plan of support. Through this means, we give not only to the national work but also to the Children's Home, Board of Christian Education, Alabama Home Missions, Board of Retirement and Insurance, Pastors and Workers Conference and the General Fund.

### Children's Home

The Children's Home is located at Eldridge, with Brother Carlton Lambert our able superintendent for 26 years. The Home is supported by offerings from other states and businessmen, clubs and individuals. Rev. W. H. Ryland was the first superintendent at the Home. Rev. Malone

Cobb and Rev. A. J. Lambert served the Home as superintendents.

### C. E. Board

The Board of Christian Education plans our State Youth Retreat each year. The Board also plans the State C.T.S. competition to see who will represent Alabama at the national convention each year. We are very proud of our young people and the way they represent us at the National Youth Conference each year.

### Home Missions

Our Home Missions Board working with the National Home Missions Board has been able to send missionaries to several cities in the state during the past years. We have seen churches started in cities where we had no Free Will Baptist work and become self-supporting.

### Board of Retirement and Insurance

With our churches giving directly to and through the cooperative plan to the Board of Retirement and Insurance, we are able each year to give our older ministers a small monthly check. This is a token of our love and appreciation for their service to God and His work.

### Pastors and Workers Conference

Each year in February we have a Pastors and Workers Conference which meets in different parts of the state. The Conference starts on Monday afternoon with supper at a nearby restaurant and a guest speaker and goes through Wednesday night.

There are usually five or six outstanding preachers invited to speak during the conference. It is a time of inspiration and fellowship as we come together to hear and learn more about God's Word.

### Missionary Conference

The area-wide Missionary Conference each year in January is the largest in our denomination with over 40 churches taking part. Rev. Richard Cordell plans the conference.

Personnel include missionaries from the home and foreign mission departments, as well as some of the department leaders. It is a time for learning the work of the missionaries as well as helping them with their finances.

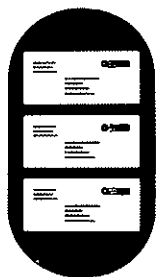
### State Paper

Our state paper is the *Alabama Free Will Baptist Digest*, of, by and for Alabama Free Will Baptists. Dennis Kizzire edits the paper.

The publication includes items from the mission fields, local churches and the Youth Digest, a message to the youth of Alabama and those who guide them. There are items of interest from our colleges and areas of concern.

Alabama is a great place to be a Free Will Baptist and a great place to build a Free Will Baptist church. ▲

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Ray Ritch has been clerk of the Alabama State Association for 20 years. He also pastors Fairview Free Will Baptist Church, Moody, Alabama.



## OUR READERS COMMENT

### ARTICLES USED ON 70 STATIONS

I have finally taken time to write and tell you how I enjoy scanning CONTACT each month.

It is obvious the staff puts a lot of time into the preparation of this publication. In my opinion, the layout, design, use of art and photos is very good.

We on occasion are able to use news and/or items from CONTACT on ALABAMA NEWS SCOPE, our interdenominational newscast on more than 70 stations. We also use news from the ALABAMA FREE WILL DIGEST.

Robert M. Duck, Director  
Public Relations  
Alabama Baptist State Convention

### 'CRITICISM' WELL RECEIVED

Regarding the articles on criticism in the October issue—Thanks, we needed that!

Your articles said it all. My only criticism is that you beat me to the draw. I was in the process of writing such an article, but three at a time would only cause eyebrows to be raised, so my copy goes to the back burner until a later date.

Again, well said.

Reverend David Joslin  
Promotional Director  
Arkansas Free Will Baptists

### WILL THE REAL NATIONAL CONVENTION PLEASE STAND UP?

I find myself compelled to write you after reading your September editorial. This article led me to believe that we attended different National Conventions.

The National Association I attended left me standing in the lobby of the Excelsior Hotel for hours. The confirmed reservation I held in my hand only identified me with a goodly number of other disappointed brethren. Oh yes, after a long wait the reservation did qualify me for a very expensive couch that made into a bed.

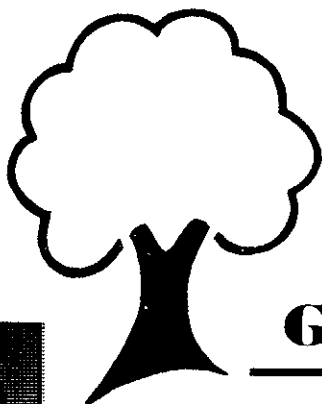
The National Association I attended kept me in constant motion in spite of the fact that I was seated. It was necessary to move when the person in front of me moved so that I could see the platform because we were all seated on the same level.

The National Association I attended kept me physically fit as I made excursions across town looking for food, but again I was in good company.

Let me say, lest I sound too critical, there were some things that helped to redeem the aggravation you apparently didn't see while being wooed by the housing authority and the convention center personnel. Those things are to be found at most all our meetings—good fellowship and good preaching.

Jack, were you really in Little Rock, Arkansas?

Reverend Nathan Ruble, Pastor  
Fordland Free Will Baptist Church  
Fordland, Missouri



## Green Tree Bible Study

Robert E. Picirilli

Colossians 1:20-23



# The Reconciling Work of Christ

**T**heologians subdivide their discussion of Jesus Christ into His Person and His work. If verses 15-19 looked at who Jesus is (see the previous study), verses 20-23 look at what He has done.

