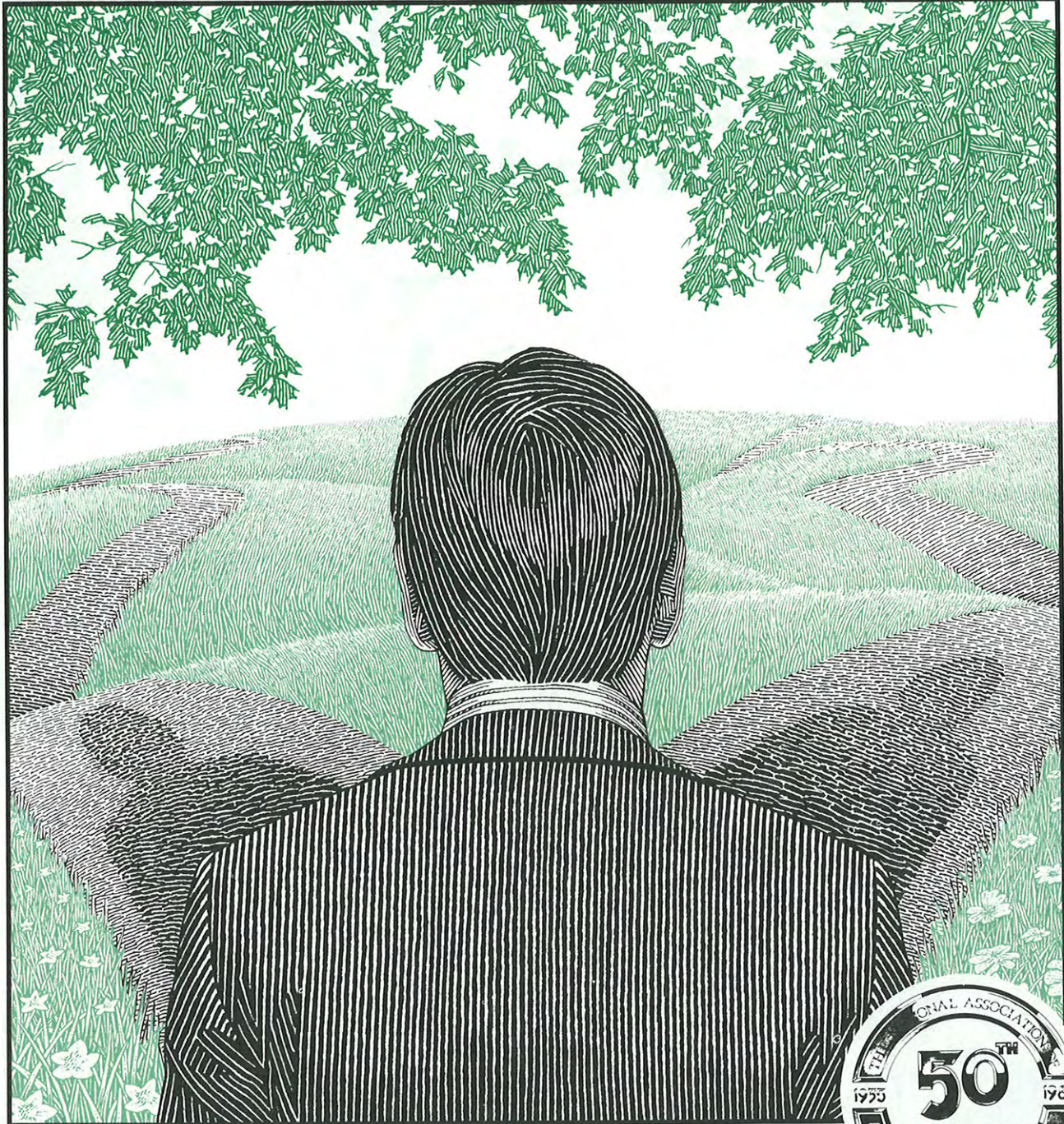


OCTOBER 1985

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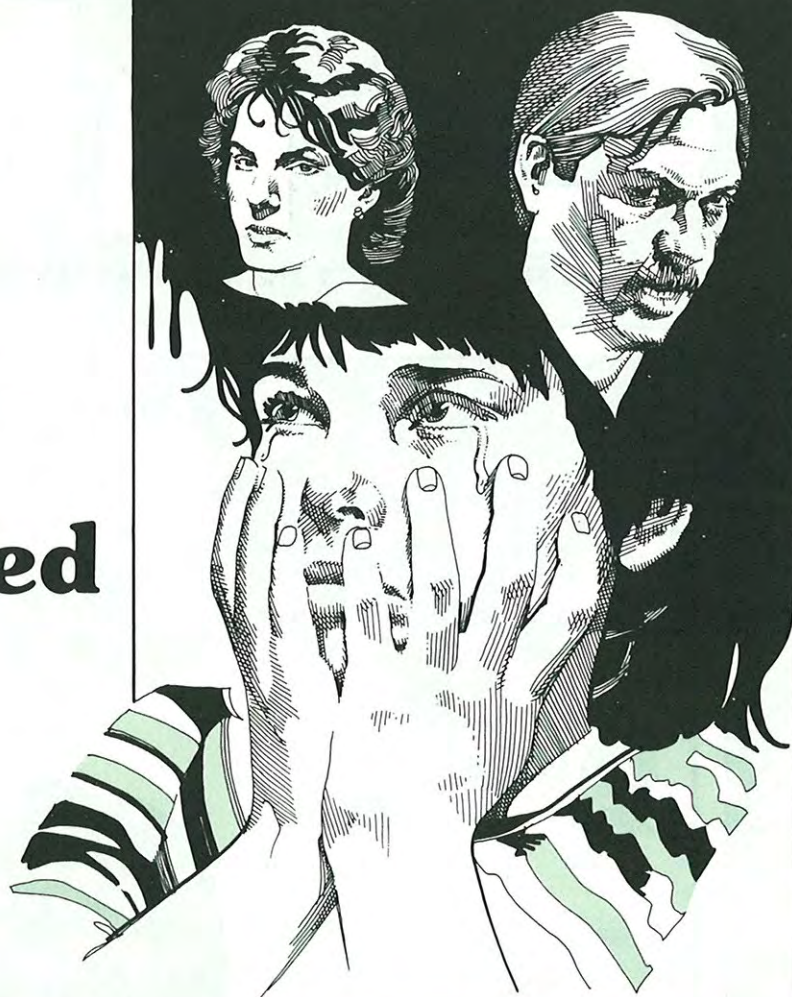
**You Can Know God's Will**





# We Must Help The Divorced

By Joe Grimmett



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Joe Grimmett is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He has pastored in Ohio, Tennessee, Colorado and now pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Tucson, Arizona.



**I**t has happened! We didn't believe it could, but it has. A couple of dedicated Christians who are members of a Free Will Baptist church have walked through the "Valley of the Shadow of Divorce." Now what?

Rome may have existed for almost 500 years without a divorce. However, we now are not so fortunate. The divorce rate of our city (Tucson, Arizona) is almost 70 percent. The national average is close to 50 percent.

As we have seen in the last few years, even Christians have not escaped. Prominent Bible-believing Christian Anita Bryant, who *championed* biblical principles for the home succumbed. Dare we admit that sev-

eral Free Will Baptist preachers and national leaders have fallen to the dilemma of divorce? Not pleasant, but it is the truth.

How shall we react to these dear brothers and sisters? Shall we use the priest or Levite method found in the parable of the Good Samaritan and pass by on the other side and ignore what has happened? I think not.

Divorce won't go away. Maybe we could condemn those involved and at least chain them to guilt for the rest of their lives. But then perhaps we should read Galatians 6:1, consider our own weaknesses, and come at the situation with a desire of restoring the marriage if at all possible. If the marriage has failed beyond repair, then we should

bring the helping, healing power of Jesus to the individuals involved.

How does one bring this helping, healing power of Jesus to what I consider the most painful, frustrating circumstance of life, (e.g. divorce)? As a pastor with almost 20 years experience, let me offer some practical and biblical helps:

## The Jesus Method

Jesus had an amazing ability to stand for that which was right and yet be tender and accepting of those who had fallen. People involved in divorce don't need condemnation, nor do they need commendation; they just need a friend who will accept them as a hurting person.

A young man in our church recently went through a divorce, without a choice. His wife left him. He told me the day their divorce was final, "I just need someone to be there, family or friend." Fortunately, family and friends were there to walk with him and he now is one of the most regular attenders we have.

## Personal Pastoral Counseling

After the fact of divorce, people don't need fancy-filled sermons with three points and a poem. What they do need is a pastor who will listen.

Oh, that God would help us preachers learn the art of *listening*! Then we could help. Help by assuring the divorcee of his or her value as a person to God. Help by bringing the balm of Gilead to the person. Help by restoring a person's self-image and self-worth.

## Lay Couples to Counsel

I realize this is a threatening concept to many of us preachers. However, who would be more capable of giving practical help than those who have actually gone through the pain and agony of divorce and have now recovered? In every church I have pastored, I have utilized these dear folks to help people who are now going through divorce.

At present, there is a lovely couple in our church; Nolen and Patricia Atchley who are good examples of this principle. Nolen is a truck driver and a

lay preacher. Pat is a licensed nurse. Both of these people had marriages which failed. Out of heartache and brokenness they met in our church several years ago and were married.

Now, Pat and Nolen have one of the most beautiful Christian marriages I have seen. They have helped some people who were thinking of divorce to stay in marriage. Also they have brought help and healing to some who have gone through the trauma of divorce.

This is similar to Bill Gothard's concept of a "Rebuilder." The first marriage failed. Now two people are in a second marriage. They are successfully rebuilding their lives for Christ. Lay couples are in an ideal position to encourage remarried couples to adopt a repentant spirit regarding their previously failed marriage.

Then God can be given the glory for blessing a repentant spirit rather than just a marriage to a new partner. This also sends a strong and correct message to others to work through their problems rather than seeking an out by divorce and hoping that somehow their next marriage will be better.

## The Small Group Method

Small Christian groups who love Christ and who open up in honesty can be powerful healing situations. This type group setting can be used to the glory of God and to the good of people.

Folks walking through the maze and daze of divorce can find love, acceptance, help and healing in this setting. One must, however, be sure the small group really has the spirit of Jesus. Otherwise this setting can become a caustic, critical calamity.

In closing, if you think I'm soft on divorce, I am not. For 20 years I've said divorce is wrong; it is not God's ideal! Amazingly enough, all those I have talked with who have gone through divorce have agreed with me. I have only told one couple they should get a divorce. They didn't listen to me; they are still married. Praise God!

The bottom line is this. We must stop shooting our wounded. We must start bringing the helping, healing power of Christ to them. May God through the power of the Holy Spirit help us accomplish this goal in our churches. ▲

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# Thank You For Your Contributions...



## ... Through the Cooperative Channel

### Cooperative Channel Contributions

July 1985

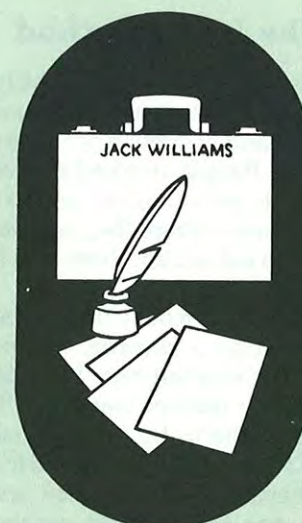
#### RECEIPTS

State	Design.	COOP	Total	July '84	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 84.00	\$ 997.31	\$ 1,081.31	\$ 1,514.81	\$ 5,094.94
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	166.75
Arkansas	.00	2,152.48	2,152.48	3,024.45	25,236.17
California	.00	782.81	782.81	705.32	6,131.79
Florida	.00	1,197.12	1,197.12	1,468.68	9,917.19
Georgia	1,829.53	5.00	1,834.53	3,969.25	27,240.82
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	131.60
Illinois	4,954.69	1,030.34	5,985.03	6,304.81	45,487.42
Indiana	631.31	.00	631.31	466.35	4,933.56
Kansas	.00	105.02	105.02	163.81	690.15
Kentucky	.00	134.68	134.68	69.40	1,439.08
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	180.00
Michigan	5,972.99	1,317.81	7,290.80	5,999.67	24,381.11
Mississippi	.00	385.38	385.38	170.56	2,048.44
Missouri	961.84	5,374.22	6,336.06	7,518.70	51,443.78
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	53.50	238.22
North Carolina	294.50	300.00	594.50	468.40	5,772.71
Ohio	399.00	1,240.00	1,639.00	5,376.64	18,789.20
Oklahoma	20,247.88	9,276.66	29,524.54	29,747.09	234,818.33
South Carolina	.00	.00	.00	.00	715.85
Tennessee	141.85	1,006.52	1,148.37	1,092.42	7,526.02
Texas	.00	.00	.00	8,845.97	31,006.42
Virginia	.00	1,425.20	1,425.20	1,112.42	4,891.63
West Virginia	2,620.72	121.42	2,742.14	2,880.08	24,557.11
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	25.00
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	43.11	.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$38,138.31</b>	<b>\$26,851.97</b>	<b>\$64,990.28</b>	<b>\$80,995.44</b>	<b>\$532,863.29</b>

#### DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive	\$ 217.12	\$13,751.88	\$13,969.00	\$13,086.94	\$ 98,114.31
Foreign Missions	26,799.95	3,013.01	29,812.96	38,096.31	254,290.16
FWBBC	2,691.11	3,013.01	5,704.12	7,432.70	42,942.07
Home Missions	7,013.05	2,358.00	9,371.05	13,253.88	86,034.92
Retirement & Insurance	222.72	1,834.04	2,056.76	3,361.75	16,655.69
Master's Men	44.24	1,703.06	1,747.30	2,851.68	15,308.29
Commission for Theological Integrity	19.53	130.99	150.52	220.46	1,289.07
FWB Foundation	12.32	786.00	798.32	1,287.18	7,205.78
Historical Commission	17.58	130.99	148.57	218.51	1,275.15
Radio & TV Commission	12.32	130.99	143.31	.00	1,338.59
Hillsdale FWB College	979.39	.00	979.39	1,162.68	7,993.67
Other	108.98	.00	108.98	23.35	415.59
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$38,138.31</b>	<b>\$26,851.97</b>	<b>\$64,990.28</b>	<b>\$80,995.44</b>	<b>\$532,863.29</b>

#### Briefcase



**T**ake charge of your own life. If you don't, somebody else will.

Of course, there are times when we need others to help us decide. When death strikes unexpectedly, the counsel of friends and loved ones guides us through the grief process and helps us past those traumatic days when so many unfamiliar decisions threaten us.

However, it doesn't take much outpouring of such warmth and concern before we depend on others to take control and make the decisions. After all, it's nice when somebody else assumes responsibility for the frayed edges of a life situation that's fallen apart.

The same holds true when a person loses his job. The presence of friends and their advice help rebuild the ego and restore confidence in ourselves.

But again, it doesn't take long until others start locking our doors and planning our future. While some seem to like it that way, most of us wake up

# Take Charge Of Your Life

after a few weeks and wonder how someone else got control of our lives.

**Take charge of your own life.** Lean on others for comfort or direction when necessary, but remember, no one else can live your life for you. Don't let anyone move in and take over your life, no matter how grateful you feel to them or how inadequate you think you are.

