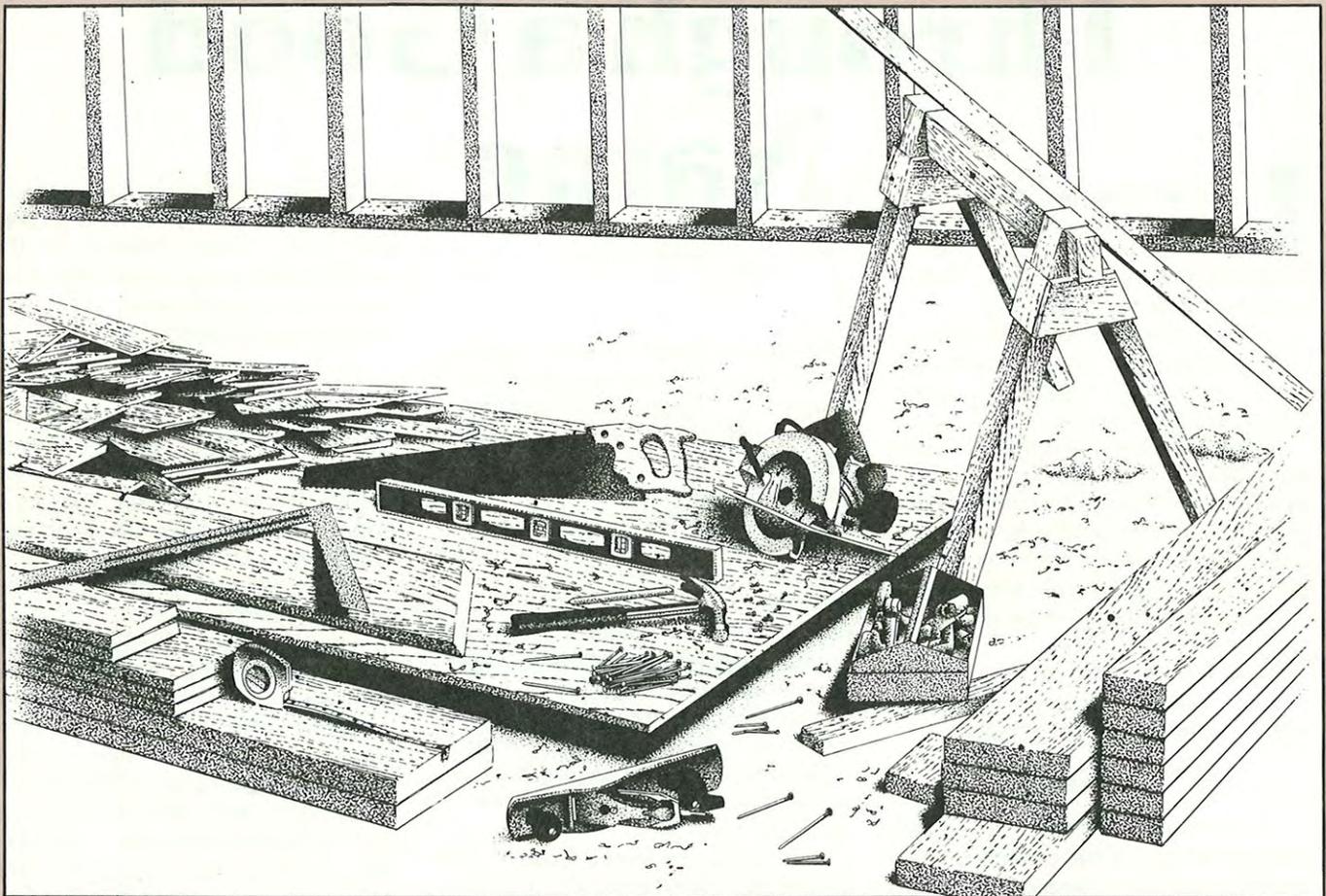


October 1986

Contact

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

Building the Church Through . . .



. . . A Strong Pulpit

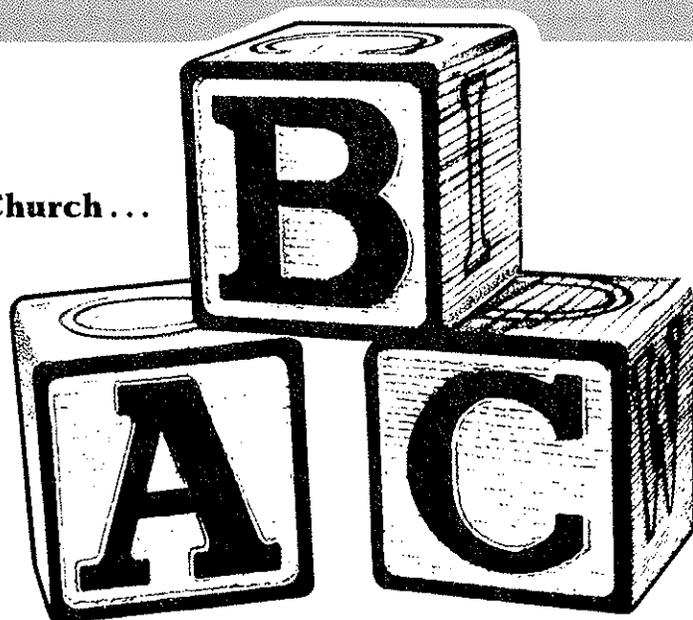
. . . A Good Name

. . . Visitation

. . . Sunday School

. . . Christian Schools

Let's Build the Church . . .