That redemptive work centers in His cross, and *reconciliation* is the word Paul uses to summarize the results.

*The nature of reconciliation* (v. 20a) is making peace between God and man. Compare Romans 5:1, 10, which clearly shows that God and men (without Christ) are enemies.

*The means of reconciliation* (vv. 20a, 22a) is presented as "the blood of his cross": in other words, the shedding of His blood as atoning sacrifice for our sins. This is repeated as "In the body of his flesh [His physical body] through death."

The heretics at Colosse may have denied that the Christ had a real physical body; if so, Paul corrects them with the truth. To die for our sins, Jesus must be truly human.

*The scope of reconciliation* (v. 20b) is "all things in earth or heaven." Apparently Paul deliberately makes the reconciling work of Christ as broad as His creative work (v. 16).

Even the cosmos has suffered because of the fall and will experience restoration as fruit of Christ's redemptive work: see Romans 8:18-23. Surely the "all" suggests that provision for the salvation of *all mankind* was made in the atonement.

*The experience of reconciliation* (v. 21). Paul makes this very personal, speaking directly to the Colossian believers. We can all identify with them.

God has reconciled us to himself from the state described: a state of estrangement from and hostility toward God, both in the mind and in the wicked deeds that demonstrate such a condition. Our joy is that we who hated Him and were deserving objects of His wrath have been brought to peace with Him.

*The aim of reconciliation* (v. 22b, 23). The goal of Christ's redemptive work, for us, is that He may present the reconciled ones to God in the fullness of Christian character.

That fullness involves three things: (1) holy—both in standing and in condition; (2) blameless—literally, without blemish; and (3) unreprouvable, which means irreproachable—so that no charge of fault can be sustained against them.

This obviously involves the finished work of sanctification; that is the ultimate end of our reconciliation to God. It really is true that God is not finished with us yet.

We cannot help noticing that this final presentation of believers to God is conditioned on their *continuing* in faith (v. 23). Not that this suggests great doubt: the conditional sentence is expressed (by the Greek indicative, rather than the subjunctive) as one assumed true.

We could render: "If in fact—as I assume—you are continuing in the faith." Nevertheless, it is a reminder, a gentle caution. Paul is saying they must stand firm on the foundation they have been built on.

They must not allow themselves to be shifted from the hope they adopted (1:5) when they heard the gospel proclaimed. That gospel, and that one only, is the one that Paul ministers. The Colossians must not heed the heretics.

What is a Christian, then, but a hater of God who has been reconciled to Him by the atoning death of His Son, who therefore expects to be presented to God fully sanctified, and who clings to that hope in simple faith that there is no work required except the finished work of his Savior. ▲

# TEEN Scene

## Local Scene

### "Back-to-School" Activities

Two youth ministers decided to soften September's painful "back-to-school" days by planning activities centered around the returning-to-school theme.

An evening "Back-To-School Blast" at Bethany FWB Church in Norfolk, Virginia included a round at the local putt-putt course and an informal game time. Youth Minister Randy Kinnick said this group capped off the evening by viewing a Christian film, "Face In The Mirror" and a discussion and devotion time focused around thoughts from the film.

A similar approach surfaced at First FWB Church in Farmington, Missouri during their "Back-To-School Bash". Dan Minkler, youth pastor, planned the evening to include watermelon, ice cream and a time of singing and devotions.

### Youth Choir Instrumental in Decisions

A moving of the Holy Spirit followed a special presentation by the Youth Choir on Sunday night, September 23 at Woodbine FWB Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

The choir, under the direction of Sue Smith, shared a short but moving presentation of musical numbers. The service concluded with an invitation by Pastor Jim Walker. Several young people rededicated their lives. One of the two salvation decisions was made after the service dismissed.

On the previous Saturday night, the choir presented a talent show for the church family followed by a pie sampling and an auction of remaining pies which were donated by parents of the choir members. Funds from the offering and auction were designated for South Dakota Home Missionaries Tim and Kathy Coats. Other recent projects included a car wash.

### Let Us Hear From You

We want to feature as much local youth news as possible each month. Let us know what's happening in your area. Send your news items with pictures to Youth Ministries Division, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, TN 37217. This could be about youth activities and projects or a personal interest item about a particular teen from your group.

# TE Sc



"Blow



"Death" monolog



th The Breeze" comedy skit

## National Scene

### Youth Evangelistic Team Ministry

Y.E.T.—Those three initials represent many hours of labor on the part of 13 Nashville, Tennessee area teens during the spring and summer of 1984. In fact, since March 1984, the Youth Evangelistic Team (YET), through the mediums of music, testimonies, drama and preaching conducted more than 20 services in six states.



Testimony time

The YET Team is a pilot program of the Youth Ministries Division of Randall House Publications. The goals for the team are threefold: leading other teens to Christ, developing leadership in the team members, and helping churches establish their own YET teams.

Auditions for the team were held in October 1983. Final selections resulted in teens from six Nashville churches. There were six young men and seven young women ranging from grades nine through twelve.

"A Service For Youth By Youth" became the motto of the team. The first service reflected that motto. As 7:00 p.m. rolled around on March 31 at a district youth rally in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, 350 crowded into the sanctuary. Needless to say, the YET Team looked a little pale and nervous. Thirteen altar decisions and time to fellowship that evening helped calm the nervousness and inspire the team for future work. Since that time YET has performed in local churches, camp settings, retreats, youth rallies and the National Youth Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas.