When someone else takes charge of your life, it's hard to pry them loose. Listen, some folks need to feel needed so badly that they'll addict you to their help and convince you that you can't make it without them.

No one knows what's best for you better than you do. You know what you think and why you think it. You determine your values. You erect the yard markers. Besides, there's strength and integrity that comes from having to make our own decisions.

A normal adult should insist on making his or her own decisions. God intended it that way. Consider this, if God trusts you with the most far-reaching decision a person could make—choosing an eternal destiny—you can be trusted to decide where you'll live, where you'll work or how to vote on a certain issue.

**It's not just** the right of individuals to take charge of their own lives, it's their responsibility. Don't become a leaner. A leaner is an emotional cripple who whines through life after meeting unpleasant or unfair circumstances. Whiners like to think that nobody is as misunderstood as they are or that nobody has had the hurts or disappointment that they have. Nonsense!

Such is the common lot of all men. Everybody faces aggravation, death, heartache, loneliness and fear. Some cave in to it while others grapple with their problems and try to find a solution.

Believe me, you don't want to become an emotional welfare case. God never intended for His people to let others make their decisions for them. The Bible is filled with admonitions to choose, to decide, to analyze circumstances and situations, and then make a mature decision.

Will you make mistakes? You betcha. We all do, and then we learn to live with the consequences of what we've chosen to be or do.

Don't worry, making mistakes won't kill you. It might be expensive and embarrassing, and you'll probably wish you'd never done it or said it or bought it—but you will survive!

**Take charge of your own life.** When our children were younger, we made every decision for them—what clothes they'd wear, what books they'd read, where they'd go and when, what they'd eat and when they'd eat it.

At the time it was normal. Parents make most decisions for young children. But children are soon ready and eager to assume responsibility for tying their own shoes, getting to the table on time and doing their homework. It's called growing up. A lot of adults need to grow up and get on with life.

Most adults want to make their own choices. It's only when we're shocked by emotional trauma or physical calamity that we revert to a child-like dependence in which we need others to mother us through difficult times.

I've been there and so have you. Even so, there's nothing in the world quite so fulfilling as taking the reins of your own life after you've spent weeks stumbling around in an emotional daze.

Be grateful for friends who care. Be grateful for those who love you enough to give advice. But have respect for yourself, have confidence in your ability, believe in yourself as God believes in you. God gave you a free will. You

not only have the ability to make choices, you have the responsibility to do it.

**Take charge of your own life.** Those who help others through tough times should know it's a temporary arrangement. Those who are being helped should insist that it be temporary. There are some fine people who mean well, but who'll move right in and take over your life if you let them.

What happens if you don't take charge of your own life? You become less of a person than you were intended to be. You begin to distrust your own judgment. You slide into a mental fog that leaves you intellectually limp. You lose the dignity and freedom of choice.

I suppose some are quite comfortable living like that. But as for me, I'll make my own choices, thank you, and I'll gladly live with my mistakes.

There are times, like everyone, when I don't trust myself to make decisions which I know I must make. But I'd rather me make my decisions than anybody else, because no matter who makes that decision, I've got to live with it. And so do you.

**You can let** someone else make the decisions in your life if you wish. But keep one thing clear: nobody but you will answer to God for what you've done with your life. You can't do what God wants you to unless you take charge.

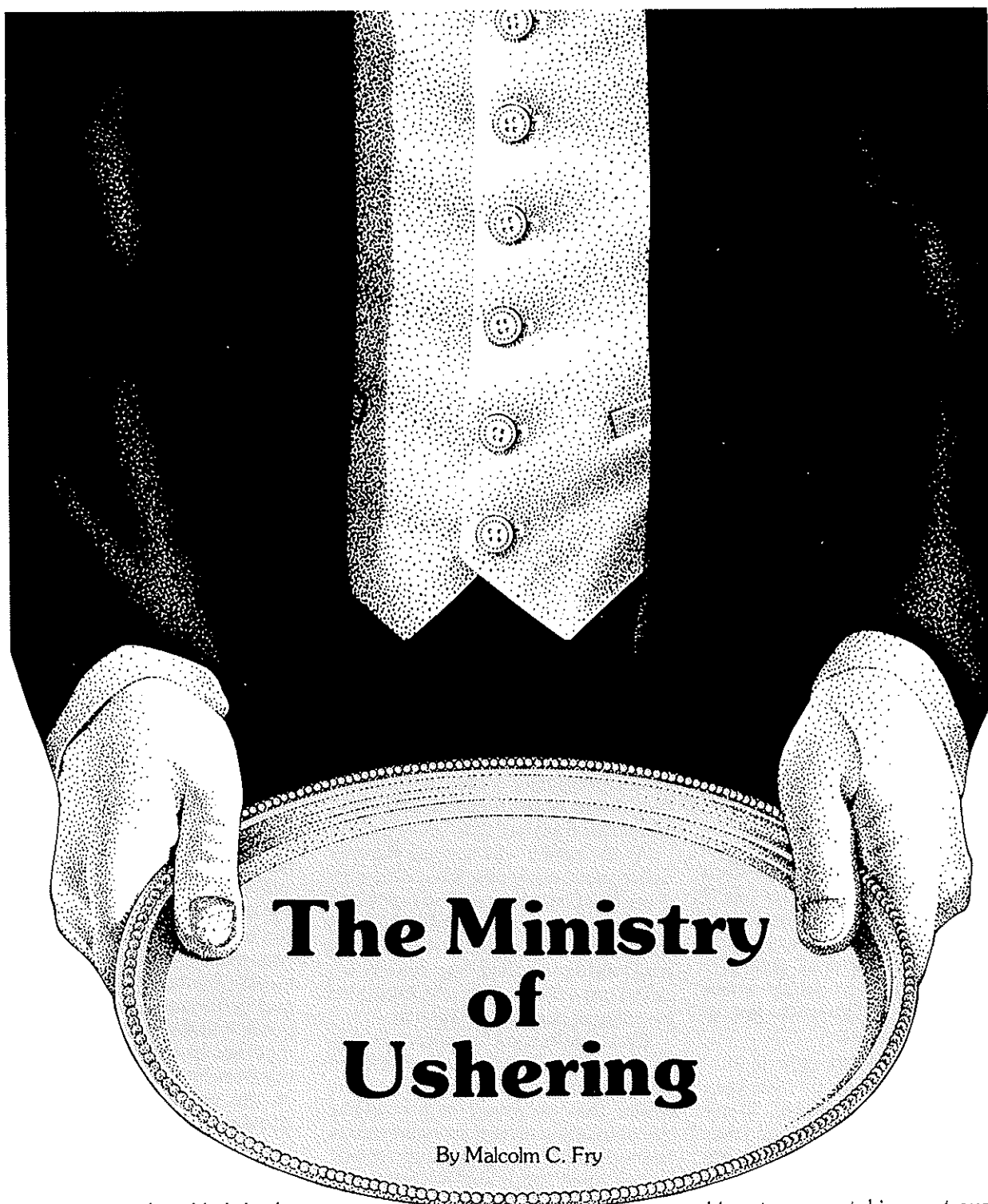
Go ahead, make a decision. Sure, it'll feel awkward at first. None of us can trust himself apart from the grace and mercy of God. That's why we measure every decision by the Bible and by prayer and by the counsel of good friends. That's why we come together in corporate worship to let our lives be examined in the presence of the preached Word and in the company of the saints.

I like something that Floyd Wolfenbarger wrote on this subject before he died. After Floyd's funeral, his wife returned to his study where she found a hand-written note on his desk containing these words:

Do not bend to popular opinion for you will become average. There are far too many average men. God gave you the resources to be great. Follow men and you fail. Follow God and all the demons in Hell cannot withstand your onslaught.

It's time. Take charge of your own life. ▲





# The Ministry of Ushering

By Malcolm C. Fry

**He** was a rather elderly bachelor attending a southern church in Virginia many years ago. A most refined and cultured gentleman at that.

One day he said to his pastor, "I'm of so little use to God. I'm such a timid person. I just do not feel that I am any good at all. But I've been praying that God would show me something I could do for Jesus. I believe I have found

something—I believe I would make a good usher. If you will let me, I will do it for Jesus."

The pastor arranged matters and set everything in motion. The members of the congregation smiled, knowing how self-conscious and timid the bachelor was.

But the next Sunday morning, this refined and cultured gentleman came in

his cutaway coat, his gray trousers, his patent-leather shoes and his nice gloves. He ushered everybody down the aisle with such dignity.

People never saw anything like it. They were delighted. He was so happy. He was back that night and again at prayer meeting. He never missed a service. He was so happy—he felt that he had found something he could do for God.

One pastor confessed that the role of the usher "had not been considered in a significant manner in relation to the total church ministry. It is a role that has been assumed without extensive thought." His honest expression no doubt reflects the situation that is prevalent in many churches today.

Ushering is not a thankless task. It is not to be an item relegated to last place by the nominating committee. Ushering, properly considered, is first and foremost a *ministry*.

Its contribution to the worship service is vital and far-reaching. It influences not only the work of the pastor, the musicians, and the choir, but also the entire congregation. It may be the cause of inducing a visitor to become a regular worshipper and ultimately a member of the church. Ushering will either attract or repel a person to Christ and the church.

It may be said of ushers, "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression."

Properly rendered church ushering is an evidence of a well-organized church, and certainly the visitor has a right to expect that when he appears for worship. Have any of the following incidents occurred at your church?

- Latecomers
- Offering plates dropped
- Sudden illness of attender
- Emergency (Power outage, fire, unexpected outbursts, a sudden intrusion)
- Baby crying
- Child leaving service
- Child re-entering service
- Note writing and passing
- Gum chewing and gum smacking
- Loud and alarming outside disturbance

An ushering staff, properly trained, would know how to respond in each of the situations. The usher is responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of reverence and order before, during and after the service.

The faithful usher finds his motto in Colossians 3:23, 24: "And whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

To reinforce this concept, one pastor frequently introduces the offering with this remark: "As the ushers come forward, I want to remind you that as they serve us, they are serving the Lord."

The scriptures, by implication, place great importance upon the work of church ushers. In the Old Testament it is best exemplified by Psalm 84:10, "... I had rather be a *doorkeeper* in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

**It may be said of ushers, "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression."**

In the New Testament, it seems clear that Jesus often used His disciples as ushers (see Matthew 15:35-37), for instance, in the feeding of the 5,000 men, plus women and children. He immediately organized the throng into groups of 50 and allowed His disciples to serve the largest outdoor banquet in history.

We may justly conclude that the usher who does a good job is actually rendering a part of his spiritual service to the kingdom of God. The ministry of ushering creates an atmosphere and it sets a tempo for the service to follow. It is a *part* of the worship service.

It might be wise to consider teaching the *Ministry of Ushering* training course. Textbook and Leader's Guide are available from Randall House. Extreme care should be taken so as not to offend any of those presently (or formerly) involved in ushering for the church.

The following principles, developed in the study course, should provoke our churches to provide this vital training:

1. An usher is the first person a stranger should see as he or she enters the church. It is important that this first impression be a good one.
2. The usher makes individual contact while the pastor speaks to the whole congregation.
3. Ushers make a definite spiritual contribution to the service. Their attitude of warmth and reverence often becomes contagious.

The usher must be well-informed. A working knowledge of the church—its programs, personnel and facilities—enables him to serve effectively. What is being done in your church to facili-

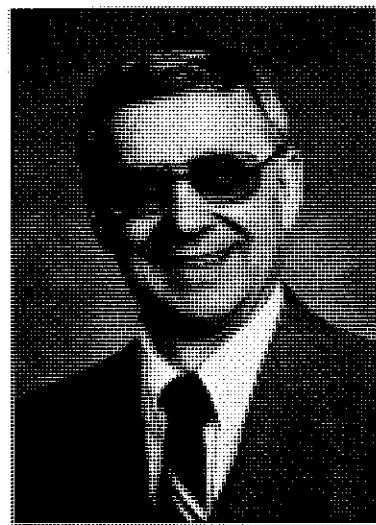
tate such learning and to encourage the ushers to increase their church knowledge on a continuing basis?

Only by careful preparation and performance can ushering in the church become a great ministry. The annals of God in the day of judgment

will no doubt reveal many an ushering service that led to the salvation of souls and the Christian usher will hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things . . ." (Matthew 25:21).

The usher is the church extended, the church on display, as far as image, personality, attitude and even commitment are concerned. Their ministry can be supportive, or it can be disruptive.

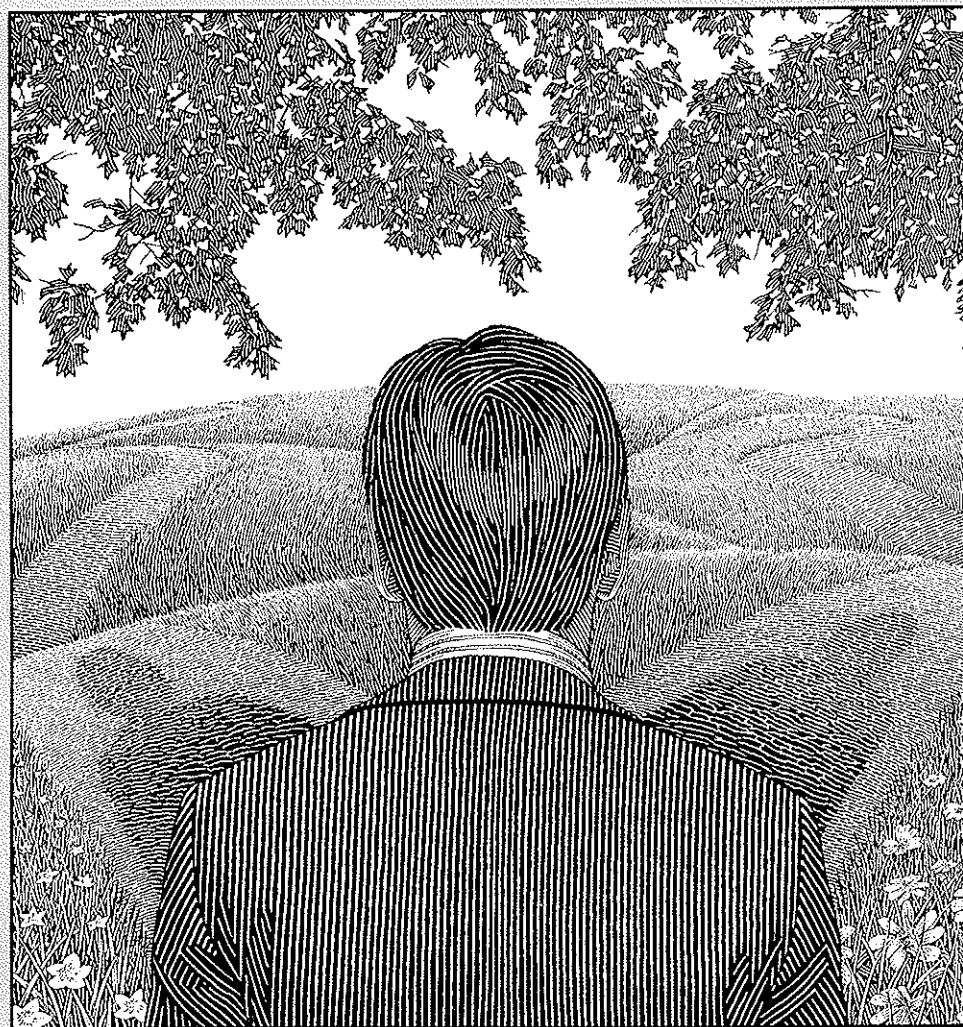
"Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40). It is largely up to the church ushers to see that this command is obeyed. ▲



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Dr. Malcolm C. Fry pastors Unity Free Will Baptist Church, Smithfield, North Carolina.