Through a Good Name

By Ben Scott

Local church congregations, like individuals, develop personality traits and build for themselves a name. Name, in this case, meaning reputation.

The church in Sardis had a name, and so does your church and mine. Truth is, you and I helped our church get its name. We're part of it.

Names are mighty important! If you don't believe your church has a reputation, just try going on door-to-door visitation. It won't take long to discover that your church is known in the community. It does have a name and so does that other church down the street.

Your church will be known and become named by three things: its pastor, its people and its program.

The Pastor

The pastor, your church's minister—no person in the church is more instrumental and influential in regard to building your church's name than the pastor. Perhaps because of this fact, Paul wrote plainly in I Timothy concerning the bishop's (pastor's) conduct and qualifications.

In the Church

The scriptural standard for a pastor-minister includes three areas.

First, among the church congregation itself. He must among the church people be "... blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous" (I Timothy 3:2-3).

Pastor, the importance of your conduct cannot be overstated. If you are a humble, right-living, spiritual leader, your church will reflect that image. Conversely, if you're a quarrelsome, unstable, impatient, self-seeking dictatorial leader, your congregation will more than likely become similar in their conduct.

The minister's name means a lot among those he's been called to serve.

In his Family

The next area in which a pastor must have a good name is in his own house, among his own family members. The scriptural reasoning for this is stated, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

For many a minister it's much easier to preach it abroad, than to practice it at home. Blessed is that preacher whose own household, those who know him best, believe in him and respect him as a godly man.

In the Community

The third area in which the minister must have a good report (name) is from "without." The community and neighborhood must know him as an honest, upright, godly, Christian man. Otherwise, the church to which he ministers will be given a less than honorable name.

Too often have God's called and chosen men fallen into bad repute because of some weakness in their character reflected in their conduct. It takes a long time for a church congregation to recover from a "black eye" it received because of an immoral pastor. Someone suggested that every preacher ought to be especially careful of his conduct in regard to ladies, lucre and laziness.

Preacher, if we break down in either of these areas, our church and its name will suffer.

The People

The people—church members also contribute to the making of a church's

name. The individual member's conduct is so important. Someone will judge your church solely by what he sees in you. You will be, to someone, the only representative of your church with whom he'll ever have any close contact.

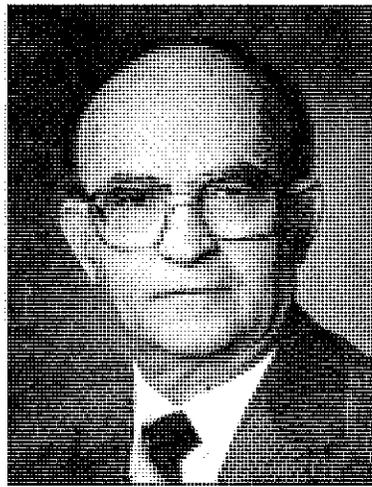
That short, one-chapter book of III John gives a clear commentary on contrasting character. There was Gaius, who "walked in the truth." He was also described as being faithful and charitable. He had a good name within the church and elsewhere. The church benefited by his good name. John believed him to be a spiritually strong Christian, and for that he was highly commended.

Another man in the church is mentioned in that little book, Diotrophes, who loved the pre-eminence. Most churches are short on the likes of the godly, gracious Gaius. Too often we're long on the likes of the domineering, divisive Diotrophes. You, church member, are helping to mold your church's image. You are helping to make its name.

The Program

The program of the church—never has the ministry and program of the church come into focus as it has in our generation. All kinds of causes claim the energy and interest of churches and their leaders. While every church ought to be known for its strong stand on moral or immoral issues, great discretion must be used in regard to politics, the endorsement of politicians and involvement in purely political matters.

Some churches, even entire denominations, have built a name based mainly on their involvement in social reform. Personally, I fear that the name of the church in general, and respect for the preaching ministry in particular have been cheapened as so many have left the main line and gotten



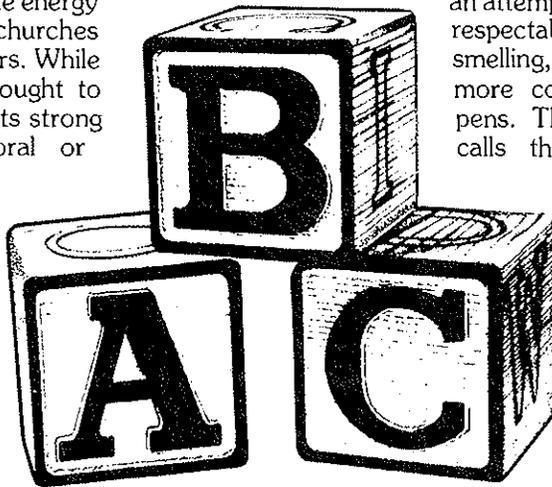
ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Ben Scott pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

involved too deeply in side lines.

Let the church be the church! Jesus said, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." That was a sure sign to the imprisoned John the Baptist that Christ was truly the Messiah. Our main line must always be the preaching of the gospel. The providing of groceries must be secondary, not primary in our program.

Our generation's social gospel has been described as being an attempt to build more respectable, better-smelling, cleaner and more comfortable hog pens. The true gospel calls the prodigal to leave the hog pen and come home, to get out of the "far country" and return to the Father.