In addition to the evangelistic program, the team developed a variety of fun-time skits. This feature allowed for better interaction with the other youth.

The teens have enjoyed fun moments of fellowship with youth groups in everything from hayrides to miniature golf. More importantly, YET has shown both adults and teens alike that youth have a great capacity for effective service in the body of Christ.

Regional YET Teams are being formed across the denomination. Packets of information are available to assist in starting this youth ministry for your own area. For your free packet, write to Youth Ministries Division, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, TN 37217.





FREE WILL BAPTIST

## newsfront

### AUDITORIUM TO HONOR JOHN WELCH

NASHVILLE, TN—Members of Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church gathered September 16 to celebrate the church's 104th anniversary and ended day-long festivities by naming the auditorium the John L Welch Memorial Auditorium.

Pastor Gene Outland said the morning homecoming speaker, Dr. Ken Riggs, spoke on "The Greatest Home Coming." Dr. Robert Picirilli addressed the afternoon session on "What it Means to be a Church."

Special tribute was paid to the late John L. and Mary Ann Welch who made significant contributions to the Cofer's church family for more than 50 years while Reverend Welch pastored the church.

In memory of Reverend Welch, a gold plaque was placed above the John L Welch Memorial Auditorium commemorating his half-century ministry with the church.

Through financing provided by the John L Welch Memorial Fund and the Welch estate, the church purchased a new copier, refurbished the church sign, and built a handicapped entrance to provide easy accessibility for the elderly and handicapped.

### ALDRIDGE APPOINTED OVERSEAS SECRETARY

NASHVILLE, TN—Missionary Jimmy Aldridge has been appointed overseas secretary for foreign missions, according to General Director Rolla Smith.

Aldridge will plan and develop this new ministry which will include coordinating counseling, advising and trouble shooting for various mission fields. His wife, Janie, will work with him in this new ministry.

Due to Aldridge's health problems and some doubt about his being able to stand the tropical heat on a continuing basis, the board and staff felt he could continue to benefit the fields in this new ministry without taxing his body. To allow more time for his condition to improve, they have asked Aldridge to assume a temporary interim assignment directing the department's golden anniversary celebration.

Jimmy and Janie will reside in Nashville in order to coordinate the "50 Golden Years of Advance" program as well as design and develop the overseas ministry. The Aldridges will travel abroad several months each



year. Due to their experience and familiarity with Europe and Africa, they will focus more on these areas at first.

The Aldridges have served with the Foreign Missions Department since 1962, laboring in Ivory Coast, West Africa. Jimmy served as field council chairman for several years. He developed the Bondoukou church to the point of turning it over to national leadership before returning to the States.

### REV. WILLARD DAY, FORMER ARKANSAS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, WITH THE LORD

FORT SMITH, AR—The Reverend Willard Clyde Day, former Arkansas executive secretary, died August 29, 1984, at his home in Fort Smith. He was 71.

Reverend Day preached the gospel as a Free Will Baptist minister for 51 years. The Muskogee, Oklahoma native was converted in 1932 and preached his first sermon May 28, 1933. He pastored churches in Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas.

Brother Day authored a two-volume set of booklets, the *Berean Bible Course*. He wrote extensive newspaper articles under the by-line, "Thought for the week by Willard C. Day, the Ozark's Friendly Parson." He was also involved in radio and television ministry.

Funeral services were conducted September 1, at First Free Will Baptist Church in Fort Smith with Rev. James Franklin officiating, assisted by Rev. Rupert Pixley, Rev. Murl Walker and Rev. Toby Jenkins. Burial followed at Gracelawn Cemetery.

Reverend Day is survived by his wife, Helen; one daughter, Shirley



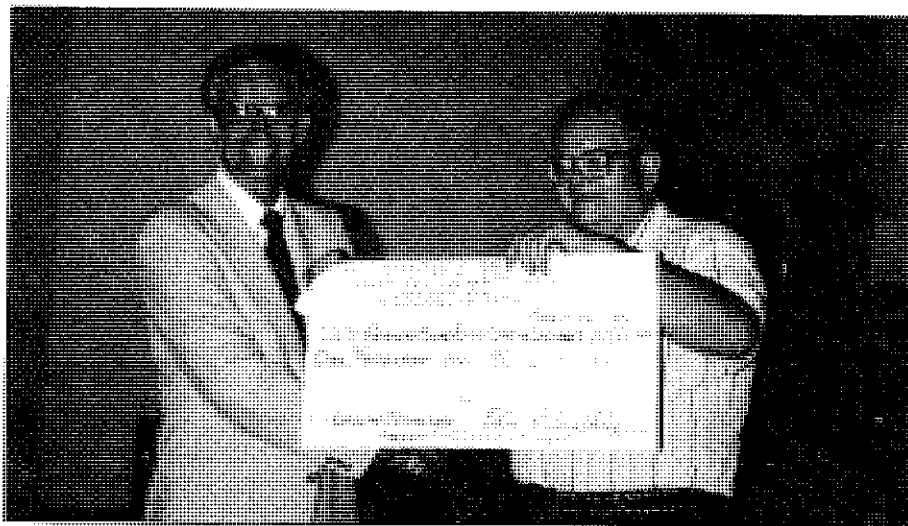
Waldo of Van Buren; two sisters, Pearl Wilkinson of Tulsa and Rosa Neal of Cowetta, Oklahoma; and four grandchildren.