# You Can Know God's Will

By Milton Fields



**T**he warrior, King Nebuchadnezzar, stands at the crossroads to Rabbah and Jerusalem. Unable to make a determination or unwilling to fully accept the responsibility for deciding which road to take, he calls for his sorcerers.

Two arrows are chosen. One is marked Jerusalem. The other is designated Rabbah. Placing the arrows in a quiver, they are twirled until one falls out. Jerusalem is noted.

A sacrificial sheep is killed. His liver is studied intently. Its folds, its color and its marks all assume tremendous importance in decision-making. Jerusalem is chosen for conquest (Ezekiel 21:21).

Foolish? Perhaps. A teen flips a coin, a Christian lets his Bible fall open to begin daily devotions, and a minister reports that he walks to his pulpit of trust and responsibility, takes his Bible and begins to preach from wherever it chances to open.

What about the father who selects a job considering only an increase in salary or the church which gauges its relationship to God's will by size alone?

**G**od certainly gives more direction to His children than this. In a psalm of forgiveness, David acknowledges the need for knowing God's will and a promise that God will give us

leadership so we may know His will. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32:8).

Knowing God's will involves more than factual knowledge. It touches the attitudes which influence the life-choices we make. If we are to know God's direction for our lives, we must be willing to accept His will: that which is already known, that which He reveals to us and which is future, and that which He only shows us step-by-impatient-step.

Laying aside the tendency to please our peers, to satisfy pride, to gratify lust for power and to compromise, we must center our complete attention on



pleasing God if we are to have His leadership in our lives (Proverbs 3:6).

In Paul's address to the Christians at Rome, he encourages them to know God's perfect will, however, he notes certain conditions which must be present. Those are holy living, an aversion to worldliness, and Christian growth which evidences itself in conformity to God (Romans 12:1-2).

**M**ost of God's will is already known. All the principles which guide Christian decision-making are known. The universal will of God, that which pertains to all men, is known.

The known will of God relates to such things as God's desire to "have all men to be saved" (II Timothy 2:4). Not only is this a universal declaration of God's will, but it is individual in its application. The first prerequisite for being in God's will is to be saved.

Secondly, God's will for the individual is that he confess his salvation publicly and without shame (Romans 10:10-11). Progressing further, God's will for the individual Christian is that he undergo a complete change in character as he becomes more like Christ (Romans 12:2).

There should be no question regarding a decision which may adversely affect a neighbor. God's Word says, "Don't." There should be no long hours in prayer and agony over whom to date, nor with whom to enter into business. If the boyfriend or the prospective business partner is not a Christian, God's Word says, "Don't" (II Corinthians 6:14-15).

Too often anxiety arises, not so much over knowing God's will for our lives, but over His approval of our will for our lives.

At times we struggle with that portion of God's will which He has chosen not to reveal as yet. Jesus tells His disciples, "I have yet many more things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now" (John 16:12).

**I**n the area of the will of God for the individual, concern arises regarding the specific will of God—that which is unique to a particular believer. There are two aspects to God's specific will—one is permissive and the other is directive.

God does not specify the brand of automobile which the Christian must drive, although the Christian should

pray for wisdom. There are biblical principles relating to honesty in business and the necessity of good economic planning which aid in this kind of decision-making.

The primary source from which God's guidance is received is the Bible. "I will delight to do thy will, O my God: Yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:8). In this statement, David notes that the law of God is synonymous with the will of God. Paul, also, directs Timothy to seek leadership from God's Word (II Timothy 2:15).

James notes that wisdom is to be discovered in prayer. Jesus promised that when He left He would not leave His disciples without one who would "guide 'them' into all things" (John 16:13). When Paul and Barnabas were ordained for missionary service, God's will was revealed in response to prayer and through the direction of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2).

Occasionally God directs through circumstances. Paul speaks of a wide door being opened at Ephesus (I Corinthians 16:8-9). Accompanying that open doorway of service, there was a seeming contradiction of adversity.

Calm waters do not always indicate God's leadership. God does open doors and allows us to see the proper route to the objectives which He has established for us.

In adjudging God's will indicated by circumstance, it should be remembered that such opportunity may never violate God's known will and must always facilitate reaching those goals which are known to be in God's will.

Proverbs 11:14 and 12:15 promise blessing when the advice of wise counsel is sought. The first Psalm qualifies good advice as coming from those who are godly, who serve God cheerfully and who love God's Word.

When God has revealed His will, He expects us to act on that information, to be faithful to and to complete the task. Solomon records that if we wait for ideal conditions to occur we'll never do anything (Ecclesiastes 11:4). ▲

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*ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Milton Fields pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Columbus, Mississippi.*

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## DIRECTORY UPDATE

### ARKANSAS

Doug Little to First Church, Russellville

### GEORGIA

Tony Tilley to Hammock Springs Church, Donelsonville from Warner Robbins Church, Warner Robbins

### KENTUCKY

Fred Hall to Trinity Church, Bowling Green from Horton Heights Church, Nashville, TN

### OKLAHOMA

Michael D. Parrott to First Church, Haskell

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Washington Miles to Victory Church, Andrews from Southside Church, Darlington

Sonny Harris to Mill Branch Church, Johnsonville

Johnnie Iseman to First Church, Hartsville

Paul Collins to Temple Church, Darlington

### TENNESSEE

William Preston to Richland Church, Nashville from Burdine Church, Jenkins, KY

### TEXAS

Richard Bowden to Faith Church, Wichita Falls

### OTHER PERSONNEL

Larry Hampton to Bethany Christian School, Norfolk, VA as principal from Randall House Publications as manager of the editorial division.

Tim Thompson to Glennville Christian Academy, Glennville, GA as principal.



# Making Friends:



## A Key to Discipleship

By Greg McAllister

**M**ost pastors aren't satisfied to get 'em, dip 'em and drop 'em. There's a lot of that going on, but I don't believe it's intentional. It's more a matter of helplessness than anything else.

We preach, teach, we even beseech (that sounds better than beg) and we organize. But still many that we win are lost before long. Some are lost to charismatics, and some go back to the church of their youth, yet more than we'll admit simply drift off into sin or spiritual retardation. What can we do?

### Bible Advice

A recent survey points out that 40-60 percent of first-time visitors are there because a friend or family mem-

ber brought them. Scripture points out in many places the importance of friends:

Proverbs 17:17—"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

Proverbs 18:24—"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

Proverbs 27:5-7—"Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet."

John 15:14-16—"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord



doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

And II Timothy 2:1-2—"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

## Hard Work

These scriptures uncover one of the biggest problems Christians and all other men have: We don't like to make friends. Notice, I didn't say we don't like to have friends; I said we don't like to make them. Making friends takes work. Having friends means that the really hard part is over.

For three years I worked with my father at the church where he pastors. I have some dear friends there. But I noticed something else also.

Many people were willing to be my friend initially just because I was the pastor's son; they respected and liked him. (Some of them even liked me after they got to know me.) But now that I'm pastoring, I find that I have to make the friends I have, and that's tough.

Many preachers don't have outgoing personalities. We aren't always blessed with self-confidence. We aren't that sure that people who attend our church once will ever come back, because we aren't sure that they will like us. We could be right.

## Doing It Right

So how do we make friends? (And we see from scripture that friends are usually the first converts we win.) Let's go over those scriptures again:

**Plan to take some time** (Proverbs 17:17). When someone new shows up, what's the most important thing to him? That people like him. That people are willing to spend time with him. That even when he isn't being very lovable, he is loved. That someone comes to see him at his house, as well as at God's house.

**Plan to make some sacrifices** (Proverbs 18:24). Remember, there's a cross involved in being a disciple, and there's a cross in making one. One of these sacrifices is a willingness to help. Another is consistency. You show up when you said you would. You keep your promises. You are consistent in your lifestyle before your disciple.

I had a friend in college who was inconsistent and he seemed to get away with it. That made me mad. He knew I didn't approve of his behavior, but I was so inconsistent in areas he knew about that I really couldn't say anything relevant.

**Plan to meet needs** (Proverbs 27:5-7). If we are real friends to new Christians, we have to meet two needs for them:

1) We point out wrong, even if it hurts us both.

2) We create a hunger for righteousness, because we, their friend, "look good." I don't know about you, but food has to be attractive before I want to eat it.

**Plan to explain everything** (John 15:14-16). Jesus made some great points about friendship here:

1) Friends please one another (v. 14).

2) Friends communicate (v. 15). Jesus never held back the Father's plan from the disciples. Get some lessons to teach your disciple and take all the time that's necessary for him to understand the doctrine. Repeat and repeat. Share your vision for the church. (There ought to be more than one person in your church who understands what you believe God wants for your congregation.)

3) Friends are friends by choice (v. 16). God chose to save them. You chose to disciple them. Drill this home. You want them in your church.

**Plan reproduction** (II Timothy 2:1-2). Convince your disciple that God wants all His disciples to disciple. Tell him that you are counting on him discipling others in the near future.

Pastors should set out to be friends with anyone who wants friendship. It may be deacons. It may be new converts. It must be with unsaved people.

You may want to select one man per month to spend an hour per week for two or three months. At the end of 18 months, you should have at least a dozen men who are consistent, sacri-

ficial, willing to face sin, trustworthy, and reproductive.

This means that you'd have to plan to spend hours away from the office. You'd have to spend most of your time with people who wanted to work in the church. You would only have time for a few activities: teaching, preaching, visiting, meeting new people, praying and studying.

This sounds a little "clique-y," doesn't it? It really limits your effectiveness, I suppose. After all, what can anybody accomplish with just 12 men? ▲

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Greg McAllister is a reasonably friendly Christian. He has served as youth pastor at First Free Will Baptist Churches of Ada, Oklahoma, and Mountain Grove, Missouri. He served as Youth and Discipleship Director at First Free Will Baptist Church in Farmington, Missouri. He is a graduate of Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. He currently pastors New Life Free Will Baptist Church, O'Fallon, Missouri.

## Hoeing in the Shade

By Charles Flynn

**As** a boy of eight years, I was required to hoe corn and cotton on my grandfather's farm. When the July Oklahoma sun let go with its rays at midafternoon, the situation seemed unbearable.

As the sun sank lower in the west, trees at the end of the rows cast their shadows on the field. This was a welcome time for me since I liked to "hoe the ends of the rows in the shade."

Many ministers in our denomination have spent their entire career "hoeing in the shade."

If every man who holds ordination papers would organize and build just one church, we would double in size!

I challenge you, brother, get out in the heat of the field. Night is coming. ▲

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Charles J. Flynn resides in Collinsville, Oklahoma.



By Jim Mullen

**A**s I sat upon the platform listening to the final strains of the beautiful music, I once again thought of the man whose funeral I was about to preach. O how I missed him already!

Lewis Croom was a pillar of the church in the finest sense of that time-worn phrase. He was the "stuff" good solid churches are made from. In the past few days I had heard testimony after testimony of his influence on many lives.

Some had been saved, others had learned of the necessity of tithing, others had become active in the work of the local church—all because of the influence of Lewis Croom.

I thought of the text that I had chosen for his funeral sermon—it could not have been more appropriate.

"Then Jonathan said to David, Tomorrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty" (1 Samuel 20:18).

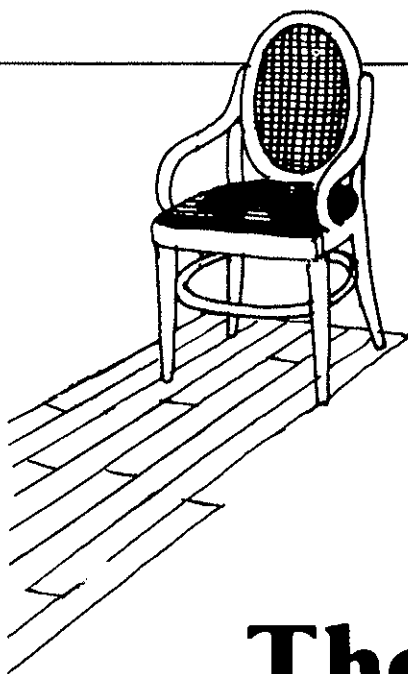
Thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty. How true that would be about Lewis in so many ways.

**L**ewis always occupied the same seat at church, the second row on the left of the pastor, over next to the wall. There he would sit and encourage and pray for the pastor and those who sang in each service. I do mean in each service. If Lewis was not present and on time for a service, it meant something was wrong. That is some testimony to have.

Lewis was the right-hand man of the pastor. He was retired so he had some extra time. He divided that time between his backyard garden and his church.

He truly loved his church; it was a major part of his life. He had driven nails to help put the building together. He had also visited and prayed and worked to keep building the church long after the construction ceased.

*Lewis occupied a seat of wisdom.* He offered wise counsel to those who



## The Empty Seats

would seek it. He had been successful in the insurance business and could offer solid business as well as spiritual advice. Here was a man who obviously knew God. But more important than just knowing God, he belonged to God. Lewis was God's man and folks around him recognized that fact.

*Lewis occupied a seat of hospitality.* His food and home had been shared with many a visiting preacher or missionary. You were always welcome at Lewis' whether you were family, friend or minister. Lewis and Mabel had a way of making you feel as if you belonged there. I thought of the many ministers who would miss Lewis because his seat would now be empty.

*Lewis occupied the seat of humor.* This is a rare seat to hold in these days. Lewis was spiritual, there was no doubt, but he was also full of just the right amount of humor. Many was the time a spirit was lifted by Lewis' humor.

I thought about this man and all the seats he had occupied for us—his family and church. I wondered who would take his place. I knew there would never be another Lewis Croom,

but someone had to carry on the duties he had performed for us. I asked myself, "How do you build another Lewis Croom?"

I preached the funeral to a packed house. It was an appropriate service—brief, to the point, and a celebration of a promotion for a deserving saint.

**B**ut I still could not get away from the nagging thought, "How do you build a Lewis Croom?" Or more to the point, "How was I going to build another Lewis?" Our church needed another Lewis to fill the empty seat by serving God and his generation.

Soon after this a friend shed some light on the problem. As long as there are giants of God on the horizon, no one dares to step up to take their place. But God is at work preparing men at all times. When the time is right, when a Lewis Croom has departed, God has someone else prepared to do the job.

Are you the Lewis Croom for your church, pastor and for your Lord? If so, God bless you and let Him continue to use you. Maybe the Lewis Croom has also departed from your church. Perhaps God has been preparing you to fill the empty seat and be the Lewis Croom for your church. Do not short-change God. He is still in charge. Be willing for Him to use you.

Back to my original question, "How can I build another Lewis Croom?" My job is to faithfully and systematically preach and teach the Word of God, praying for God to raise up men to occupy the seats that are empty. ▲



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Jim Mullen pastors Faith Free Will Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Arkansas.