The program of the church must always be based upon and centered around saving grace, not merely a social gospel. Let's build our churches through a good name. And may that name be acquired by scriptural, spiritual standards exemplified by the church's pastor, its people and its program. ▲



Contents October 1986

- 2 A Good Name**
Ben Scott
- 4 Life's Price Tags**
Floyd Wolfenbarger
- 5 Briefcase: Hard-Hat Religion**
Jack Williams
- 6 A Strong Pulpit**
Jonathan Yandell
- 8 Visitation**
Brian Atwood
- 9 The Sunday School**
James McAllister
- 11 Christian Schools**
Sam Henderson
- 13 Victorious Faith**
Larry Hampton
- 14 Target 90: How Are We Doing?**
Robert E. Picirilli
- 16 Dealing With Depression**
Malcolm Fry
- 18 Help! I'm Shy!**
Dennis Hensley
- 19 Not For Sale!**
Larry Hughes
- 21 Free Will Baptist Newfront**
- 23 Currently**
- 24 The Scarecrow**
Wanda Bankhead
- 24 Top Shelf**
Thomas Marberry
- 25 Teen Scene**
- 26 On Little Lanes**
Donna Mayo
- 28 Green Tree Bible Study**
Robert E. Picirilli
- 29 Especially For Young Preachers**
Dennis Wiggs
- 30 News of the Religious Community**
- 31 Looking for a Layman**
Melvin Worthington

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Life's Price Tags

By Floyd Wolfenbarger

The Baptist Scotsman R.E.O. White wrote about two young boys in a toyshop who, while the shopkeeper was occupied, rearranged all the price tags to conform to what they thought each toy was really worth. Their deed bewildered the customers and angered the shopkeeper.

It has been said that Jesus came to earth and did just like those mischievous boys; He put a correct value on everything. He turned our treasures upside down and created a more pure system of genuine worth.

He challenged the value we put on possessions. He told the rich young ruler to relinquish worldly goods and follow Christ to become rich before God. Those with few possessions need not despair, for our Father clothes the lilies of the field and the sparrows in the sky. Those with many possessions must not horde them as though riches could be trusted to bring security and joy. Rather we are to administer our possessions in such a way as to glorify God.

He challenged the value we put on people. How strange it seems that the publican left the house of God justified while the pious Pharisee leaves with a devalued esteem. Only Jesus would tell a story in which a sore-ridden beggar seems a saint while a princely rich man cries from torment.

A recent survey of young people showed that a list of their top 30 heroes contained no one who was not an entertainer or athlete. Our amusement-crazed society pays Kareem-Abdul Jabbar more in one year than all of the costs of Free Will Baptist foreign missionaries combined.

If Jesus were here, He'd change the price tags. In fact, He would turn the whole world upside down. ▲

Thank You For Your Contributions...



... Through the Cooperative Channel

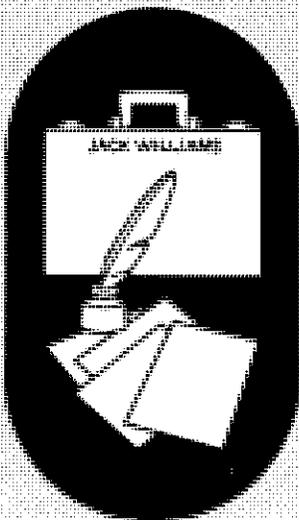
Cooperative Channel Contributions July 1986

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	COOP (Undesignated)	Total	July '85	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 691.70	\$ 597.41	\$ 1,289.11	\$1,081.31	\$ 6,335.90
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	71.29
Arkansas	.00	2,974.92	2,974.92	2,152.48	28,150.09
California	50.00	542.56	592.56	782.81	5,750.26
Florida	52.00	2,527.36	2,579.36	1,197.12	14,415.08
Georgia	3,835.19	.00	3,835.19	1,834.53	30,515.73
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	190.72
Illinois	3,652.34	648.04	4,300.38	5,985.03	48,640.73
Indiana	581.40	108.51	689.91	631.31	3,945.47
Kansas	.00	69.93	69.93	105.02	429.13
Kentucky	2.00	501.00	503.00	134.68	3,141.94
Michigan	2,079.82	332.25	2,412.07	7,290.80	32,779.67
Mississippi	89.00	674.74	763.74	385.38	3,302.57
Missouri	1,485.02	8,240.23	9,725.25	6,336.06	58,412.64
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	.00	247.31
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	18.00
North Carolina	1,399.03	315.00	1,714.03	594.50	14,712.80
Ohio	2,562.97	3,064.00	5,626.97	1,639.00	20,506.07
Oklahoma	36,186.69	7,399.19	43,585.88	29,524.54	288,194.11
South Carolina	1,281.34	.00	1,281.34	.00	9,122.15
Tennessee	480.62	1,227.12	1,707.74	1,148.37	11,550.53
Texas	7,681.57	392.94	8,074.51	.00	52,592.39
Virginia	145.00	1,038.10	1,183.10	1,425.20	3,996.75
West Virginia	3,892.10	477.55	4,369.65	2,742.14	23,593.83
Totals	\$66,147.79	\$31,130.85	\$97,278.64	\$64,990.28	\$660,615.16