## HILLSDALE ENROLLS 156 STUDENTS

MOORE, OK—Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College enrolled 156 students for classes during the fall semester, reports Vice-President of Academic Affairs Thomas Marberry.

This fall's student body includes 70 freshmen, 38 sophomores, 19 juniors, 18 seniors and 11 special students. The students hail from 14 states and seven foreign countries; 88 students are men and 68 are women. On-campus students total 72; off-campus students total 84.

Dr. Marberry said that although this is not a record enrollment, "It is a healthy enrollment in a time when many college enrollments are actually declining. We are looking forward to a good year. We desire the prayers and support of Free Will Baptist people."



*John Mauldin (R) of Liberty Free Will Baptist Church Master's Men Chapter (Millington, TN) presents \$1,000 check to Home Missionary Hughes Ellis for Lakeland Land Fund at Paris, Tennessee.*

## DIRECTORY UPDATE

### ARKANSAS

Harold Wilkins to Central Church, Lavaca

Kevin Jewell to Daisy Church, Daisy

Ray Prince to First Church, Newport

Lawnie Coffman to Hector Church, Hector

Merle Guess to First Church, Huntsville

### FLORIDA

Steven R. Hasty to St. Johns Church, Perry from First Church, Albany, GA

Bud Hill to Harmony Church, Lake Butler

### GEORGIA

Mickey Broadway to Swainsboro Church, Swainsboro

Rick Cason to New Salem Church, Colquitt from Bay Church, Hartsfield

### MISSOURI

Gary Tune to New Hope Church, Fredericktown

### OKLAHOMA

Kevin Francis to Eastside Church, Muldrow

### VIRGINIA

Jeff Crabtree to First Church, Roanoke from Doran Addition Church, Kingsport, TN

### OTHER PERSONNEL

Mark Barber to First Church, Benton, IL as youth director

## BIBLE COLLEGE SETS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CONFERENCE


NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. George Youstra, appointed by President Reagan to the U.S. Department of Education, will be the featured speaker at Free Will Baptist Bible College's 1985 Christian Schools Conference, February 18-20, according to Dr. Ken Riggs.

Dr. Youstra, in addition to his service with the government, has served

as a high school teacher and principal, college professor and as dean of a Christian college. He also has been active in conservative politics.

The three-day February conference will feature workshops/seminars, interviews with prospective teachers and booths to display the ministries of Free Will Baptist day schools, as well as agencies that serve Christian schools.

# GIVE THANKS



for . . .

- Jesus Christ**
- The Holy Scriptures**
- Family**
- Friends**
- Good Health**
- Our Church**
- Job**

Members of **First FWB Church, Bryan, TX**, celebrated 90 years of service to the city of Bryan and the surrounding communities in October. Pastor **Dennis Henderson** recognized and paid special tribute to five members who had contributed to the church's history—the youngest of the five was 90 years old, the oldest 97.

**Michael McCurry**, member of **First FWB Church, Erwin, TN**, raised more than \$1,300 in the Tennessee Walkathon for Missions. Pastor **Howard Messer** said nine-year-old Michael rode his bicycle throughout the community in search of sponsors for his walk. Michael was accompanied on his walkathon by 22 other participants from First Church.

Pastor, have you considered printing your sermon outline for your people? Some Free Will Baptist ministers do. Pastor **Fred Hanson** of **Upper Brighton FWB Church, New Brunswick, Canada**, has made it a practice for a number of years to print his sermon outline, including introduction and conclusion, for the members. Fred says it helps the people to remember the sermon.

Last month in the *Currently* column we shared the good news that the prayers of delegates at the National Convention for Reford Wilson and **Paul Kettelman** were answered. Again, for the thousands who prayed especially for Brother Kettelman, a further update is included here. Brother Kettelman is back at work at Free Will Baptist Bible College on a limited basis. He says that although his disease is listed by the medical profession as terminal, "I have confidence that God is able to heal me so that I can continue His work for Free Will Baptist Bible College." Brother Kettelman says the cards, letters and many phone calls assuring him of continued prayer have encouraged him in this time of personal crisis.

**Larry Bryan**, minister of youth at **Trinity FWB Church, Greenville, NC**, may have come up with a novel idea. He said, "Youth activities are fun but can be expensive. If you don't have teens of your own, why don't you sponsor a teen?" That seems like a workable idea in many churches throughout the country. Sometimes those who have children can least afford the expense of some needed activities for them. **Leroy Welch** pastors Trinity Church.

Two members of **Shiloh FWB Church, Bratt, FL**, were honored by the community, according to Pastor **Mike Jones**. The **Terry Hall** family was selected as Farm Family of the County.

**Cecil McElhaney** was recognized for outstanding community service.

Pastor **Jimmy Smith** said **Lower Corinth FWB Church, Oak Park, GA**, dedicated a new sanctuary. The seating capacity for the new edifice is 150. During dedication services Reverend **Sherod Holton** read a history of the church. Reverend **Emmitt McDuffie** preached the dedication message.

Members of **First FWB Church, Tifton, GA**, invested more than \$10,000 in church renovation, according to Pastor **Jerry Wishum**. Renovations included new padded pews, choir benches, pulpit furniture and carpeting for the sanctuary.