# Spotlight On West Virginia



By Carl Sullivan

*"Oh the West Virginia hills! How majestic and how grand,  
With their summits bathed in glory, like our Prince Immanuel's land!  
Is it any wonder then that my heart with rapture thrills,  
As I stand once more with loved ones on those West Virginia hills?"*  
H. E. Engle

**T**hese opening lines of the official state song reflect the attitude of most people born and reared in West Virginia. However the hallmark of West Virginia's beauty is not its mountains and streams, its lakes and scenic overlooks, but its people, the majority of whom have been positively affected by living in the "buckle of the Bible belt."

## The Civil War

Organized from loyalist counties in the western part of Virginia, West Virginia was admitted to the Union on June 20, 1863, at the height of the Civil War. At that time Free Will Baptists had already discovered this territory, establishing works in northern and central West Virginia. However the major efforts of Free Will Baptists in West Virginia did not occur until the close of the Civil War.

In the closing days of the Civil War the Federal Government offered land

to groups willing to help educate the newly emancipated slaves. The Northern movement of Free Will Baptists were allotted the Shenandoah Valley area surrounding Harper's Ferry.

For the next 50 years Free Will Baptists established dozens of churches and preaching points from Winchester and Staunton, Virginia, west to Harper's Ferry, Charles Town, Martinsburg, Clarksburg, Flemington and as far west as Parkersburg.

Two schools were established. The first and more notable was Storer College at Harper's Ferry. Founded in 1865 the school maintained an active educational ministry until the 1960's when property granted by the Federal Government was reclaimed. The other school was chartered by the West Virginia legislature in 1868 and was known as West Virginia College at Flemington.

## A New Beginning

The current state association was organized on September 8, 1945, at

Greenview. Rev. Thomas Clay of Holden was the moderator. This new state association consisted of five district associations: Guyan, Mingo County, Beckley, Brotherhood and Mingo #2.

The first annual session was held June 7-8, 1946, at the Switzer Church in Switzer. Rev. John Henson moderated. The National Association was represented by Rev. R. B. Crawford. Minutes of this session do not provide any statistical information. However the minutes do indicate the association continued to grow, receiving three district and one yearly association.

Today the West Virginia State association consists of 21 district associations, 182 churches, 465 ordained ministers, and 11,554 members, ranking eighth among the other state associations in membership.

## State-Sponsored Ministries

One of the oldest continuously sponsored ministries of the state as-



## WEST VIRGINIA (from page 13)

sociation is the *West Virginia Free Will Baptist*, our state paper. This monthly publication has the fifth largest circulation among all Free Will Baptist state publications, (3,900). The cost of publication is underwritten by the state association.

West Virginians also support a state Christian Education Board. This five-member board coordinates the work of a state Bible Institute and the state CTS/Youth activities.

Sunday School is used as an effective outreach activity by many churches in West Virginia. Of the 30 state and regional associations reporting to the 1984 National Association, only nine, including West Virginia, reported Sunday School enrollment greater than church membership.

The annual state Sunday School Convention generates much interest among local churches by presenting workshops on Sunday School, teacher training, bus ministry, children's church and Vacation Bible School.

## Missions

The missionary zeal which led to the birth of many Free Will Baptist churches in West Virginia a hundred years ago is still alive today. The state Missions Board solicits support for both home and foreign missionaries from West Virginia.

These include the Ron Scott family, joint project workers in Wheeling, and the Russell Wright family in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Foreign missionaries from West Virginia are the Jim Combs family, the

Jim Sturgill family, and the Dave Franks family (Dave's wife Pat is Jim Sturgill's sister), all serving in Brazil, and Alice Smith in Ivory Coast.

In support of these is an active state Woman's Auxiliary Convention with the fourth largest enrollment (944) in the denomination. The annual "old fashion pounding," a grocery collection for the Scotts at Thanksgiving is just one of their many mission activities.

Master's Men also benefit from West Virginia with 171 men enrolled in five local chapters. The general director of Master's Men, Jim Vallance, is from West Virginia.

The mission-mindedness of West Virginia Free Will Baptists also extends to their giving. The state-sponsored cooperative plan received more than \$88,000 in 1984. With new regular contributions each month the state co-op plan is expected to exceed its 1985 budget of \$100,000.

Undesignated gifts are divided for the support of the State Mission Board, State Publication Board, State Christian Education Board, Free Will Baptist Home for Children (Greeneville, Tenn.), the general fund of the state association and the National Association Cooperative Plan of Support.

## The Future

Serving the Lord means "living as if Christ will return today but planning as if His return is tomorrow." So it is among West Virginia Free Will Baptists. Plans are underway to make the promotional director a full-time position. Discussion is taking place regarding a centralized state office. An invitation has been extended to host the 1991 National Convention in Charleston.

Indeed West Virginia Free Will Baptists are beautiful people. They understand what the psalmist meant when he wrote, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1, 2). They love the Lord and share Him with those they meet.

No wonder popular singer-songwriter John Denver called West Virginia "Almost Heaven!" ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Carl Sullivan is a member of Central Free Will Baptist Church, Huntington, West Virginia.

# Yes, You Can!

By Floyd Wolfenbarger

**I**t's a common but desperate mistake to think that God only uses people who are self-assured and confident in their abilities. This thinking permits a person to avoid any Christian duty with which he is uncomfortable.

Moses protested his inadequacy as a speaker as though that would exempt him from obeying God's command. Throughout the Old and New Testaments God called on people to do what they thought they were no good at, and it was precisely for such things that those saints are now famous.

*No Christian is too inadequate to pray.* Many feel that prayer is the privilege of those poetic souls who can move God by cunning mixtures, flattery and faith. Every Christian is His child and He is moved by their sincere petitions.

We have made prayer too complicated with formulas and prescriptions for praying. It is never inadequacy of words that hinders prayer. Rather prayer is hindered by insincerity of heart disguised behind pious words. If you are sincere, you can pray.

*Nor are Christians inadequate to witness.* Some envy the bold vacuum

salesman who won't take "no" for an answer. That's the kind of person we often think God uses to be His witness.

Have we so easily forgotten that timid, fearful and scattered disciples were His chosen witnesses to the first century world. Not many wise, noble or powerful were called—only ordinary people, protesting their inadequacy, doing extraordinary things. If you are submissive, you can witness.

*Finally, no Christian is inadequate to overcome temptation.* Who has not admired the firm resolve of Eric Liddell, the "Flying Scotsman" who refused to run on Sunday? To be tempted by the prince and the press and stand firm is to be admired for determination.

God does not expect us to overcome by will, rather by willingness. If you want, God will make a way of escape. If you are willing you can overcome. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Floyd Wolfenbarger wrote this article on February 26, 1985.

# The Four Faces of Trust

By Brenda McElyea

**Trust.** A good companion. One who helps another reach full potential as an honest, dependable individual. One who gives another chance and another, until convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt of unreliability.

**Trust?** You've heard of it, I'm sure. Remember the first time your mother let you ride your bike to the neighborhood store? What did she tell you? Mine said, "I'll let you go if you'll go straight there and come straight back!"

When I returned, did she say, "Did you come straight back?" No, she said, "My, that didn't take long!" knowing in the back of her mind just how long it should take me. In the back of my mind, I knew because I did what she expected of me I would get to go again.

**Trust!** It's painful when you break that bond. A trusting relationship is

one of mutual benefit. You feel good when you trust a friend. You feel good when a friend trusts you.

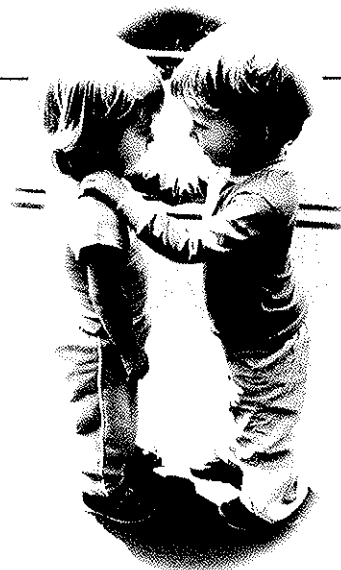
Likewise, you feel like a rat if you doubted a friend who comes through in the clinch. And you get really mad if you're distrusted without legitimate reason. Do you think a friend should feel any differently?

**Trust.** Why is it so important? Because it gives you significance. Ever been distrusted? Makes you feel like a heel, doesn't it? You feel like you always have to explain yourself so nobody gets the wrong impression.

Ever been trusted? Feels great, huh? No explanations necessary, no doubts or suspicions to clear up.

Through the pen of Paul, Jesus instructs us to encourage one another, to build one another up, to edify one another. That's a tough job, next to impossible if we try it without love.

But love is trust in action. Christ said love *always* perseveres, protects,



trusts, hopes. So how do we encourage, build up and edify one another?

It's simple—Trust me! ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Brenda McElyea is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Johnston City, Illinois. She was converted at the age of 21. She is a senior at Free Will Baptist Bible College.*

## What About Our Best?

By Jeffrey Stegall

**W**hile attending Bible College, I sang in the choir under a director who was a stickler for detail. I often asked, "Why do our songs have to be perfect?" Now I know.

Many people think that when they work for the Lord their service to Him doesn't have to be polished. It's a disease called "Christian Mediocrity."

A friend of mine in Raleigh, North Carolina once summed it up like this, "We Christians are great at being mediocre."

We often hear the attitude, "You pray for us 'cause we a'int practiced a bit!" As if to say, "I didn't take time to practice to do my best, so if I forget my words or miss some notes, please understand."

How sad this attitude is. Oh, I don't have the misconception that every preacher should sound like a radio announcer and every song should sound like a top-10-tune.

God looks over mistakes if... *IF* we make those mistakes while we are

doing our best. That is the key—doing our best for God!

Some have the notion that everything that we do for God pleases Him. Genesis 4:4-5 gives us a different view: "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell."

No wonder Cain was downcast; the Lord had just rebuked him for not doing his best. Cain knew the sacrificial system as well as Abel, but he chose to ignore it and tried to palm off on God his idea of what was acceptable.

If one of us was asked by the mayor of his town to speak or sing at a town gathering, think of the hours that would go into choosing the right material, learning that material and practicing, practicing, practicing. All that time would be used to please man. How much more important is doing our best to please God?

We often offer God that which costs us little or nothing. "The church needs a new stove? Well, I have an old stove in the basement. It's not in very good condition, but it's only for the church." Is it a sacrifice when we give our 1948 Amana to the Lord and go home to cook on our space-age computerized cooking unit? I think not.

David said that he wouldn't sacrifice to the Lord burnt offerings that cost him nothing (II Samuel 24:24). How can we give the Lord offerings (of song for instance) when we don't use any of our precious time to practice or pray? It costs us nothing to get up and sing for a group of people on the spur of the moment.

You say, "It's only for the Lord."? No, it is for the Lord! ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Jeffrey Stegall is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He resides in South Roxana, Illinois.*





By Daryl Ellis

**S**hould a Christian worker concern himself with physical fitness? Since the exercise craze is on, are we buying into a worldly trend?

Here it comes . . . running instead of praying; conformed to the image of Bruce Jenner; the body more important than the soul. A health nut must be preaching his gospel of heavenly bodies. Hardly!

This pastor is overweight and participates in sports vicariously—a sports fan. With these “disqualifications” he hopes you will take this article even more seriously.

Why talk about physical fitness when no biblical teaching exists? One wonders why this void exists. First of all, the authors wrote a spiritual message. Many subjects are untouched by the Word. Does that mean medicine and mechanics are not vital?

Paul wrote in I Timothy 4:8, “For bodily exercise profiteth little . . .” Though it appears so, he does not demean exercise. Verse eight teaches that exercise must take a back seat to godliness. Don’t pamper your body and starve your heart.

The second reason for this void in the Bible is that Palestine presents a different set of circumstances in diet and lifestyle from America. Cereal grains, nuts, vegetables and fruits highlighted the menu. People boiled or roasted their food. Every village didn’t have the Golden Arches. The deserts weren’t dotted with fattening franchises.

Vic Tanny would go bankrupt in Palestine because exercise was a way of life, quite unlike the Western world today. People did not use planes and cars for transportation. Therefore, Bible authors did not address physical fitness. However, the Christian worker

should make health and fitness concerns of his life.

How can someone living for eternity stoop to place emphasis on this earthly life? Why hinder a lifestyle that works to get an early ticket to heaven? Simple. Getting people to heaven is important. We, who are responsible to reach, teach, train and mobilize must be able to do it well and as long as possible!

Opening our eyes could lengthen our ministry. Stress, the killer companion of many workers, could become creative strength. Self-esteem gained from fitness will sparkle our efforts for the Lord.

### Claim Those Cliches

Yes, this could be a matter of life and death. Since we spend considerable time guiding people in the faith, let’s use some of our cliches on ourselves.

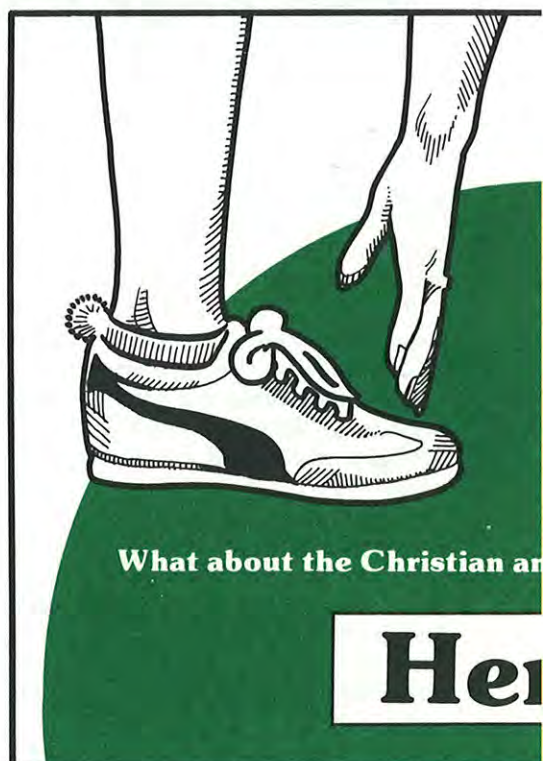
## Fit To Be Tried

*Words are important; seek the truth.* Fitness differs from health. Whereas health is “freedom from disease,” fitness is “the ability to perform.” Fitness is easier to change than health, assuming health changes are possible. Don’t develop your understanding of nutrition and exercise from the popular books and talk shows. Research qualified medical writings.

*Don’t believe everything you hear.* It’s easier to name who doesn’t have a diet, health or fitness book than who does. Using cosmetic appeal and popularity, unqualified people dispense their dogma to their disciples.

*Be realistic in your expectations.* Many start to exercise and quit because the routine didn’t suit them or discouragement triumphed. Dr. Lawrence Morehouse in *Total Fitness* writes, “The way to achieve fitness is to be delighted with anything that takes you where you are right now to being a little better.” This kind of realism doesn’t satisfy the spartans out there, but normal people must take note.

*Be yourself.* Young men who are active will opt for more strenuous work than older men who are inactive.



New exercisers over 30 should consult a doctor before starting any program.

Much advice is prescribed by professional trainers and athletes. An athlete’s approach to fitness training isn’t necessary. Signing up for a marathon isn’t a measure of one’s spirituality. Also, God gave some people sedan frames. Give up your dreams of a Ferrari body.