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 1,309.96	\$13,476.98	\$14,786.94	\$13,969.00	\$103,508.56
Foreign Missions	46,864.73	4,060.37	50,925.10	29,812.96	336,657.80
FWBBC	1,640.33	4,060.37	5,700.70	5,704.12	44,330.68
Home Missions	14,515.50	3,177.71	17,693.21	9,371.05	118,733.37
Retirement & Insurance	91.44	2,471.61	2,563.05	2,056.76	18,455.26
Master's Men	34.50	2,295.06	2,329.56	1,747.30	16,707.77
Commission for Theo. Integrity	15.98	176.48	192.46	150.52	1,431.02
FWB Foundation	11.04	1,059.31	1,070.35	798.32	8,045.93
Historical Commission	15.62	176.48	192.10	148.57	1,432.87
Radio & TV Commission	45.62	176.48	222.10	143.31	1,663.72
Hillsdale FWB College	1,475.86	.00	1,475.86	979.39	9,123.33
Other	127.21	.00	127.21	108.98	524.85
Totals	\$66,147.79	\$31,130.85	\$97,278.64	\$64,990.28	\$660,615.16



Hard-Hat Religion

Did you ever walk onto a bustling construction site and get stopped cold by a weather-beaten face that growled, "Hey, Mac, where's your hard hat?"

Safety's a way of life on big construction jobs, and for some good reasons. There's always somebody working higher up than you. Sometimes they drop things that hurt.

So the rule is, either grab a hard hat and help or get out of the way. A building site's no place for a casual stroll. First off, it's awfully noisy. Things clang and scrape and throb and pound and spew and whistle and belch. That's how buildings get up out of the dirt—with unending struggle and a lot of noise. That's hard-hat living.

Construction sites are inconvenient and not very pretty. When the weather's hot, there's dust everywhere. When it rains, mud climbs over boot tops. The hard hatter's got nowhere to go to escape the dust or the mud, because that's why he's there.

Hard-hat projects attract the scrutiny of John Q. Public. Every sidewalk superintendent that comes along offers an opinion on what's being built. Some like what they see; others laugh at it.

Hard hatters gulp huge quantities of raw materials. They waste some of it, though not by design. One of the hard lessons of building is that you can't save everything.

Hard-hat work roughs up hands and clothes. Hands blister,

bleed, peel and finally toughen to the task. Clothes rip and tear and hole and fall apart from the grit and stress. The hard-hat world's no-comfort zone.

And, yes, people do get hurt. It's a risky business where folks who don't get serious get cuts and bruises. That's why most of us pecker to avoid the bother in air-conditioned ease.

But those who learn to live under a hard hat discover there's nothing more invigorating than the fresh smell of raw-cut lumber, the feel of finished concrete, the challenge to kick and gouge the earth until something better emerges from a pile of bricks and a truck load of steel.

There's also the wonder of how it all fits together. Building something from the ground up toughens a man and makes his hard hat a badge of distinction.

There's a parallel here in Christian living. I'm not talking about the ease-through-life-quietly crowd. I refer to those who grab society and twist its ear, who pull and scruff with life's ugly realities, who take seriously the business of being right.

Hard-hat religion is New Testament Christianity. You'll discover it's noisy and not very pretty at times because people struggling with life trying to remove beams from their eyes and mill stones from their necks frequently bump into one another and scar their friends.

Hard-hat religion licks up clouds of dust and tracks mud through the sanctuary. It's inconvenient. It requires loads of raw material, blunders at the worst possible moment and attracts public ridicule.

God's hard hatters take risks, and sometimes they drop things from high places when they attempt to span a chasm of unbelief with a girder of hope. Christians and buildings share a common truth that the only way to get up out of the dirt is unending struggle and mashed fingers.

Better wear a hard hat if you take Christianity seriously. You'll be issued one your first day on the job. It's called the helmet of salvation. Don't leave home without it. You won't last long if you do.

It's true that sometimes God's people sing anthems in the splendor of some spectacular atmosphere that excites awe and creates ardent expressions. But the fact remains that most of the time, Christianity is some Daniel spending an uncomfortable night with the big cats. Or a Jeremiah straining to keep his head above the mud in a dungeon, or a Paul dragged through the streets of some Jerusalem town and left for dead on the garbage dump.

Yes sir, keep your hat on if you mean business with God in this society. Mind you, there's a difference between hard hat and hard-headed. But you can't confront racial prejudice and social injustice without raising some dust. You can't defy hatred and envy and selfishness and perversion without blistering your hands.

But for those who risk hard-hat religion, there's nothing in the world like the smell of freshly cut timbers—godly men newly-hewn from the forest of sin. And there's nothing so invigorating as the noisy clanging, thrashing, pounding of new Christians being trimmed and tempered and fitted together into a community of believers.

This world's no place for a quiet stroll. We've stepped onto a planet-wide construction site. It began 2000 years ago.

The Foreman cut down a tree from a hill outside Jerusalem, worked alone three days in the belly of the earth digging a foundation, burnt loam to spend 40 days training His first crew and now travels the globe foreing "who-soever will" to work on the building.

Need a job? Like a challenge? Grab your hard hat and come on!

Let's Build the Church . . .

Through a Strong Pulpit

By Jonathan Yandell



Some 100 years ago Charles Haddon Spurgeon told his students at the Pastor's College, "The chief business of a captain is to know how to handle his vessel, nothing can compensate for deficiency there; and so our pulpits must be our main care or all will go away."

Spurgeon's statement was insightful then; it may be moreso now. Whatever else pastors may be called on to do, their primary task remains preaching.

In this time of unprecedented discussion and planning for growth, we dare not lose sight of the fact that our efforts will hinge largely on what occurs or does not occur in the pulpit. While a strong pulpit ministry alone will not build a church, no church of consequence will be built apart from it.