Pastor **David Kirby** reports 18 professions faith, 25 rededications, and a spirit of revival in the last six months at **First FWB Church, Ypsilanti, MI**.

**West Calvary FWB Church, Smithfield, NC**, gave \$1,000 to Promotional Director **Tom Lilly** to help purchase land on which to build the new state office complex. **Sam Truett** pastors.

Pastor **William Vaughn** of **New Home FWB Church, Piney Creek, NC**, was honored as Chaplain of the Year by the V.F.W. Pastor Vaughn is chaplain of the McDowell County Post 4208 and Post 56 of the American Legion.

Members of **Horse Branch FWB Church, Turbeville, SC**, gave Pastor and Mrs. **Talmadge Brown** a \$1,700 love offering during Pastor Appreciation Day activities.

**Lockhart FWB Church, Lockhart, SC**, honored a senior member, Mrs. **Connie Lawter**, for 39 years of faithful service to the church. According to Pastor **Ronnie Adkins**, Mrs. Lawter has missed only one church service in the 39 years. She serves as church pianist, is active in the local and district Woman's Auxiliaries, has a 35-year perfect attendance in the district meetings, and has served as district treasurer for the greater part of that period. The church presented Mrs. Lawter with a plaque of appreciation.

**North Spartanburg FWB Church, Spartanburg, SC**, built a three-bedroom parsonage valued at \$63,000, according to Pastor **Clyde Nations**. The group also sponsored a patriotic weekend in which the church grounds and buildings were draped with the American flag. Special speaker for the Sunday morning Sunday School hour was Congressman **Carroll Campbell**.

South Carolina Promotional Director **Norwood Gibson** delivered a dedication message when members of **Hill Side FWB Church, Florence, SC**, con-

structed a 2200 square foot Fellowship Building. The \$25,000 structure is made of concrete block and brick.

Members of **Whitney FWB Church, Spartanburg, SC**, voted to sell the parsonage and give their pastor a housing allowance. Pastor **James Childers** and his family purchased a new home five miles north of the city.

**New Hope FWB Church, Charleston, SC**, purchased an acre on US Highway 17-A, according to Pastor **Leroy Grant**. The church group had been leasing a building, but earlier this year the lease expired and they resorted to meeting in a home. Pastor Grant and the congregation expect to build at the new site.

The South Carolina Eastern Conference Home Mission Board launched a \$10,000 fund-raising project this summer. Funds from the project will underwrite construction of **Hickory Hill Mission Church at Gresham, SC**.

Pastor **Kenny Klaiber** reports 60 conversions at **Pine Grove FWB Church, Ironton, OH**. The group also set an all-time attendance record during Vacation Bible School when 160 enrolled and they maintained an average of 145.

Pastor **Paul Williams** reports six conversions and three baptisms at **Bloom FWB Church, Wheelersburg, OH**.

Our readers might be interested in knowing that Pastor **Norman Livingston of Greenvew FWB Church, Dayton, OH**, is seen on 21 television stations three times a week and is heard on a number of area radio stations.

**Sedalia FWB Church, Sedalia, MO**, burned the mortgage according to Pastor **Leonard Sanger**. Missouri Executive Secretary **Clarence Burton** delivered a dedication message on the occasion.

Members of **First FWB Church, Flat River, MO**, honored **Marion Wilson** who has been music director at the church for 29 years. The special service honoring Sister Wilson included tapes from former pastors, poems written and read in her honor, and telephone calls from well-wishers. Pastor **Ron Edgil** presented Sister Wilson with a plaque from the church in appreciation for her labors.

Mrs. **Gwen Collins** was awarded a 20-year perfect attendance pin by members of **Shiloh FWB Church in Detroit, MI**. Pastor **Billy Brown** said that Mr. Collins is just as reluctant to miss a church service as his wife. Brown said, "Brother Collins was in the hospital and he made them let him out so he could come to

Sunday School. I wish I had a hundred like these two."

According to Pastor **Gary Tune** of **New Hope FWB Church, Fredericktown, MO**, the church was involved in organizing a Christian Club on campus at Fredericktown High School. **Joe Pogue**, a member of New Hope Church was elected vice-president of the 37-member organization. By the second week of its existence, the Christian Club included 58 in attendance.

**Bixby FWB Church, Bixby, OK**, celebrated its 40th anniversary this fall. According to Oklahoma Executive Secretary **Lonnie DaVoult**, some 19 preachers have been called into the gospel ministry from this church. The church was begun in 1944 by Rev. **Virgil Florence**.

Pastor **Phillip McAskill** said members of **Wilmot FWB Church, New Brunswick, Canada**, are adding a balcony to the building in order to provide more seating and Sunday School facilities.

Pastor **Brian Williams of Plaster Rock FWB Church, New Brunswick, Canada**, said they have completed a renovation project which includes a new ceiling, new walls, varnishing woodwork and seats, installing new vertical blinds, new light fixtures, and a floor covering in the foyer and basement.

Pastor **Ron Wood of Concord FWB Church, Concord, CA**, reports 44 conversions, 26 baptisms and 23 new members in the first six months of 1984.

Members of the **Southern Quarterly Meeting in California** gave a \$1,600 scholarship to 17-year-old **Mike Trimble** to assist him as he attends California Christian College.