*Shun profane and vain babblings.* Sweating does not get you in shape.

(Continued on page 19)





# e's To Your Health



By Larry D. Hampton

**H**umans come in all shapes and sizes. Over the years some of us engage in expansion programs. Then there are those who retain a slim and trim torso. Disgusting aren't they?

Are you right-handed? Most people are. Some are left-handed. Still others are ambidextrous.

"Can I get you something to eat? How about a hot dog?" Did you know the average American consumes 92

hot dogs a year? Still, not everyone is into hot dogs.

While we are all different—male, female, short, tall—with different backgrounds and preferences, we do share one thing in common. All of us experience sickness. Although what you suffer from may not be what I've been afflicted with, we both know what it means to be ill.

Find a cure for the common cold and you will be rich. Discover the cure for cancer and you will be famous.

Illness is a fact of life. That's why companies provide employees sick days and health insurance.

**H**emorrhoids or typhoid fever, every physical problem has its roots in sin. That's not to say you get a

cold because of sin in your life. Cancer is not an evidence of God's disfavor.

"God is not always trying to tell us anything specific each time we hurt. We may simply be experiencing the consequences of our actions or the facts of the universe, too little exercise, a poor diet, contact with a germ," reminds Philip Yancey.

The point is, sickness entered the world as a result of Adam's sin. Let me explain.

God placed Adam and Eve in a flawless environment. He made provision for their every need. One tree was placed off limits. To partake of that tree in the midst of the garden was to be subjected to God's wrath.

So why are we sick? Ask Satan. He's the culprit who tempted earth's first couple. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. They ate of the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden. As a result, they (and all their descendants) came under God's curse. That's why all men get sick and eventually die.

Our society is health conscious. (Maybe you have noticed folks jogging under unhealthy conditions for their health.) But it is true, when you've got your health, you've got just about everything.

If you're healthy, be grateful. Don't take your health for granted. Guard your health by practicing good health habits. Use your strength in the service of the Lord.

Remember to pray for the ill. Visit them. Help them in any way you can.

**W**hile all suffer the assorted ills that flesh is heir to, Christians should be healthier. After all, Christians don't worry. (At least they aren't supposed to.)

Worry is the breeding ground for a raft of ailments you can do without. We have our Lord's promise that anyone who puts God's work first will have his needs supplied (Matthew 6:33).

A believer recognizes that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. That being true, he abstains from alcohol, drugs, cigarettes (While it may not be a sin to smoke, it is certainly saner not to.), and too much food.

By now you know I can't guarantee that you will never be ill. You may contract a disease that baffles your doctor.

Should this occur, remember Jesus is the Great Physician. He can heal you. To be exact, He heals all our diseases. Some instantly; others gradually, by a combination of rest and medication.

It's great to live in a land with so many fine doctors. All of us should thank God for medical discoveries that brought such diseases as tuberculosis, small pox and polio under control.

One day all illnesses will be healed resurrectionally. His second coming (our resurrection) will signal the end of all disease.

While God can heal you, He may not. That is why we pray asking that God's will be done. God's grace is sufficient.

**W**hile there is no way to insure a disease-free future, here are a few suggestions that can help you enjoy a healthier life.





## YOUR HEALTH (from page 17)

Eat wisely. Eat nutritious meals in moderation. Dr. Myron Winnick, director of Columbia University's Institute of Human Nutrition reminds us "too much food contributes to the problem of obesity, which is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, atherosclerosis, high blood pressure, gallbladder disease and diabetes."

Get plenty of exercise. Jogging, walking, swimming and cycling are pleasant, enjoyable ways to give your body the exercise it needs.

Jesus knew man's need for rest. That's why He called His disciples to come apart and rest. One writer wisely said if you don't come apart to rest, you will come apart.

Are you a night person or a day person? Plan your schedule so that you make the most of the best part of your day.

Can you say "no"? If not, you will live according to an agenda prepared by others. Be realistic. You are not a bionic man. You can't do everything. You have limitations. Accept them. Do yourself a favor; learn to say "no".

Norman Cousins discovered what Solomon knew long ago. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Smile. Laugh. You will be healthier and life will be more enjoyable.

I hate to admit it, but you may experience deteriorating health even though you follow these guidelines religiously. Any one of us may suffer from a chronic disease for years. You may become disabled. One day all of us will have a final illness.

But death isn't all bad. "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Only then will we enjoy perfect health. We will be free of pain and sickness forever. ▲

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Larry Hampton is principal of Bethany Christian School, Norfolk, Virginia.*

## KNOW A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT?

Send his/her name and address to:

**Free Will Baptist Bible College**  
**3606 West End Avenue**  
**Nashville, Tennessee 37205**

# The Free Will Baptist Pulpit

**Reverend Robert Rose, Pastor**

**Mt. Elon Free Will Baptist Church, Pamplico, South Carolina**

## A Father's Love

**Text: Romans 5:1-11**

### INTRODUCTION

There are several levels of love and commitment among people. There are the commitments we have to friends and associates, members of our families and to fellow Christians. But none of these relationships produces a behavior on our part equal to the way God has behaved toward the human race.

While it is impossible to entirely define or understand God's love, perhaps a consideration of the way God's love behaves will at least stimulate our love for Him and others.

#### I. The Time of God's Love

- A. When We Were Without Strength (Rom. 5:6)
- B. When We Did Not Love God (I John 4:10)
- C. When We Did Not Want God's Love (I John 4:19)

#### II. The Objects of God's love

- A. The Ungodly (Rom. 5:6)
- B. The Sinner (Rom. 5:8)
- C. The Enemy (Rom. 5:10)

Note: This is not intended to imply that there are groups of sinners. Actually, the terms "ungodly," "sinner," and "enemy" apply to all men outside of Christ.

#### III. The Expression of God's Love (Rom. 5:8)

- A. God's Love is Not Passive.
- B. God Commends (or proves) His Love by Action.
- C. God's Love is Proven Through Giving (John 3:16).
- D. The Quality of God's Love is Seen in What He Gave. He Gave Himself, Not Things.

#### IV. The Purpose of God's Love

- A. As strange as it might seem, the purpose of God's love is to benefit its objects (John 3:16; I John 4:9).
- B. In the passage before us we see the underlying purpose or objective of God's love in such terms as "justified," "saved," and "reconciled."

Indications are that these were His goals all the time, to acquit man of all crimes against Him, to save him from an eternity of torment and ruin, and to bring him again into fellowship with his Creator.

### CONCLUSION

We live at a time when the love and commitment of many of the Lord's people have "waxed cold." This is evidenced by the lack of warmth in our relationships and the lack of commitment to each other and to the cause of Christ in the world.

In view of this we should look again at John's first century admonition: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (I John 3:16).

If God has behaved toward us in this way, does it not stand to reason that we, being children of God, should behave in a similar way toward others?

## **FIT TO BE TRIED** (from page 16)

Skip the rubber suits. Ditch the Dexamtrim. Wraps are a ripoff. Avoid the ads.

**Watch your testimony.** Don't brag about your exploits at the dinner table. Some preachers are known more for their appetites than for their ministry. A fruit of the Spirit is self-control. This may be one of our blind spots.

**Your problems don't automatically go away.** Jim Fixx, a noted runner, died of a heart attack while running. Exercise doesn't necessarily change our health. Chromosomes and environment guide our health. A great athlete may be unhealthy; a healthy person may be a poor athlete. Diet and exercise are not a cure-all.

**God wants to help you.** If God will rescue us in sinful temptations, it should follow that He grants victory over a potato chip or an irresistible dessert. A Christian is in the driver's seat because he possesses the Holy Spirit. Power to witness, love enemies, accomplish great ministries and yes, power to resist the urges of the flesh.

**Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.** You are what you eat. Nicotine isn't the only chemical to avoid. Yet, we treat our stomachs like a garbage disposal. We argue, "It's tough going to socials, visiting people, preaching revivals and not be like everyone else." Maybe our children aren't listening; hope so.

**Develop daily habits.** You can change your life with effective daily rituals. Thirty minutes of quality exercise at least three days a week will result in fitness. Alternate exercises to work different muscle groups.

**Don't reform, renew yourself.** Losing weight is so easy, I've done it many times. Change your habits and lifestyle instead of fasting or crashing. Busy-ness may result in barrenness. Exercise done improperly is rather useless.

Your cardiovascular system doesn't benefit unless exercise is sustained at 80 percent of the maximum heart rate for a reasonable period of time (20-30 minutes). This is explained in most discussions on aerobics. Kenneth Cooper broke the ice on this in the 60's with his book, *Aerobics* and followed it with *The New Aerobics*.

The principle is this. Stress under the proper conditions builds and expands a person's capacity. Something like the trying of your faith works patience is an example.

Maximum heart rates vary with individuals. A medical person should be consulted for this and a demonstration of pulse reading. Doing it right is more important than doing it.

**Be faithful, don't depend on quick results.** Covert Bailey in *Fit or Fat* alerts us, "Very few calories are used during exercise. But, exercise changes us. It increases the metabolic rate, increases the amount of muscle, and raises the level of calorie-consuming enzymes inside the muscles and so increases the burning of the fat. This process continues after the activity is ended." Steady Eddie prospers more than Fast Freddy.

## **Outdoor/Indoor Exercises**

Here are some outdoor exercises that are good for you. Jogging/running—good for fat, bad for joints. Walking—excellent, especially with a loaded backpack. Cycling—non-weight bearing, good for back-sufferers, but you must not stop. Swimming—good for lungs and heart, less for fat burning.

Indoor exercises. Jumping rope—great. Running in place—boring, need a cushion for your feet. Chair-stepping—tailor the height to your fitness level. Stationary bicycle—great but costs for a quality one. Rowing machine—good for the upper body as well as all major muscles. Treadmill—more costly, watch your pace.

Remember, the effectiveness is lost if you do not sustain the exercise for at least 20 minutes after your heart rate increases to 80 percent of your maximum heart rate. Tribulation worketh great things!

Preachers can take advantage of their activities to tone up lazy muscles

and develop flexibility. Use stairs instead of elevators. Avoid those hospital parking places for clergy. They are too close and you lose walking steps. Do stretching exercises while talking on the phone. While sitting at your desk do isometric and isotonic exercises. Make the sedentary lifestyle work for you!

Do you want to serve the Lord as long as possible? An inactive life is a slow form of suicide. The right kind of exercise may buy years. Make physical fitness part of your life. Accept its importance, schedule it as a primary-level priority, and work on your attitude as you work your plan.

One caution, though. Don't get caught in the "excess trap." It is easy to become lopsided. More wisdom is shown and ability required to manage a *balanced* life. A preacher's life glorifies God most when it includes study, witness, work, family, leisure and exercise. People tend to be tempted toward the sensational, lopsided person.

Physical exercise may be more spiritual than we think. "See then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15, 16). ▲

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Daryl Ellis pastors Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, South Roxana, Illinois.

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### **Additional Reading**

Baily, Covert. *Fit or Fat*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978.  
Cooper, Kenneth H. *Aerobics*. New York: Evans & Co. Inc., 1968.  
Cooper, Kenneth H. *The New Aerobics*. New York: Evans & Co. Inc. 1970.  
Morehouse, Lawrence. *Total Fitness*. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1975.

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## **Coming Next Month . . .**

- ☐ **Daddy Was a Missionary**
- ☐ **Help, I'm a Chaplain's Wife**
- ☐ **Sins That Missed the "Most Wanted" List**
- ☐ **How to Keep a Church Secretary**



# Yes, We Must Say No!

By Marsha Rolen



**S**aturday night at 9:30 the telephone rings. "Hi, we need you to sing a solo in the morning service." But your daughter has a part in the children's church skit. Which do you choose?

On Tuesday, the Woman's Auxiliary president asks you to speak at next Monday's meeting. But it's the only night you have free to spend with your family. What should you do?

"Good morning, Pastor, how about going to a conference with me this Friday?" the dilemma begins. For weeks you've planned a fishing trip with a friend. Would he understand if you changed your plans? Should you change them? You need to get away and relax. But what will this church member think if you decline the conference offer.

Many pastors and laymen serve on endless numbers of committees. Women are busy hosting or attending

parties where they buy plastic, crystal or home decorations. It seems impossible to say no.

The cost, both in money and time, often devastates our personal budgets and family ties. But it's so hard to resist!

## Learn To Say No

Learning to say no is tough. If we say yes, we feel guilty because we have less time to spend with our families. Saying no results in guilt feelings for disappointing someone who's depending on us.

We must not allow Satan to ticket us with a guilt trip which may lead to

our destruction. We don't need to feel that we're under some divine obligation to say yes to everything for which we are "volunteered."

None of us has conquered this task. It may seem small and insignificant, but always saying yes destroys relationships. We must learn to simplify our lives by filtering the roles that demand our time.

My position as a supervisor for students at a Christian college forced me to learn to say no. I couldn't fulfill every request and plea. I had to be fair to my family and to myself as well. I learned that it was better to complete one job than to leave a half dozen projects scattered about my life.

## What To Consider

We must pray about our responsibilities to projects and people. This helps us choose a few jobs and do

them well. Obviously we cannot do our best if we rush madly from meeting to project.

## Why We Say No

Ministers are warned that it will not matter how many people they win if they lose their families. Ever wonder why such a warning is necessary?

A college student told me about her babysitting job with a non-Christian family. The parents place high priority on the family. They read bedtime stories nightly and emphasize shared time. Yet in many Christian homes, parents are too busy to read or share with their children.

We say we're concerned about the eternal destiny of people around us. But it's not unusual to hear a Sunday School teacher begin with an apology. "Sorry, I'm not well prepared today."

Or what about the abandoned wife who's left to rear her child alone? It seems that everyone in the church is too busy to spend time with her. All she needs is a good listener.

Then there are those lonely individuals who come to church to visit but are never greeted. We are too busy to get involved in their lives. If we fail to get involved, we cannot know them. We can't help those that we don't understand.

The result of not saying no at the right times for the right reasons is obvious. We're too busy for our families and fellow Christians. We cannot lend a helping hand or a listening ear.

In His infinite wisdom, Jesus approached Martha's busyness in Luke 11, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but

one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

We face a danger of "busying" ourselves with the little endless jobs so that often we lose sight of the "good part" of serving our Lord well.

The time to perform each new undertaking must be found. This time must be taken from another activity or relationship. Where shall we deduct it? There's the all-too-real possibility of scheduling ourselves so rigidly that we write our family off the edge of our appointment book and lose sight of discipleship, marriage and parenthood as God designed them.

## Why We Say Yes

Professor Leroy Forlines says that our personalities are molded by what we think other people think we are. In light of his statement, I was intrigued with an article in a widely read magazine. I clipped an article from the May 1983 issue of *Redbook* entitled "How To Say No (Without Guilt, Lies, or Excuses)." A bold print statement leaped at me, "I was letting my fears of what other people might think make my decision for me." What other people think! How often this becomes the motivation for what we say, think and do.

We must examine our reasons for being so busy and set priorities to reach the right goals. In light of Philipians 2:3, ask if saying yes is for the benefit of others. Ask, "Could someone else do the job as well as I could?" Ego dislikes letting go.

## How To Say No

—The person must see in you a genuine desire to help. Listen to the need. Preface your no with concern for the project or situation.