Holds Central Place

Preaching holds a central place in the work of the church. Jesus commanded, ". . . Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Fundamental to our mission and purpose is the preached gospel. Because of this preaching centrality, the pulpit ministry forms the hub around which the church ministry revolves.

Each avenue of church ministry is an extension of the motivation and theology supplied by the pulpit. As spokes anchored in the hub, they sprout from and are stabilized by instruction given from the pulpit.

If the hub remains strong the wheel moves smoothly. But if the hub rusts or cracks, the smoothness deteriorates to a wobbling, lurching motion.

Once the "wobble" begins, the road stress causes it to progressively worsen until the spokes fall out and the wheel gives way. The ministry of the church draws its strength from the hub, the pulpit.

Builds People

The term "strong pulpit" evokes different visions. Some see a tall, well-built preacher with a booming voice and commanding posture. Others see a pulpit ministry like a grand tower where all decisions are made, all directions charted, and from which all divine decrees are handed down. But, quite simply put, the strong pulpit is one which builds people.

The church is not buildings, budgets and bills; the church is people. Peter said, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

Built on the cornerstone of Christ, the church is a spiritual house of living, breathing Christians. As with any physical structure, the building is no stronger than its materials. To build the church, we must build people.

Biblically, it is the purpose of pastoral ministry to "perfect" (fully prepare) the saints ". . . for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12). A strong pulpit ministry equips the saints for service.

True and lasting church growth cannot be produced by paid staff and

paying spectators. It results from a pulpit ministry that equips God's saints to win the lost, and disciples them in the faith. When the preacher builds people through effective discipleship, he multiplies his ministry through training others to minister, and though growth seems slow at first, it mushrooms and multiplies at a faster rate than if he alone was winning, discipling and teaching.

Meets Needs

In our day of systematic classes, courses and programs, remember that Jesus Christ, the greatest of all preachers, won souls and disciplined saints not by systematized theological instruction, but by speaking to meet their needs.

It has always interested me that in order to develop a systematic theology we must glean bits and pieces from all parts of scripture. Have you noticed that the Holy Spirit did not give us in one concise location a series of progressive, well-outlined chapters called "God's Systematic Theology?"

Instead, we're forced to learn our facts about God by reading how He dealt with people in various situations. The Ten Commandments came in the context of meeting the need of God's people for instruction in obedience. The Prophets, which reveal so much about the character of God, are merely the compiling of God's messages through His men to meet the needs of His people. Every New Testament epistle addresses the needs for instruction, correction or exhortation.

The life of Christ illustrates this principle. We learn about salvation while we watch Him meet the needs of Nicodemus and the woman at the well. We learn about prayer as He responds to the disciples' request, "... teach us to pray." We learn about the Holy Spirit's ministry as Jesus comforts His men in preparation for His departure saying "... I will send him unto you."

Given this biblical, pragmatic approach to preaching, small wonder then that men drift off to sleep when we begin our 11:00 a.m. Sunday morning theology class.

W. A. Criswell says, "The difference between a bore and a good conversationalist is that the bore has not discovered the distinction between what interests him and what interests his hearers."

The interest of today's listeners, as in Jesus' day, is what will meet their present needs. Their main concern is not theological suppositions, but rather, how what we're saying affects them.

What can I do to help my children turn out right? How can my spouse and I get along better? How can I tithe when I can't pay my bills now? How can I stand it one more day on my high-pressure job? I'm battling temptation, how can I win? How can I get through to my lost friends?

These questions demand answers. Sadly, they often come with wounds needing salve and bandages, only to find us dispensing medical textbooks!

The strong pulpit preaches to the needs of people. It must be relevant—addressing existing needs and real problems and offering practical biblical solutions. It must be understandable—on the level of the hearer in easily comprehended language, aimed to penetrate the heart. And, most important, it must be applicable—down to earth, something you can put to work tomorrow.

Challenges Men

In addition, the strong pulpit challenges men. The challenge from the pulpit that builds people begins in a flaming heart. Spurgeon said, "A burning heart will soon find for itself a flaming tongue." The strong pulpit is not merely one from which men are instructed but one from which hearts catch fire.

To Salvation

The primary challenge the pulpit issues to men is to make a decision for Christ. Our divine calling is not merely to govern the daily affairs of the church and administrate its ordinances. Paul said, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." (I Corinthians 1:17).

What greater need can we address than the need of all to be saved? We must challenge men to receive Christ! We must do it often, we must do it well, and we must do it in fresh, insightful ways presenting it as the answer to their needs.

To Win Others

The pulpit that builds men further challenges them to win the lost. The grand vision of the church's task can never be clouded if we expect to build the church. The preacher must call before his people the lost condition of our friends, our neighbors, our world, and challenge us to be part of God's mission to reach them.

To Excellence

The sorely needed challenge today is the challenge to excellence. The cancer of "good enough" eats away at our society and churches. The pulpit that builds people must cry out for excellence from the saints. It must issue the challenge to be our best for our master, not simply to do our best, for if we are our best we will be so even when no one is watching.

If we teach men to be soul winners they will win souls wherever they are. However, if we teach them only to do the work of a soul winner, they will do it only when we are watching and at the regularly scheduled time. Can we not challenge men to go into the depths of true, meaningful service to Christ and the church?

"More" without "better" will eventually lead to decline, as recent Free Will Baptist history demonstrates. We must have growth, but we must also grow toward excellence in our abilities and methods of ministry if we expect to retain it.