**Faith FWB Church, Oak Grove, MO**, was organized a year ago in the midst of an ice storm with 14 charter members and called a new pastor, Reverend **John Percival**. The group soon purchased a 6,000 square foot church in the heart of the Oak Grove community. Clerk **Ginger Short** said the church recently opened a Christian Day Care Center with full-time staff members and is seeking outreach ministries in other areas of community needs.

One year after **Paul Wood** accepted the pastorate at **Victory FWB Church, East Wenatchee, WA**, officials report 36 conversions and Sunday School attendance that has surged to a 91 average.

**Portland, Oregon** home missionary, **Mike Mutchler**, said 75 people from 21 different families met for the first service in the new work which he has begun in the metropolitan Portland area.

Members of **Pine Grove FWB Church, Perdido, AL**, presented pastor **John Burnham** with a \$100 cash gift during Pastor Appreciation Day activities.

## Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



**James Montgomery Boice, *Standing on the Rock* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1984, paperback, 160 pp., \$4.85).**

**T**his book is subtitled "The Importance of Biblical Inerrancy." The author has served for several years as chairman of the International Council for Biblical Inerrancy.

The Bible occupies a unique position in the Christian experience—the unique revelation of God to mankind. If the Bible does not reveal to mankind what God is like and how He operates, then there is no reliable revelation from God.

How the Christian views the Bible is not just a peripheral issue; it is of vital importance to the Christian life. If the Bible is not reliable, then the Christian has no firm foundation upon which he can build his life. If the Bible cannot be trusted, the church has no firm foundation upon which to build life and faith.

Informed laymen will have no trouble reading the book and understanding it. The author presents several important concepts which are often not well understood by the average Christian. He presents clear and understandable explanations of such concepts as revelation, inspiration and illumination. He points out that the Holy Spirit works in and through the scriptures to influence the lives of people.

One chapter is devoted to the question of interpreting the Bible. Dr. Boice gives 10 principles of biblical interpretation which should be understood by all Christians. If one does not follow these basic principles, there is the danger that he may seriously misunderstand the message of scripture. It is also important to understand that all Christians may not interpret the meaning of a passage in the same way.

The author admits that there are passages in the Bible which present special problems. In most cases, a careful study of the passage or passages involved will clarify the situation. The fact that two passages describe an event in two different ways does not mean that one of the descriptions is in error.

There are a few problem passages which we cannot fully explain, but this does not prove that the passage is in error. The problem could very well lie in our inadequate understanding of the situation. In fact, there are many evidences for the reliability of the Bible.

This is a book which I can recommend to concerned Christians. It addresses a vital issue in an intelligent and pleasing way. In fact, this is one of the better books on the question of inerrancy which I have seen. ▲



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## ON LITTLE LANES

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BY DONNA MAYO

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# The Christmas Star

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**I**t was that time again—the most special, exciting, wonderful time of the year—Christmas!

Christmas meant many things at the Lane home—visits from grandparents, homemade cookies and gingerbread men, caroling around the piano, a tree and presents, and three children with dancing eyes.

And just as sure as Mom made eggnog and fruitcake, just as sure as Dad gathered the family around the Christmas tree and read the Christmas story, just as sure as anything that spelled Christmas tradition, there was an annual play at church.

Two weeks before the play the Lanes were on their way home from church. The air was cold and the gray sky spitting snowflakes.

"It's not fair," complained Megan. "Just because Melissa has long black hair she gets to be Mary. I never get a good part in any of the plays. It's just not fair."



"Who cares?" said Marty. "Who wants to be in a dumb ole play anyway? They're so much trouble. And if I have to wear Dad's bathrobe again this year, I'll croak."

"Maybe we can come up with a better costume for you this year, Honey," said Mrs. Lane. "And, Megan, I'm sure Mrs. Shaw tried to be as fair as she could when she gave out the parts. After all, everybody can't be Mary."

"But I don't want to be an angel," moaned Megan. "I only have one line to say, and it's with all the rest of the angels. Melissa gets to say a whole bunch."

"Girls!" sighed Marty shaking his head. "Girls are so goofy. You ought to be glad you don't have to say much. I don't care who I am as long as I don't have to say anything."

"Marty, don't you understand?" asked Megan. "Being an angel is like, well, it's like having to sit on the bench for the whole basketball season. I want to be something important."

"Well, this is one game I'd just as soon sit out," grumbled Marty.

"You kids sound like Scrooge," said Mrs. Lane. "Where's your Christmas spirit?"

"What if Jesus' attitude on that first Christmas was like yours?" asked Mrs. Lane. "What if He had said, 'I don't want to wear swaddling clothes' and 'Who wants to be born in a stable? I want to be born somewhere important.' What if Jesus had said, 'Christmas—it's too much trouble. It's just not worth it?'"

Marty and Megan saw that they had been proud and selfish.

"I'm sorry," said Megan. "It's okay if I'm not Mary. I'll just do my part the best I can."

"That's my angel," said Mr. Lane with a chuckle.

"I don't reckon a few play practices will kill me," said Marty.

"That's the spirit," said their mother. "Jeff, what about you? You've been quiet. Do you have a part in the play?"

"Yes," said Jeff with big eyes, "I'm the star."



Marty and Megan giggled. Mr. Lane groaned. "Oh no, I thought we were through with this business of big important parts."

"Let's see," said Mrs. Lane trying to hide a smile. "The star of the play. Who would that be? Are you Joseph?"