—By listening, you may be able to discover another approach to the problem or situation.

—Feel free to share why you are saying no—children, spouse, another position or financial cost involved.

—Give advice on how to get someone new involved.

—Set rules for yourself. Explain that you're involved with Woman's Auxiliary or Vacation Bible School.

—Be true to yourself. For example, it may be your policy never to buy

anything at home parties (no matter how great a bargain).

—Good humor and firmness do mix. Learn to say no with a smile.

—Be tactful and kind. Be friendly and express that you're honored to be asked.

The lesson we should learn is aptly taught in a children's song. We are to be "wrapped up, tied up, tangled up in Jesus"—not in tasks we have undertaken.

A friend said recently, "God's call is always accompanied by His supply. If a job goes undone, maybe it is better so." Perhaps the best way to do some jobs is not to do them at all. ▲

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Mrs. Marsha Rolan is student supervisor at Free Will Baptist Bible College. She's a member of Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.





FREE WILL BAPTIST

## newsfront

### STATE BEGINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MOULTRIE, GA—Georgia Free Will Baptists began a historical society in 1985 to preserve Free Will Baptist history in the state. The group has also launched a new publication, *The Timemachine*, an occasional newsletter to distribute society news.

The first issue of *The Timemachine* came off the press this summer and featured a major article about the Zion Bible School in Blakely, Georgia, written by Reverend Steven Hasty.

Reverend Hasty said, "We hope the idea (of a historical society) will catch on all across our denomination. Our state office did a mass mailing of the first issue of *The Timemachine* to 2,200 people."

During the upcoming November 14-16 session of the Georgia State Association which meets in Norman Park, the historical society will elect officers and adopt by-laws.

### MARY WISEHART TAKES WNAC HELM

NASHVILLE, TN—The new chief executive officer for Woman's National Auxiliary Convention, Dr. Mary R. Wisehart, told leaders at the WNAC Presidents and Field Workers Meeting at the July national convention, "Other faithful women had yesterday, but tomorrow is ours."

Dr. Wisehart, 52, assumed duties as WNAC executive secretary-treasurer in August, succeeding Mrs. Cleo Pursell who retired from the post after 22 years. Wisehart came to the office after 30 years at Free Will Baptist Bible College where she chaired the department of English and speech.

The Missouri native told WNAC leaders, "We cannot rest on past achievements. We must put behind us missed opportunities, past mistakes, personal failures and weaknesses."

She cautioned, "Let us not divide ourselves. Let us not become entangled in the velvet curtain of comforts. Let us not seek to make a name for ourselves . . . getting credit, demanding rights, and so forget that we are laborers together."

Dr. Wisehart urged the group to blaze new trails as women of faith and vision. "I believe that God has some special goals for us as Christian women," she said.

"We are writing today what Free Will Baptist women will be reading 50 years from now," Wisehart continued. "Sanctify yourselves; set yourselves apart for God. Be prepared to give, to sacrifice."

Dr. Wisehart brings extensive auxiliary experience from her local church,



Tennessee's Cumberland District Association, the Tennessee State Woman's Auxiliary Convention, as well as the national organization.

Dr. Wisehart wrote a history of the WNAC, *Sparks into Flame*, which was published this summer.

She said that she expects to become involved as the WNAC meeting planner, focusing on the annual national convention and the bi-annual national retreat. She plans to pursue membership in the Religious Conference Management Association, a professional organization for meeting planners.

Dr. Wisehart has four earned degrees: Ph.D., M.A., B.A., from George Peabody College; B.A. from Free Will Baptist Bible College.

She is a member of the Historical Commission of the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

### MEMPHIS CHURCH BURNS BOND

MEMPHIS, TN—Members of North Memphis Free Will Baptist Church, 4080 Mamie Road, Memphis, paid their final bond payment and celebrated with a ceremonial bond burning and home coming service in June, reports pastor Eddie Hopkins.

Former pastor Jerry Pressley returned to help light the fire during the Sunday morning ceremony.

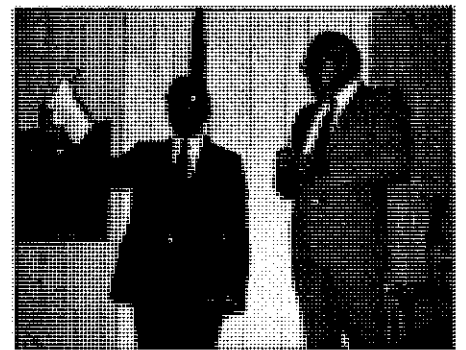
The church was organized in 1957 as Shelby Free Will Baptist Church at Shelby Center in Memphis, and moved to its present location later that year. Part of the present building was erected in 1971.

Pastor Hopkins said, "The church fell upon difficulty and was closed for a brief time in 1973 and 1974, but thanks to the Home Missions Department was re-opened in June 1974 under the leadership of Rev. Jerry Pressley who served the church until October 1981."

A classroom addition and fellowship hall was started under the leadership of Rev. Pressley and completed in 1982 under the leadership of Rev. Hopkins. The church has a membership of about 90.

Rev. Hopkins previously pastored in Ohio where he organized and built a church in North Ridgeville. He also

served as pastor of First FWB Church in Memphis for six years.



(L) Pastor Eddie Hopkins, Jerry Pressley

## CHURCH CONDUCTS FIRST VBS

PENSACOLA, FL—Members of Soul's Harbor FWB Church, Pensacola, completed their "first ever" Vacation Bible School in June, according to Pastor Barton Baird.

Reverend Baird praised workers who led the five-day session, noting that the group averaged 40 in daily attendance.

Baird said, "We had many first-time visitors, and on graduation night, a number of unchurched parents were present."

The VBS focused missionary emphasis on Japan, and gave a \$40 love offering.

"God is establishing His work on the north side of Pensacola," said Pastor Baird.



## FWBBC LAUNCHES NEW MASTER'S PROGRAM

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College announced a new Master of Ministry program for full-time church workers that can be earned by studying at home and attending one-week seminars at the college, according to Dr. Robert Picirilli, dean of the graduate school. He says, "This program is designed especially for pastors and other church workers who are unable to leave their places of ministry to attend graduate school."

The college will offer three courses per year—two in the summer and one in December. Students must complete eight courses (32 credit hours) to earn the M. Min. degree.

In addition to the week of study on campus, each student will be required to read related textbooks and complete assignments before attending the campus seminars. After the week of seminars, each student will also do a ministry project in his own church.

Program courses include "Evangelism/Church Growth," "Church and Ministry," "Pastoral Leadership/Administration," "Pastoral Care/Counseling," and "The Educational Program of The Church." Other courses will be

added. The program may be taken either for credit or non-credit.

There are five requirements for acceptance into the program. Applicants must (1) meet general requirements for all students the Bible College accepts, (2) have a college degree (unless the courses will be taken for non-credit), (3) have at least one year's experience in full-time Christian ministry, (4) be presently involved in a full-time ministry, and (5) have the recommendation and approval of his church to take the program.

The first course, "Evangelism/Church Growth," will be taught on campus Dec. 30, 1985-Jan. 3, 1986. All students must be enrolled at least 30 days before the campus session in order to have time to read the textbooks and complete other assignments. Tuition is \$250 for credit; \$200 for non-credit. Room/board will be charged extra.

Anyone interested in more information on this new program may write or call:

Free Will Baptist Bible College  
3606 West End Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37205-2498  
(615) 383-1340

## NORTH CAROLINA CHURCH PROVES 'IT CAN BE DONE'

WILSON, NC—Members of Peace FWB Church, Wilson, completed a four-week no frills, no gimmicks summer growth campaign that resulted in 828 attending morning services on August 4, according to Pastor Gordon Sebastian.

In mid-June, Pastor Sebastian mailed a letter containing one sentence to all members—"It Can Be Done." When members arrived at church the following Sunday, they discovered that same statement on every wall. No one knew what the statement meant except the pastor, and he refused to talk.

After three weeks of receiving "It Can Be Done" mail from the church, members were told the secret. Peace FWB Church could have a big Sunday morning attendance on the middle Sunday of summer—August 4. The goal was 600, but the pastor hoped to reach a higher unannounced goal of 700.

Sebastian said that the plan was simple and the promotion low-keyed.

For four weeks all members and friends of Peace FWB Church received mail urging them to do two things—attend and bring one visitor. No commitments were made and no pledges were signed. Members were reminded that the church world had said, "It can't be done. No one can have a big attendance in the middle of summer."

At 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 4, a

group of men met with the pastor to pray for success. The pastor explained that the real purpose of the prayer meeting was to give God the credit and the glory for reaching the goal.

After the usher chairman handed him the attendance total, Reverend Sebastian said, "Our goal as not only reached, but smashed. We had 828 with 154 coming on buses."





# newsfront

(continued)

## SOUTHEASTERN SLATES MISSIONS CONFERENCE, 'GET ACQUAINTED DAYS'

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—Southeastern Free Will Baptist College will host its third annual Missions Conference, November 10-12. The conference begins Sunday evening at 6:30 and concludes with the Tuesday evening service.

Speakers include Pastor Bob King, pastor of Cramerton Free Will Baptist Church, Cramerton, North Carolina; Rev. Roy Thomas, National Home Missions Director, and Sam Yerby, veteran Free Will Baptist missionary to Japan.

The college will also observe "Get Acquainted Days" for junior and senior high students November 21-24. Prospective students will arrive on campus Thursday night and leave after Sunday morning services.

They will attend classes and chapel on Friday with activities planned Friday night. Saturday, they will visit bus routes, military bases. Sunday School classes and teenage soul winning, capped off by a giant youth rally Saturday night at Gateway FWB Church under the direction of Nate Ange.



Bob King



Roy Thomas

## GEORGIA CHURCH PURCHASES HOME FOR RETIRING PASTOR

COLQUITT, GA—With the retirement of Pastor Damon C. Dodd from the pastorate, Bellview Free Will Baptist Church, Route 3, Colquitt, purchased a home for Dr. and Mrs. Dodd and moved them into their new residence on June 22.

Dr. and Mrs. Dodd came to Bellview Church in March of 1983 as interim pastor. In November of 1983, the church elected Dr. Dodd as full-time pastor.

During this short time, Bellview Church experienced growth in every department and many projects have been completed, among which were a lighted tennis court, paved parking lot, and some renovations to the church interior. In addition to these and of far more importance, several people have accepted Christ as Savior and have been baptized and united with the church.

The Dodds will be living in this "second parsonage" on Route 3. Dr. Dodd will be serving in supply and interim ministries and will be completing two books which he had started previously.

## Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



**William F. Davidson, *The Free Will Baptists in America 1727-1984* (Nashville: Randall House Publications, 1985, 459 pp., hardback, \$14.95).**

In recent years, Free Will Baptists have come to develop a serious interest in our history. Writers and students are beginning to research the early years of our movement. This is a difficult and sometimes frustrating process. In the study of history, tradition is no substitute for evidence, and in many cases early Free Will Baptists left little hard evidence for us.

There is little doubt that the author of this work is the outstanding historian in our ranks, and we owe him a great debt of gratitude. He spent long hours

researching early published works, unpublished manuscripts, diaries, letters, court records and other sources in an effort to reconstruct and document our origins.

The author's basic contention is that our denomination does not have just one point of origin; it has several.

Paul Palmer and the other early leaders in North Carolina labored under the influence of the General Baptists. Benjamin Randall was the central figure in the North. Evidence indicates that he came to his theological position as a result of his own study of the scriptures and his contact with other religious groups in New England.

Other leaders arose in different parts of the country as a result of a variety of different influences. All of these various influences have helped to make us what we are today.

In my opinion, Davidson has established that there was considerable contact between Free Will Baptists in the North and those in the South. He has also established that the missionary work of the Randall movement contributed greatly to several of the states which presently form parts of our National Association.

This is a fine work which deserves to be studied in churches and colleges. It is a survey volume; many individuals who have made significant contributions to our denomination receive only brief mention. It is my hope that this book will stimulate other Free Will Baptists to the kind of scholarly work which Davidson has done. ▲



## Green Tree Bible Study

Robert E. Picirilli

Colossians 4:2-6

# Living Before the Watching World

**T**he late Francis Schaeffer liked to speak of the context of the Christian life as in the eyes of the watching world. You might say that we live in a fishbowl.

The apostle Paul was always conscious of that dimension of our responsibility. Here, as he begins to draw this short letter to a close, he's concerned again about the Christian's witness to unbelievers—both his own and his readers'.

*Request for Prayer for Paul's Witness* (vv. 2-4). This begins with a call to prayer (v. 2). In such few words Paul manages to name three qualities that ought to characterize Christian prayer.

First is *constancy*. "Continue" translates the Greek *proskartereo*, an uncommon word, linked six times in the New Testament with prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:4; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 6:18). It means to be always ready to pray, always "at the disposal of" prayer.

Second is *watching*, which translates the Greek *gregoreo*, also often linked with prayer. Prayer is staying spiritually alert, on guard.

Third is *thanksgiving*, which is so often associated with prayer that we

get the idea that we should also pray with gratitude.

The general call to prayer is turned to a specific request: namely to pray for Paul (vv. 3, 4). And not only for Paul's own witness ("I"), but also for all his co-workers in Rome ("us").

The Colossians should pray for them to have (literally) "an open door for the word." Then they will be able to speak "the mystery of Christ" (compare 1:26, 27), even though such speaking is the reason Paul is in prison at the time. In jail or not, Paul's goal is that he may declare the truth openly and fearlessly ("make it manifest"), because he senses that this is his duty.

We ought always to pray for those who preach the Word to have open doors and boldness to enter them.

*Challenge to Give Their own Witness* (vv. 5, 6). Not only should the Colossians pray for Paul, they should be equally concerned about their own responsibility to the lost around them.

They should walk wisely (v. 5a) toward unbelievers, those outside the congregation. We must be careful and prudent, measuring both the effect of our lives on sinners and how they influence us.

They should *redeem the time* (v. 5b)—literally, "buying up" (as precious,

Greek *exagorazomai*) the season: "letting no opportunity slip you, of saying and doing what may further the cause of God" (Lightfoot).

They should *speak graciously* (v. 6). Speech "with grace" probably means gracious, winsome speech. Even so, Christians are manifesting God's grace—His favored dealings with undeserving men—when *they* are gracious. And when we speak thus, that "grace" is the salt that seasons our witness, making it flavorful and appealing to the lost. (Even the heathen spoke of seasoning conversation with salt, by which they usually meant wit.)

The last part of v. 6 may explain only v. 6 or all of vv. 5, 6. Either way, it is crucial for the Christian to be wise in answering—responding to—those whom they have opportunity to reason with (cf. I Pet. 3:15).

When this is done, "Those who hear our words may sense that we are speaking to *their* needs and matching *their* questioning with God's provision in the message of his love and wisdom in Christ's cross" (Martin).

Thus the "wisdom" that should characterize our relationship with the unsaved involves both walk (v. 5) and word (v. 6). The world is watching us: what we do and say should always be done and said in that consciousness. ▲



The **Limestone FWB Church, Limestone, TN**, through its Vacation Bible School raised more than \$1,100 for missionary representatives **Don and Billie Sexton**. The check to help the cause of missions was presented to the Sextons by **Debbie Mitchell**. Though they serve the foreign missions outreach on the homefront, the Sextons must raise their support and have an account just as missionaries in foreign countries. **Alfred Cutchall** pastors.