The birth of spiritual excellence in the pew results from excellence conceived in the pulpit. Much preaching misses the mark due to slothful or ineffective preparation by the preacher. Preaching to build people and meet their needs requires labor

among them, with them and for them. We cannot be intimately acquainted with their struggles and only passively acquainted with them. Let the testimony of Paul be ours also, "... I have been with you at all seasons" (Acts 20:18).

Requires Commitment

Such preaching requires a commitment of time and energy on the part of the pastor to prayer and preparation. "Borrowing" our message from another preacher will not work when we preach to meet the needs of our people. We must discipline ourselves to dig into the Word and study it long and hard looking for principles and truths for daily living.

As we study our people and our Bibles we will see where the two meet, the point where their needs converge with biblical answers. That, then, becomes the cross-hair in our sights; it is there that we must aim and fire!

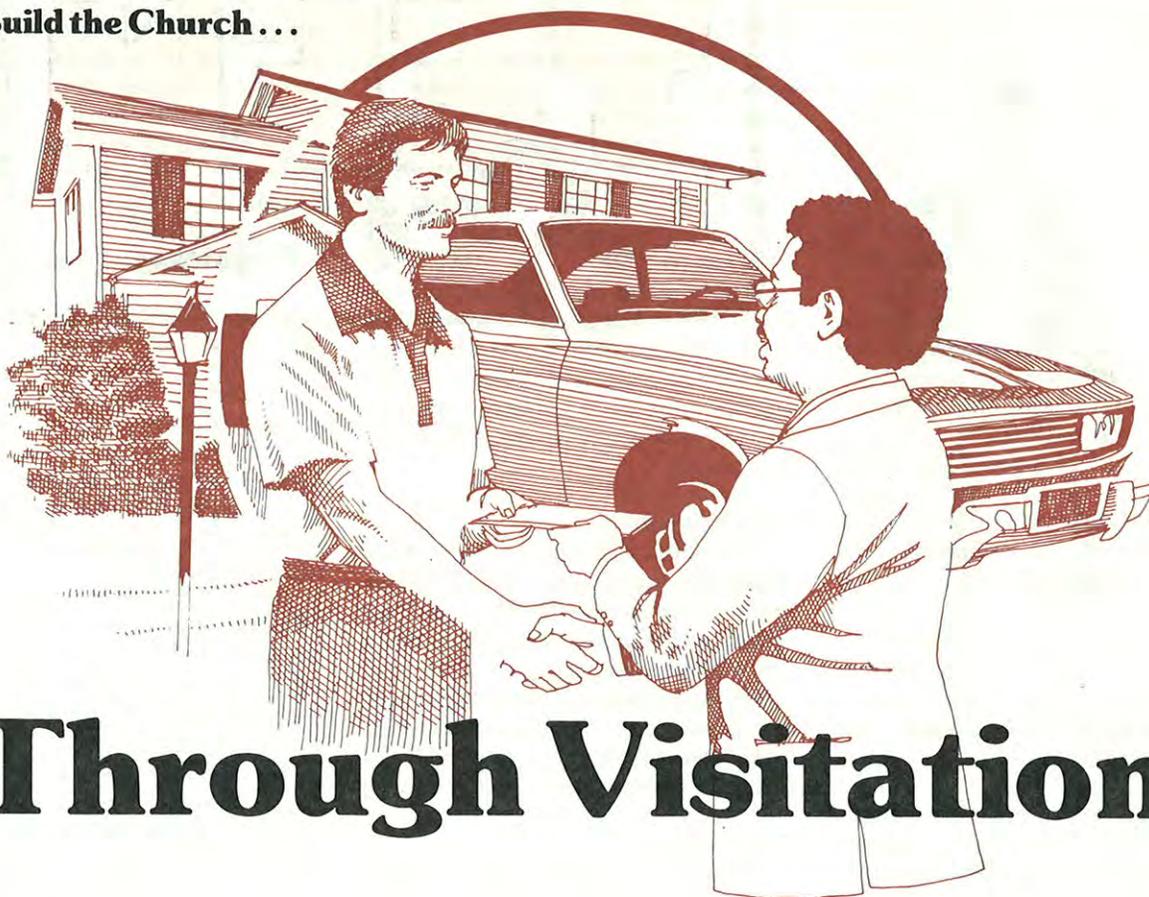
The hunter can stalk the prey for days. He can prepare the tools to dress the game. He can use the finest equipment to locate the game and carry the finest firearms in preparation for the kill. But when he pulls the trigger he must hit something or all is for naught.

Preachers, let us plan, pray and prepare for growth. Let us use the finest tools and the most excellent means to obtain our God-given objective. Let us be sure that every round we squeeze off finds its way into the hearts and eventually the lives of men. In so doing we will build the church. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jonathan Yandell pastors North Metro Free Will Baptist Church, Sacramento, California. He preached his first sermon at the age of nine. He is the son and grandson of Free Will Baptist preachers. He attended both Hillsdale FWB College and California Christian College.

Let's Build the Church...



Through Visitation

By Brian Atwood

A man in our church called me at home last Tuesday night to ask which community newcomers' names should be placed on the Thursday night visitation assignment cards. He and another member wanted an early start on the organized visitation outreach of our church. Each week these men and others take note of people who could be reached for Christ and the church by a visit in the home.