"No," answered Jeff.

"Are you a shepherd or wise man?" asked Megan.

"Nope," said Jeff.

"Well, you're too big to be Baby Jesus," said Marty, "and you're too little to be anybody else."

"I'm the star," said Jeff firmly. "I am. I am," he insisted.



"Well, what is your name?" asked Mr. Lane.

"I don't know," said Jeff shrugging his shoulders.

"What do you say?" asked Megan.

"Nothing," answered Jeff.

"You can't be the star," said Marty.

"You don't have a name or any lines to say."

"I am too," said Jeff who was about to cry.

The Lanes didn't want to upset Jeff any more, so they just dropped it. But they were all curious about Jeff's part.

The days before the play passed quickly. Marty and Megan practiced hard. But Jeff's class never had to practice, so not even the twins knew who Jeff was going to be.

"At last, the mystery will be solved," said Mrs. Lane getting ready for church the night of the play. "We'll finally know what Jeff is in the play."

Mr. and Mrs. Lane watched proudly as Megan and the other white-robed angels announced the birth of Christ. They tried not to laugh when Marty, once again dressed in Mr. Lane's bathrobe, knelt to worship the Christ Child with the other shepherds.

"I wonder when Jeff comes on?" whispered Mrs. Lane to her husband.

Then they saw Jeff walking on stage. He had a big grin on his face, and he was carrying a long broom handle. Attached at the top, cut out of poster board and covered with aluminum foil was a big star.



Jeff marched proudly to the center of the stage and stepped up on a stool behind the manger where Jesus lay. He stood on his tiptoes and stretched his arms to hold up the star as high as he could. Then the wise men entered, and after a few more verses of scripture, the play ended.

After the play Mr. and Mrs. Lane hugged all their children and told them how proud they were of them.

"You told us you were the star, didn't you?" said Mrs. Lane to Jeff. "We just didn't know what you meant, Honey. We're sorry."

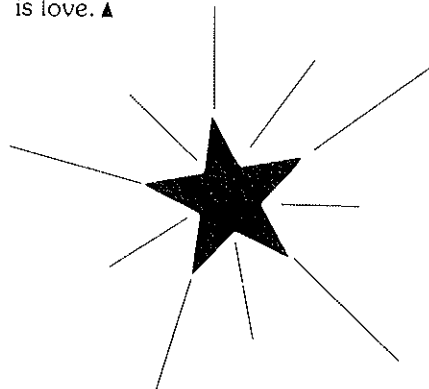
"Yeah, we thought you meant that you had the most important part in the play," said Megan.

"But I did," insisted little Jeff.

"Tell me," said Mr. Lane kneeling down to look Jeff squarely in the eyes, "why do you think the star is so important?"

Jeff answered with surprising seriousness for a three-year-old. "Cause, Daddy, I leaded the people to Jesus. It's not Christmas 'til you see Jesus."

Mr. Lane looked up at the rest of his family and smiled. They had all caught a new glimpse of Jesus, and it filled them with a special warmth and joy. Christmas truly is a wonderful time, for Christmas is Jesus and Christmas is love. ▲





**Free Will Baptist Music Ministries**

# The Creative Congregation

By Vernon Whaley

**C**ongregational singing is done together. That's what makes it unique. Choirs, quartets, trios or soloists never take the place of congregational music. We sing to provide fellowship and praise to God. That's why a sense of commitment to sing songs unto and about God must undergird planning and preparation.

Each service should be characterized by a spirit of spontaneity. Spontaneity, tempered by sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and a lot of preparation. Spontaneity for the sake of spontaneity turns into chaos.

But the big question is what can music directors and congregations do to keep the music lively and creative?

## *Choruses*

One of the most successful ideas for congregational singing is the use of choruses. Try old Youth For Christ choruses or today's Scripture Songs. It's a great way to teach doctrine and the choruses are easily interwoven into the fabric of the regular hymn service.

## *Select Favorites*

Let the congregation select some favorites. People choose what they like. One caution, however, the pace of the service must be kept moving.

## *Band Instruments*

One of the best ways to use junior and senior high school students in congregational singing is to let them play their band instruments. Several music companies publish materials for band and congregation. Instruments can be used any number of ways. The most important thing is that everyone is contributing to the service.

## *Themes*

Congregational services can be based on a topic or theme. Scripture verses or the stanza of a hymn can

serve as the foundation for developing ideas. Other hymns are then selected that conform to the theme.

### *Benedictions*

Some churches use choruses and hymns for the benediction. This is especially effective if the chorus is one of commitment or worship.

### *Communion*

Communion can provide the framework for a song service. Soloist, choir and/or congregation can join together in song while the deacons are sharing the bread and juice. Remember, the disciples sang a hymn with Jesus at the conclusion of the Passover.

### *Revival*

Evangelistic services offer a variety of possibilities. By their very nature, evangelistic services allow the song director to be enthusiastic. Many pastors prefer this approach to song leading. The most important element is a varied service of testimony songs.

### *Stanza Swap*

Sometimes it's nice to have the men sing a stanza and the ladies sing the next. It's even more interesting to get the children and teens to join in as individual groups.

### *World Missions*

A congregational service can be built around world missions. Letters and reports from mission fields can be given during the service. Planning is crucial to prevent interest from flagging.