Pastor **Freddy Dutton** reports that attendance at **First FWB Church, Garland, TX**, has doubled. Pastor Dutton said the church has voted to give 10 percent of all income to missions.

The **Atlantic Canada Association** of Free Will Baptists reports a new attendance record at **St. John Valley Bible Camp** with 119 campers. **Fred Hanson** serves as moderator and general board member for the group.

Pastor **Ronnie Lawson** of **First FWB Church, Sylvester, GA**, reports a note burning service in June to celebrate the final payment on a note that was used

to construct a new fellowship hall. The 30' x 60' block building was dedicated in May 1984. The structure was paid for in two years. Pastor **Lawson** said that a central heating and air conditioning system has also been installed in the church sanctuary and Sunday School rooms.

Camp director **Carl Young** said that 184 young people from California's **Golden Gate Association** concluded "a really good camp" near Watsonville. Fresno pastor **Joel Kircher** served as camp evangelist.

Construction on the **Fairfield FWB Church, Fairfield, CA**, began in June. Workers began unloading lumber on the 1.17 acre plot just off Interstate 80 at Travis Air Force Parkway. Home Missionary **Sam Hensley** pastors.

Pastor **Homer Young** of **First FWB Church, McAlester, OK**, conducts a 6:00 p.m. Sunday radio program for 30 minutes over Station KNED.

When Pastor **Jim Summerson** of **Mt. Calvary FWB Church, Hookerton, NC**, went back for his 25th high school reunion, he received an unusual award. Pastor Summerson received the award for "most changed." Brother

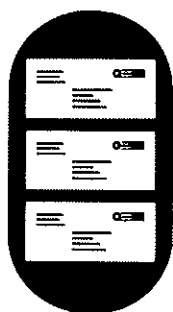
Summerson did not get saved until two years after his high school graduation. His former high school chums could hardly believe that he was now a minister of the gospel.

*Contact* welcomes the newsletter of **Ozark FWB Church, Ozark, AR**. **Charles Davis** pastors. The newsletter reported one conversion and two rededications as the result of work on a bus route.

The Master's Men chapter at **Oak Ridge FWB Church, Oak Ridge, TN**, put a new roof on the parsonage.

Pastor **Danny Keen** and the congregation at **Peace FWB Church, Florence, SC**, conducted ground breaking services for the first phase of their building program. The new facility is located on a 5.17-acre plot south of Florence. When completed, the structure will have a seating capacity of 215, an educational section that will house 10 Sunday School rooms, office space, and a kitchen and fellowship area.

Pastor **Robert Edwards** reports that the Vacation Bible School at **First FWB Church, Darlington, SC**, raised more than \$600 for the **Sherwood Lee** account. Mrs. **Melanie Munn** directed the VBS which enrolled 86 students. ▲



## OUR READERS COMMENT

### 'BEEFCASE' OR BRIEFCASE?

I began reading with interest your August editorial "It's A Dog's Life." However, as with so many times in the past, I was quickly disappointed.

I refer to your statement, "Yes, a few preachers resemble aristocratic poodles, more name than dog. They won't answer to Fred, Bill or Harry. They're addressed by highfalutin titles such as 'Doctor' (ouch!) . . ."

My experience with these "highfalutin" preachers is that they are humble men of God doing the work of God for the glory of God. It is from the ministry of these men that we are getting the preachers, missionaries and dedicated teenagers.

Instead of casting barbs and criticism, you should be thanking God for these men and holding up their hands in prayer. Your editorial would be better called "Beefcase" than "Briefcase."

Reverend Robert Edmonson, Pastor  
Crossroads Free Will Baptist Church  
Pontiac, Michigan

## CHEERS 'PASTOR APPRECIATION' ISSUE

The August issue just arrived, and, as always, I sat down and read practically every word before putting it down. Thanks for giving us such a timely and informative monthly.

I am especially appreciative of the emphasis in the August issue regarding the ministry of the pastor. I am thankful to God for the Free Will Baptist denomination in which I have been privileged to pastor for many years, and I am especially thankful for the church that I have pastored since March 1973.

There are many pressures brought to bear on today's ministry. However, I thank God that

He has those in all our churches who stand with the Lord's servants and become ministers of encouragement. We could not do without them.

While some disagree with *Contact*, I am happy to report that we have enjoyed the "Family Plan" for a number of years and will be including it in our forthcoming new church's budget recommendations. Carry on!

Reverend George Lee, pastor  
Victory Free Will Baptist Church  
Goldsboro, North Carolina

## WHO DO WE BLAME?

We have been reading articles on "respect the pastor." And rightfully so, because we have congregations of church members who are:

- disrespectful
- unholy
- selfish
- greedy
- ungrateful
- pleasure seeking
- and lazy.

On the other hand, do we not have a group of ministers who are:

- boastful
- unmerciful
- proud
- lucrative
- hard-hearted
- glory-seeking
- and spiritual dictators?

Were it not for some loving deacons, concerned laity and caring pastors, the cause of Christ would be non-existent.

It seems to me that the answer to our problems is not articles about "respect the pastor" nor "respect the laity," but an all-out effort to love and please the Master which will result in holy living and loving others.

All of us know that this is no new concept. It has been in God's Word for all to see since the apostles. We see it today in publications across the globe.

Is it possible that we have read and heard it so much that our ears are deaf and our hearts are hard? Is it possible that words will not penetrate the hardness? If so, our prayers have become mere words. And if so, what will it take?

Dora McReynolds  
Pleasant View, Tennessee

# Kids Can



# Serve God

## ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

**E**very morning at breakfast Mr. Lane read a Bible verse to his family. "Start your day in the Bible and you'll end it in a smile," he always said.

Today Mr. Lane read Joshua 24:15. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

"Let's memorize that verse," said Mrs. Lane. "I want our family to be one that serves the Lord."

"You're right," agreed Mr. Lane. So the Lanes repeated the verse until they all knew it, even little Jeff could recite most of it.

"Now, everybody, remember to do it," said Mr. Lane as he left for work. "During the day let's see if we can serve the Lord."

Marty and Megan finished eating and went outside to sit on the back porch steps.

"What do you want to do?" asked Marty.

Lost in her own thoughts, Megan said, "Wonder what that verse means? How are we supposed to serve the Lord?"

"Beats me," shrugged Marty. "We're just kids."

"Let's go for a walk," suggested Megan. "Maybe we'll find something to do for Jesus."

**A**s usual, when the twins took a walk, they ended up at Mrs. Douglas' farm. She was sitting in her porch swing, and the children were surprised to see tears running down her cheeks.

"What's wrong, Mrs. Douglas?" asked Marty.

"Oh, good morning kids," said Mrs. Douglas wiping her eyes with a handkerchief. "I was just sitting here feeling lonely. Today is Mr. Douglas' birth-

day. He would be 72 if he were still alive. And I'm missing him so."

"Please don't cry," said Megan sitting next to Mrs. Douglas. She took the lady's wrinkled hands in her own. "Try to think about something happy."

"We didn't know Mr. Douglas," said Marty, "but we remember lots of things you've told us about him."

"Yeah," said Megan, "like the time he put red pepper in the apple pie you were baking for the preacher."

"Oh, my," chuckled Mrs. Douglas. "I'd almost forgotten about that. I asked him to hand me the cinnamon and he gave the red pepper. He always said it was a mistake, but I knew better. I can see Preacher Kennedy now."

Before long the twins had Mrs. Douglas laughing and telling funny stories.

"I'm glad Mrs. Douglas feels better," said Megan as the twins walked home.

"I wish I did," sighed Marty. "We've spent most of the morning and still haven't come up with a way to serve the Lord."

**W**hen the twins reached home, Jeff was in the back yard. He was happy to see them. "Swing me, Marty," he pleaded. "Please."

"Not now," said Marty. "I want to go inside and watch TV."

"Please," begged Jeff. "Pu-leeesees!"

"Oh, all right," agreed Marty. "Beat you to the swing set!" The two brothers raced across the yard.

"Mom, we're back," called Megan as she opened the door. "What are you doing?"

"About a million things," said Mrs. Lane. "I'm doing laundry, trying to dust . . ." She was interrupted by a loud buzz from the clothes dryer. "That means Daddy's shirts are dry," said

Mrs. Lane. "I want to get them out before they wrinkle. I'll never get the dusting done."

"Give me the cloth," volunteered Megan. "I'll finish for you."

"You're a sweetheart," said Mrs. Lane giving her a quick kiss before she started to the laundry room.

**T**hat afternoon Marty and Megan were riding their bikes when they spotted a moving van at the new house on the corner of their street.

"Look," said Megan, "Somebody's moving into that new house. Wonder if they have any kids?"

"Let's stop and see," said Marty.

The twins parked their bicycles and walked to the front door. Their knock was answered by an 8-year-old boy. The twins introduced themselves and asked the boy, whose name was Alan, if he wanted to play.

"Mama, come here," called Alan. "This is Marty and Megan. They're twins and they live down the street. Can I go play? Please, Mama, can I?"

"Sure," answered his mother as she gave him a hug. "See, I told you you'd meet new friends at our new house."

So Marty, Megan and Alan played all afternoon. They rode bikes, played catch and were in the middle of hide-and-go-seek when Mrs. Lane called them for supper.

Alan jumped on his bike and waved goodbye. He pedaled home as hard as he could, smiling all the way.

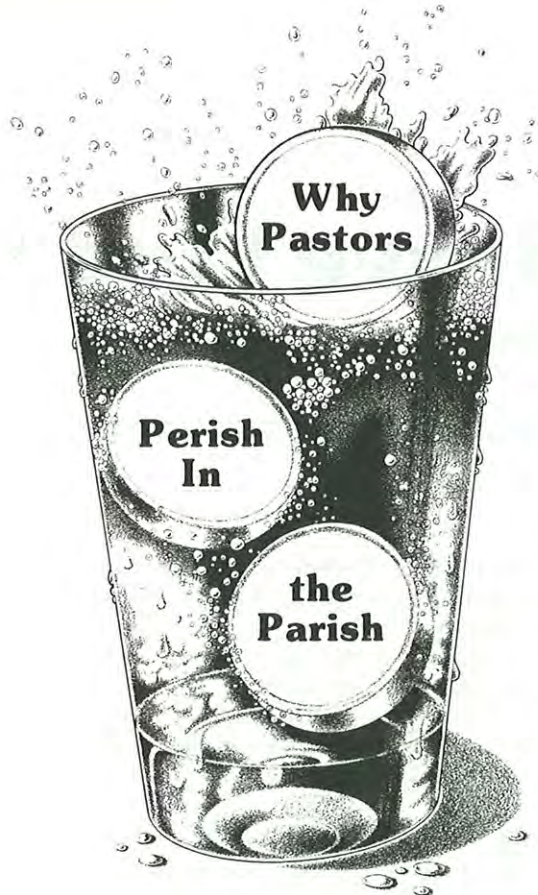
"Well," said Mr. Lane as the family sat down for supper, "did anyone remember to do your assignment today?"

"Assignment?" asked the twins with puzzled looks on their faces.

"Did anybody serve the Lord today?" asked Mr. Lane.







By Fred D. Hanson

**T**he Christian Church is reeling from a pastoral exodus. Numbers of active clergy are depleting so rapidly in some major denominations that task forces, study groups and special councils are being formed to analyze the growing problem.

Institutions of higher learning have not graduated ministerial students in sufficient numbers to alleviate the crisis.

Notes of sadness, regret and concern accompany this spiritual retreat.

#### LANES (from page 27)

"We were going to," said Megan. "I mean we tried."

"But we didn't know how," said Marty. "I guess we're too little."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Lane. "Even youngsters like you can serve Jesus."

"Why don't you tell us what you did do today," suggested Mrs. Lane, "and maybe we can think of something you could have done for Jesus."

So Marty and Megan recalled the day's events—their visit with Mrs. Douglas, swinging with Jeff, dusting and playing with Alan.

The pastor's family, church and associates must make major adjustments while trying to understand this malady of the ministry. Implications in heavenly terms are no less important. Desertion of pastoral duty must cause angels to weep and the Holy Spirit to grieve.

Why do pastors leave the ministry? Consider these reasons—

### IMPRESSIONS

First impressions cannot always be trusted. The world has forgotten (if it ever knew) that the ministry is a calling instead of a career. Many in the church have forgotten, too.

Some personalities gravitate toward the ministry because they see it as a position of power, great authority and recognition. They assert themselves, cultivate little tact, become domineering in their dictatorial philosophy of ministry and their congregations reject them.

Their impressions formed an improper basis of ministry which led to frustration and failure. Eventually the pastor may regard people as tools to be used, rather than persons to be loved and served. He then sacrifices them for his own ends.

This reaches into the pastor's home where the effects are just as devastating. The pastor manipulates his children and they soon become aware that their father's motivation is not their own spiritual welfare but his professional image.

A pastor may be anything from an overconscientious work-a-holic to a lazy gadabout. The pastor is his own boss, doesn't punch a time clock and doesn't report to a superior. No one

checks his hours or questions his schedule, so if he tends toward laziness, there's no better place to be lazy than in the ministry.

In an article entitled "Nobody's Perfect," published by The Ministers Life and Casualty Union, the question is asked, "Are you truly overworked? Or just afraid?" The article admits that members often expect too much of the pastor. But some pastors play right into the hands of their congregation by refusing to recognize their own human limitations.

They are so afraid of criticism, of not being needed, that they break their necks trying to keep busy. They're afraid to delegate responsibility. They think they'll lose their authority. They refuse vacation time because the church could discover it can get along without them.

But, as the article points out, work can be shared. Encourage lay people to perform functions once reserved for professional clergy. A competent church member can teach a home Bible class without supervision. Lay people can help with hospital visitation, counseling, evangelism. The harvest is doubly sweet.

### EXPRESSIONS

Lehman Strauss says, "Many congregations are a mixed multitude. Many who profess to be saved are still unregenerate, and the natural man has his limitations. He lives as if all his needs are physical and material."

Perhaps the fault belongs to the pastor, not the congregation.

We've fallen into the rut of preaching unfelt truth. We rattle through

He lives in you," said Mrs. Lane.

"Remember, kids," said their daddy, "the best way to serve the Lord is to serve others."

Marty thought for a minute before speaking. "Dad, do you want to serve the Lord tonight?"

"Sure," answered Mr. Lane.

"Well," began Marty, "I've been feeling kinda down today. A chocolate sundae sure would pick me up."

Mrs. Lane and Megan laughed. "How are you going to get out of this one?" asked Mrs. Lane.

"I think this is a set-up," laughed Mr. Lane as he herded his giggling family into the car. ▲

**W**hen they finished, their parents smiled. "And you say you didn't serve the Lord," said Mrs. Lane.

"That's what living for Jesus is all about," said Mr. Lane. "You were kind to those you met during the day. You cheered someone who was sad and lonely, you helped your mother and brother, and you made friends with a boy who was scared about moving to a new neighborhood. I'd say you both did a full day's work."

"You mean we served the Lord?" asked Marty excitedly.

"And we didn't even know it!" said Megan.

"Serving God comes naturally when



sermons as if they were stock market reports at the end of a day of poor trading. Absent is fire of a preacher delivering himself as he speaks.