That's just one of the pleasing by-products of organizing for evangelism. Folks in the church use their time and talent to serve Christ in obedience to the Great Commission and not in conflict with one another. The pastor and people who keep busy in an effort to rescue the perishing won't have much time (or inclination) to fight each other. (The same can be true of a denomination.)

Biblical Examples

Of course, that's not the main motive for organized visitation.

There's the biblical example of Jesus who frequently won souls in homes and advocated home visitation. (See Matthew 8:6,7,14; 9:10,23,28; 10:12,13; 26:6; Mark 1:29; 2:1,15; 5:19,38; 14:3; Luke 4:38; 5:29; 7:36; 10:38; 14:1; 15:2; 19:5,9; John 12:1-3.)

Consider the example of the early church (Acts 2:46; 5:42; 10:22; 16:32; 20:20). By the precedent they set it's apparent their knuckles were not too delicate to knock on doors!

Pragmatic Proof

There's also the pragmatic proof: organized visitation works. While on the one hand we should be wary of the idea that the final test of everything depends upon results, we should, at the same time, utilize the practical as long as it's not unbiblical or unethical.

For years the cult groups have grown because of the success of their organized visitation. Even the Avon lady knows the results that accompany contacts with individuals in the home. A church that preaches the gospel at its services, yet doesn't muster an effective outreach program of

some sort probably won't grow. That fact must be faced.

Key to Success

The greatest key to success in an organized visitation program is the pastor. Once he settles in his own heart and mind that organized outreach is biblical and practical, he should then do at least three things: (1) designate a specific time each week to go; (2) begin a filing system for prospects and visits made; and (3) stir interest among his church members by preaching, teaching and training soul winning.

Weekly visitation time may vary according to the particular circumstances of an area. One evening a week and/or Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon may be scheduled. The main goals are to find suitable times when your people can participate and when your prospects are most likely to be home.

Determine a time, and then commit yourself to it. Persistence is another secret to success. Only a few may start
(continued on page 10)

By James McAllister

The important part of the title is "Build the Church." Donald McGavran said there are four basic reasons why churches grow: They believe growth is God's will; they pray for growth; they know what produces growth; they do what produces growth.

Jesus said the church belonged to Him, and that He would build His church. He uses men to build His church. Therefore, our task is to be used by our Lord to build His church.

Building the church is a many-faceted proposition. You cannot build the church through one department only. To build the church one must have a well-rounded program. In this article we will refer to one of those approaches—the Sunday School.

Organize

First, we will discuss the organization of the Sunday School. It's my personal opinion that we reach people with visitation and keep them with organization. Most of us know that.

Free Will Baptists have usually been able to win souls, but we haven't been able to keep them. So organization, if it will help us keep our students, will be worthwhile to understand.

My favorite organization structure for the Sunday School is the departmentalized and graded Sunday School. I personally like for each department to have an opening assembly with song, prayer, brief devotion, announcements and promotions. After the opening assembly the students go to class.

We have 12 departments in our Sunday School at present—nursery, toddler, beginners, kindergarten, first grade, primary, fourth grade, fifth grade, intermediate, junior high, senior high and adult.

Each class is graded. Whatever grade a child attends in school, he's in that same grade in Sunday School. We've found that this is the best plan. The child is with his friends, and usually has the same learning abilities as his peers.

We constructed our educational building with the department assembly area surrounded by classrooms. With this approach all groups can go

from the classroom back into the assembly area for their youth church. This works well for us. Naturally, one must decide about his organizational structure before building his educational plant.

If, for example, one decided to change his organizational plan from master teacher to the small class departmentalized and graded Sunday School, he might find the need to tear out walls and spend a lot of money. Better to make the decision before you build.

Excite

Second, we should concern ourselves with the important subject of excitement. A dear friend of mine who has since gone on to be with the Lord, Reverend Lawrence Thompson, told me that one can't excite the church unless he is first excited himself. I believe that.

It's the duty of the pastor to be the motivator of the church. Motivation

and excitement are indispensable in the church. The congregation can do whatever it believes it can do and wants to do.

Excitement is contagious. If the preacher is excited, before long the church will be excited also. I'm not a self-motivator. I look to others to help me get excited so I can motivate the church. I find ways to get motivated.

I read the right kind of books, listen to tapes, attend conferences, hear motivational preaching, and try to have someone in the church or community that I can depend on to help me get excited and stay excited. We have a young man who believes it's his duty to keep the pastor in good spirits. An excited Sunday School is a growing Sunday School.

Train

Third, we must consider teacher and worker training. A continuing

Let's Build the Church...



Through the Sunday School



VISITATION (from page 8)

visiting, but word spreads when converts won in the home walk the aisle to profess faith in Christ. Consider a campaign or contest between teams to get the organized visitation program off to a good start.

Visitation prospects are plentiful if the church makes a priority of finding them. Ask visitors to your services to fill out visitor's cards, and keep these on file. Ask members to give prospect names and addresses to the pastor or notify the church office.

Check newcomer lists to your community; visit these folks to tell them about the Lord and your church. Take a survey by getting members to canvass house-to-house looking for folks who are unsaved. Don't overlook

those who claim affiliation with another religious group but are unconverted.

If you have a bus ministry, follow up on the rest of the family, not just the bus rider. Visit absentee and delinquent members as well as unsaved family members who live under the same roof. Consider a telephone survey.

Get Started

After deciding on these or other means of obtaining prospects, gather at the church at the appointed time. Schedule a brief of prayer, a pep talk and then divide the volunteers into pairs. Give each pair an assignment card with the instructions such as name, address and purpose of visit.