### *Hymn of the Month*

A hymn-of-the-month can help also. It's usually best to introduce new hymns during this time. Further interest is provided if the story behind the hymn is shared. These stories often prove inspirational for the entire church.

### *A Divided House*

One way to include everyone in congregational singing is to divide the

congregation into two sections. Let one half sing the stanza or verse and the other half sing the chorus. On some hymns, like "Christ the Lord is Risen Today", half of the group can sing the stanza while the other sings allelujah.

### *Solo Lead*

An interesting way to open the service is to have the song director begin singing the stanza of a familiar hymn. When he gets to the chorus, the director can lead the entire congregation in singing the hymn together. Try it on such favorites as "How Great Thou Art" or "Because He Lives."

### *Holiday Specials*

Special events and seasons provide the basis for some delightful variety. During the Christmas season any number of creative activities add spice to the song service. The use of hymns during a candlelight service, reading the Christmas story between congregational hymns or presenting gifts to Christ to the strains of a hymn all serve as good formats for worship music.

### *Lining Out*

One approach used by Free Will Baptists during the 1780's is called "lining out the phrase." That means the song leader sings a phrase and the congregation answers. A modified example of this can be done with the hymn, "No Not One."

It works like this: The song leader sings the verse, "There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus", and the congregation answers, "No, not one; No, not one." Everyone sings together on the chorus.

### *Super Choir*

One fun activity that I've used over the years involves dividing the congregation into choir formation (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). Perhaps the auditorium could be roped off into the different sections. The idea is to treat the congregation as a choral group (with the rehearsal during the service!) and sing traditional (and favorite) choral numbers.

The key to good congregational singing is spontaneity, variety and purpose. Keep those three things in mind and your programs will take on natural interest. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Vernon M. Whaley is chairman of the music department at Free Will Baptist Bible College.*

## Merry



## Christmas!

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—Compiled by CONTACT Staff

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- ☐ Spotlight on California
- ☐ The Impossible Dream
- ☐ When You Are A Hurting Parent
- ☐ Deacons—Who Needs Them?

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## NEWSFRONT

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## THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

# Gabriel's Gospel



**C**hristmas is a unique time of year with its own sounds, sights and stories.

To some it's a season for feasting. Others use Christmas to fellowship with friends and family. For one time during the year a spirit of concern and compassion sweeps across the land.

During the Christmas season Christians draw attention to the coming of Christ through sermons, songs and skits. We're reminded of the mysterious, marvelous incarnation of the Messiah.

### The Messenger of Jehovah

Gabriel was sent by God to the city of Nazareth, an obscure town north of Jerusalem in Galilee, to announce the advent of Christ (Luke 1:26). God in His divine providence which orders all things in heaven and earth did not choose Jerusalem or some other great city as the place of Mary's residence, but the pastoral village of Nazareth.

Gabriel's salutation troubled Mary and she wondered what he meant. We understand that Mary was "one much graced"—one who had been made the object of much grace. The angel salutes her as a virgin who had been chosen to be the mother of the Messiah.

### The Mother of Jesus

Mary's position in life was not one of greatness either in station or dwelling place. Nothing about her suggests

greatness as the world perceives greatness today. The utter absence of greatness was providential. Mary had nothing to offer except her reputation and character, but that was enough.

Mary's purity of life recommended her to God. She is described as a virgin espoused to Joseph of the house of David.

Bishop J. C. Ryle observes, "Let us not fail to note the wise providence by which the mother of our Lord, though a virgin, was a virgin 'espoused'. It screened her reputation from unseemly remarks. It provided a helper and protection for her in her time of weakness and need."

Mary's privilege in being chosen makes her remembered and her name blessed. Gabriel declared that Mary was highly favored, that the Lord was with her, that she was blessed among women and that she had found favor with God.

No woman has ever been more highly honored than Mary. Of the countless millions of women which could have been chosen, Mary seems the most surprised that she is that one. But by the childbearing of one woman, life and immortality were brought to mankind when Christ was born.

Mary was perplexed by the message of Gabriel. Gabriel's explanation satisfied Mary (Luke 1:38). She declared, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

"It was no light matter to become the mother of our Lord in this unheard of and mysterious way. It brought with it great honour, but it (also) brought no small danger to Mary's reputation and no small trial to Mary's faith. She asks no further questions. She raises

no further objections. She accepts the honour laid upon her with all its attendants and inconvenience." (Bishop J. C. Ryle)

### The Messiah

Gabriel declared that His name would be Jesus. This word means Savior. Jesus Christ the Messiah would be the Savior of all men. He would save them from their sins.

The nature of the Messiah is noted by such phrases as "he shall be great," "shall be called the Son of the Highest," and "the Son of God." They suggest that Jesus Christ was more than a mere man. He was the God-man.

The mystery of the incarnation should be regarded with reverence and respect. We must be content with the truth as given in such statements as "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14); a "body was prepared for Him" (Hebrews 10:5); so that He "took part of our flesh and blood" (Hebrews 2:14); and "was made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4).

Gabriel silences all objections to the mystery of the incarnation when he declares, "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). We accept this truth by faith.

Celebrating Christmas correctly involves recognizing, remembering and responding to the angel's announcement. ▲

### The Secretary's Schedule

- December 4-5** Executive Committee Meeting  
Nashville, Tennessee
- December 5-7** Leadership Conference  
Nashville, Tennessee

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