Congregations err when they demand that their shepherd offer sermons with little emotion, content or conviction, perhaps admonishing them not to "rock the boat." Pastors incur the wrath of parishoners when they ride hobby horses, chase tangents and berate the faithful with statistics of what others are doing and are not doing.

We invite trouble with criticism and gossip when we pay scant attention to the provisions of the Word. A balanced spiritual diet of gospel preaching, evangelism, edification (milk for the new believer and meat for the mature Christian) as well as history is essential. The pastor, the congregation and the community will pay the price for uncontrolled expression or lack of proper expression. The success of any ministry will rise or fall on this point.

## OPPRESSIONS

Ralph Turnbull, in his book on a minister's obstacles, writes, "There is a common supposition that men in the ministry are exempt from the manifold temptations of Christian living and wear a kind of charmed life. Those who are engaged in the ministry of Christ's gospel know full well that rather than finding safety, we are targets for the insidious attacks of evil. . . . Preaching is the most perilous of all vocations."

Throughout the pastoral epistles Paul warns, "Beware!" David McCarthy, in an article entitled "On Guard," suggests four areas of concern.

He says: (1) Beware of the covetous eye; (2) beware of the cowardly heart; (3) beware of the critical lips; and (4) beware of the conceited mind.

All that is good stands as a target for all that is evil. The devil constitutes a major threat to the pastoral ministry today or in any day. Satan constantly attacks the man of God, his family, his home, his convictions, his values, his standards. For when the man of God is neutralized, the ministry will be paralyzed.

Continuous oppression demoralizes the strongest servant, causing him to become irresolute, illogical, and/or ir-

responsible in act and attitude. Every such victory for hell is a defeat for heaven.

## DEPRESSIONS

In 1840 Robert Murray McCheyne said, "I can truly say that I desire no other honor upon earth than to be allowed to preach the everlasting Gospel—the joy of ministry."

Warren Wiersbe, commenting on McCheyne's statement, said that our joy has three dimensions. First, there's our joy of salvation (see Luke 10:20). Second, he refers to our joy of service (see Luke 10:17-19). Third, he speaks of the joy of submission (see Luke 10:21-22).

Discouragement has been rightly called the handle that fits all the devil's tools. Despondency discolours the character, distorts the calling and deplores the conditions of service. No one is exempt.

Studies have concluded that pastors face three crises during their tenure of service. Again from the "Nobody's Perfect" article, "The first four or five years after ordination are the hardest for most ministers. Much of the problem stems from the fact that prospective pastors are, by nature, idealists. Consequently, the pastor's first few years can be torturous."

"But once you've passed the five-year mark, you're still not out of the woods. Stress is a symptom of growth, and as such, it's a recurring problem. Many pastors find themselves in critical situations again after eight to ten years, and also around the twentieth anniversary of their ordination."

The ministry abounds with pressures which trigger depression and result in ineffectiveness. Ineffectiveness breeds contempt. Many have perished exchanging their Bible for a book of insurance rates, their calling for worldly comfort and convenience, and their vision of the glorified Christ for a vestige of their former life.

## WHAT NOW?

How can one give up a calling so rich in blessing? How may one desert the highest and holiest calling in all the world? Extracting answers and coming to terms with the remedy may be a painful process, but it's necessary.

There are no short cuts to victory and no easy solutions to success in

ministry. The fact remains that pastors have perished, are perishing, and will continue to perish in the parish unless we can balance the man and his ministry, his message and his methods. His faith and convictions must be reinforced with the scriptures and revitalized with a sense of commitment.

We frequently jest about the pastor writing his resignation every Monday morning. And though I admit that we may often feel like doing so, in our spirit and soul, we know our resignation is inviolate until death. It is an irrevocable trust in the most complete and true sense spiritually.

The most verifiable proof of one's ministry is that the pastoral successor can continue building upon the previous servant's ministry. Isaiah 28:10 directs our teaching, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little."

Paul restates the ministry's balance and interrelation by saying, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. . . . For we are labourers together with God. . . . I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." (I Corinthians 3:6, 9, 10).

If credibility cannot be added to one's ministry in this manner, then little else matters. After all is said and done, it is what has been done that will stand or fail the tests of continuing ministry.

So teach and train, labor and build, aware that even as others preceded you, more are to follow. There must be victory over false impressions, futile expressions, forceful oppressions and faithless depressions or you will perish in the parish! ▲



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Fred D. Hanson has served for 15 years in pastorates in Maine and New Brunswick. He is moderator of the Atlantic Canada Association of Free Will Baptists and a member of the General Board of the National Association. Hanson pastors Free Will Baptist churches in Upper Brighton and Wakefield, New Brunswick.





## NEWS OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

### EGYPT ISSUES BAN ON RELIGIOUS BUMPER STICKERS

CAIRO, Egypt (EP)—Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's ban on religious bumper stickers went into effect without incident July 8, despite fears that Moslems and Christians might defy it.

Interior Minister Ahmed Rushdi said most motorists had respected the ban, and that any defying it "would be dealt with quietly." Offenders can lose their licenses for one year, or be fined the equivalent of \$12.

Moslems, a majority in this nation of 48 million people, have traditionally adorned their cars with slogans such as, "To God, Religion is Islam." Many of the six million Coptic Christians have responded with, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Although many Cairenes said they felt removing the bumper stickers was tantamount to blasphemy, endorsement of the ban by Moslem and Christian leaders appeared to have eased its enforcement.

Mubarak faces a campaign led by Sheik Hafez Salama to put Egypt under Islamic law. He has promised to crack down on Moslem fundamentalists if they create unrest.

### PROTESTANTISM BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONSERVATIVE

SANTA BARBARA, CA (EP)—The once-dominant liberal and moderate denominations are quickly becoming a minority in American Protestantism, according to figures compiled by Harvard University's William Hutchinson for a small conference with the theme, "Does Liberal Protestantism Have An American Future?"

Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist and similar congregations have been called "mainline churches" because they represented the great majority of U.S. Protestants. In 1920 mainline bodies constituted 76 percent of America's Protestant population, but by last year that figure had fallen to 53 percent.

The two dozen sociologists, historians and church leaders that attended the conference earlier this year, reached no consensus on what was needed to reverse the mainline church slide. They agreed, however, that the churches are suffering from aging membership, relatively few young adults (compared with evangelical, charismatic and fundamentalist churches), and lack of a stirring message.

Survey material showed specific weaknesses in mainline churches:

They are disproportionately made up of people over age 50. The percentage of older

### WEST AFRICANS FACE FAMINE IF RAINS FAIL

SEGE, Burkina Faso (EP)—"Most of the Sahel region of West Africa is just one year away from the crisis that has hit Ethiopia," says Moise Napon, World Relief's director in Burkina Faso.

Many of the relief workers in West Africa agree with Napon, predicting that people in Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso are on the verge of starvation and will die if the rains do not come during these summer months.

"Wells that were producing at least a little bit in February now are completely dry," reports Cecil Cole, World Relief's communications officer, who visited Burkina Faso recently. Gardens and crops that were green are now dead, he added. "I saw the severe conditions I had only heard about during my first trip in February: people digging in anthills for grains of millet and eating bark and roots from the few remaining trees," he said.

Working to fight these conditions, World Relief workers in Burkina Faso have distributed more than 215 tons of emergency food, developed 40 small-scale gardens and irrigation systems that will soon produce vegetables, and dug 15 wells and sited 60 others to be dug. "If it had not been for World Relief food distribution we would all be dead or we would have deserted this village," says Pastor Toubou Ouedraogo, an African pastor in Sege.

church members is out of step with the demographics of conservative churches, and of the population at large.

They have failed to retain more conservative children of liberal parents. "It is now firmly established that the prime source of membership losses sustained by the liberal denominations is the failure of the offspring of their members to affiliate with a liberal religious body," said Benton Johnson of the University of Oregon.

They aren't getting as many new members through "church switching." Mainline churches, never characterized by aggressive evangelism, used to receive many new members from more conservative and morally strict churches with a lower social-economic makeup. Now conservative Protestant churches have been relating more to social and political issues, and have begun to attract a broader middle-class constituency.

They lose a greater percentage of their church members to "secular society" than do conservative churches. Among church members below age 45, the conservative churches lose only 5.6 percent of their members, while liberal denominations lose between 9 and 12 percent.

### ETHIOPIANS CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS, SAYS MENNONITE WORKER

ERITREA, Ethiopia (EP)—"Ethiopians can turn the situation around. They are the solution to Ethiopia's problems," says Stu Clark of the Mennonite Central Committee Canada office. Clark, who administers the MCC program in Ethiopia, visited Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan last spring to help make plans for future programs in the region.

There continues to be a need for food aid, especially in the refugee camps in Sudan, but the Ethiopian people are beginning to turn the corner on the famine, Clark says. "It's not the end of the need, but the end of the beginning," he adds.

Clark reports that recent rains in many parts of Ethiopia have encouraged Eritrean and Tigrayan farmers in Sudan refugee camps to return to their farms to plant their crops. "Able-bodied men are leaving their families in the campus and trekking back empty-handed," Clark says. "It's a long, hard walk. But they're returning, ready to try again."

### RELIGIOUS SECT RAIDED, STOLEN CREDIT CARDS FOUND

CHICAGO, IL (EP)—The FBI July 16 arrested 25 members of the Chicago-based Black Hebrews religious sect, and recovered "bags and bags" of stolen credit cards, plane tickets and phony passports.

The arrests followed an 18-month probe that included infiltrating the group. The FBI arrested 18 members in Washington, D.C., three in Baltimore and four in Chicago. Ten others are sought. Those arrested face multiple counts of theft and fraud involving airline tickets, credit cards and checks, telephone tolls, televisions, videocassette recorders, computers, rental cars, passports and false IDs.

Proceeds from the illegal activities were apparently used to support sect members living in colonies in Israel, said Norman Zigrossi, head of the FBI's Washington regional office. The estimated 25,000 members of the Black Hebrews claim to be descended from the original tribes of Israel.

### BERTRAND RUSSELL'S LIFE ONCE SAVED BY STAFF AT CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL IN CHINA

PEKING, China (EP)—Bertrand Russell, atheistic philosopher, once had his life saved by the staff at a Christian hospital. His former secretary, Peg Aitchison, said that Russell owed his life to the Peking Union Medical Center founded by her step-father, Dr. Thomas Cochrane, a Scottish doctor, who was the first Westerner to become an adopted member of the Chinese royal family.

The life-saving incident with Russell took place in 1921 when he became seriously ill while in Peking. Though hospital staff opposed Russell, they provided him with a serum to kill the pneumococci, saving his life.

Although Russell was thankful, he dedicated the remainder of his life to opposing Christianity.





## THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

# From Now to 90



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Free Will Baptists

**D**uring the 50th anniversary convention last July, Free Will Baptists adopted Target 90, a growth strategy designed to involve every member.

Denominational leaders met in the spring of 1983 and expressed a deep sense of need for growth. From that discussion came a decision to appoint a Task Force—one representative from each national agency to study, shape and suggest a strategy for denominational growth.

The success of any growth strategy depends upon the cooperation of each pastor, local church, district association, state association and national agency.

## The Challenge

Our denomination needs to grow. Available statistics indicate no significant growth in our churches during the past 10 years.

This trend must be reversed. Free Will Baptist churches can grow. We must face our failure with honesty and do something about it.

While some churches are growing, they are the exception. As a denomination we have not experienced significant growth. It's time to cease fussing and fueding.

*Denominational growth starts with spiritual growth.* Emphasis must be given to developing dedicated, devoted, disciplined, durable disciples. Paul clearly champions this area of growth truth in Ephesians 4:11-16.

*We must chart denominational growth with statistical data.* The book of Acts gives us a historical record of statistical growth in the early church. We must reach, record, report and

retain if we expect any statistical growth.

Attention must be given to accuracy in reporting our statistics. Without accurate statistics, growth cannot be measured or monitored. Free Will Baptists have not only failed in reaching but in recording and reporting.

It's no sin to keep records or to report statistics for the purpose of having a historical record by which growth can be measured.

*Denominational growth must include stewardship growth.* Financial support is a pressing need among our churches. We are years behind in development of a stewardship program.

At the present time two methods for denominational stewardship are used by our people—the Cooperative Plan and designated giving. It's time we ceased debating the plan of support and start fairly and fully supporting all denominational outreach. The bottom line is total denominational support.

A combination of cooperative giving and designated giving can be utilized. Every Free will Baptist has an obligation to support the ministries of his local church, the district association, state association and national association. Not until he is fully, fairly and faithfully supporting the total denominational program is he fulfilling his promise in the Free Will Baptist Church Covenant.

## The Secretary's Schedule

<b>Oct. 6-11</b>	First FWB Church Albany, GA
<b>Oct. 16-20</b>	Sunnyside FWB Church Oklahoma City, OK
<b>Oct. 21-24</b>	Oklahoma State Association
<b>Oct. 25-27</b>	Music Retreat Camp Na-Co-Me
<b>Oct. 30-Nov. 1</b>	Florida State Association

*Denominational growth must include growth in service.* We must pray that the Lord will thrust laborers into the harvest. Growth strategy must give attention to the development of Christian workers—preachers, missionaries, Christian school teachers, doctors, lawyers, nurses.

## The Campaign

The Target 90 Committee will promote and oversee the overall campaign. Using the resources, personnel and programs available, efforts will be made to involve every Free Will Baptist in this growth strategy.

Target 90 is a five-year growth strategy which calls for growth in two areas:

### New Membership

1986	increase of	5,000
1987	increase of	7,500
1988	increase of	10,000
1989	increase of	12,500
1990	increase of	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>increase of</b>	<b>50,000</b>

### New Churches

1986	number planted	10
1987	number planted	15
1988	number planted	20
1989	number planted	25
1990	number planted	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>new churches planted</b>	<b>100</b>

## The Commitment

We are convinced that the time is right for this campaign. Many have already responded. The challenge is great. Working together with total denominational commitment and cooperation we can reach these goals.

Will you join us in this growth campaign? ▲



## CONTACT

P.O. Box 1088

Nashville, Tennessee 37202

Second class postage paid at Nashville, Tennessee

# IT'S TIME TO HELP THE MEN.

## The year . . .

Master's Men has served Free Will Baptist denomination for 29 years. The needs of the Department are great. You and your church are asked to help just one time a year.

## The month . . .

October has been chosen for the time to honor the men of your church with a Layman's Day/Master's Men Day. Plan now to include this special emphasis in your services.

## The week . . .

Announce the occasion at least one week ahead. Advise the people of the need for a special offering for Master's Men. Your help is vital to this ministry.

## The day . . .

Sunday, October 6, the denomination is asked to participate in observing this special occasion. Take time in services to speak favorably about the work of Master's Men.

## The hour . . .

Use your men for testimonies, songs and special speakers. Involve them in the ministry of the hour. Receive the special offering knowing it will be a blessing for Master's Men.

## The minute . . .

As soon as the offering is counted, send it to Master's Men Department.

## Give time . . .

Your gift offering will help Master's Men get the job accomplished. Reaching, enlisting, training and equipping men is a great responsibility. Finding adequate finances is also a great responsibility. Help Master's Men Department use time wisely. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."

## Master's Men . . . Your men.

Free Will Baptist Master's Men Department  
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