Sunday School (From page 9)

program of training is necessary to keep the church and Sunday School on a schedule of growth. When I refer to growth, I usually mean numerical growth. However, churches like other things that have life and grow, move in cycles.

As there are four seasons of the year in agriculture growth cycles, so there is a growth cycle in the church. There are times to prepare the ground, plant the seed, nurture the soil and reap the harvest. There are times in a growing church that growth occurs even though there's no numerical growth. The church may be growing doctrinally, in maturity and in Christian stewardship.

Training teachers, officers, ushers, soul winners, bus workers and others are all necessary if the church experiences prolonged growth. Start a program today and keep at it.

Promote

Promotion is the fourth ingredient in this discussion of building the Sunday School. The Sunday School must be promoted in the congregation and in the community. When we consider promotion, we must think about goals and goal setting.

First, set goals (big goals should be determined by vote of the church). Second, promote that goal in the church by means of banners, bulletins, posters, drama and skits. Third, pro-

mote the goal outside the church through visitation, street banners, newspaper ads, radio announcements and handouts.

Evangelize

Finally, we need a means of reaching numbers. In my opinion the fastest and most productive way to reach people is through the bus ministry. God does something through an old bus.

First, because of that bus, the worker is able to get into a home that would otherwise be closed to him. Second, because he's dealing with children primarily, the parents will listen. They really do love their children.

Don't have a bus ministry without a children's church program. Go after children with salvation as your goal. Ask God to convict you about their salvation. Try to win them to Jesus. Go after their parents. In the bus ministry, all five points of this article are brought into focus.

Organize, excite, train, promote and evangelize. Five ingredients that will make your Sunday School thrive. If your Sunday School thrives, your church will grow. God demands it. Non-growth is sin. Believe it, and be stirred to build a great Sunday School. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend James McAllister is president of California Christian College and pastor of Harmony Free Will Baptist Church, Fresno, California. At the time he wrote this article, he was pastoring First Free Will Baptist Church, Farmington, Missouri.

These cards should be prepared in advance by the pastor or some other competent person.

The more people involved in the visitation program, the more likely the success. Assign different volunteers to bring a devotion or personal testimony before making visits. Commend everyone for giving their time. Remember to give the teams attractive church brochures, gospel tracts and door knob hangers to leave.

Keep good records. File your prospects and visits made. Consider filing under the following categories: visitor card prospects, inactive members, census prospects, bus ministry prospects, prospects submitted by members, new Christians, etc. When visits are made, file your assignment cards instructing teams to list results of their visit on the back. These results will help future visitation.

Keep it Going

Provide consistent training in the art of soul winning and visitation for your volunteer ambassadors. Give instruction not only on biblical matters but also on practical matters. Train members in exactly what to do and say on a home visit. Many Christians will step forward if they're properly motivated and instructed.

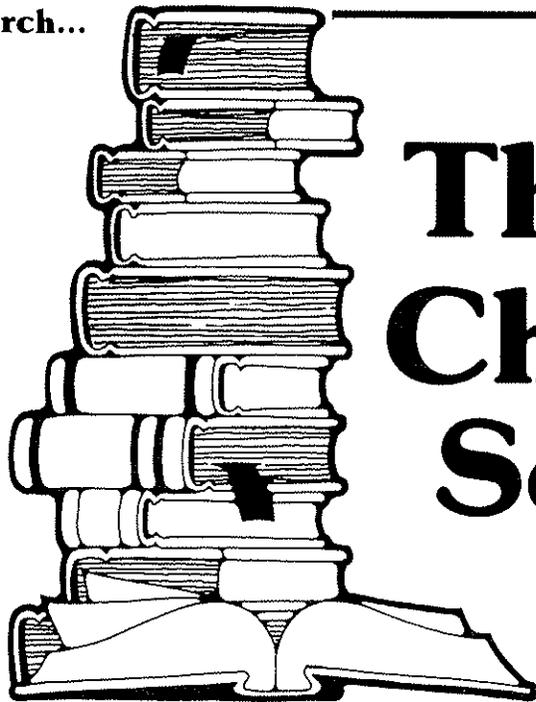
Those who represent Christ and His Church must be clean and neat in appearance, mannerly in conduct and polite when they visit, even in the face of prospect hostility.

Don't give up if something doesn't work the first time you try it. Reorganize and try again. Organized visitation is one of many ways to help your church grow, and it will be well worth the extra effort necessary. Give organized visitation a try in your church. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Brian Atwood pastors Emmanuel Free Will Baptist Church, Wabash, Indiana.

Let's Build The Church...



Through Christian Schools

By Sam Henderson

William C. Pitts wrote in a recent article for the Ohio State Association's newsletter that Free Will Baptists must attempt to answer these three questions:

- 1) Is the loss of our young people *avoidable*?
- 2) Is the answer to our problem truly *available*?
- 3) Is the remedy needed *acceptable*?

Borrowing from these three points, I would like to point out that, first of all, we can avoid such great casualties among our "new recruits" through better training and planned life-preparation.

Secondly, we do have an answer that is available: Christian schools can be effective in helping the local church help its youth.

And thirdly, the remedy is acceptable: it is built on our convictions; it perpetuates our congregation; it provides the consistency needed throughout our denomination. This consistency will, as a result, cause growth in our churches, our Bible colleges and our outreach.

Jane Seagrove, associated press writer, states, that in the days of the church-house schools, American children learned their morals from story books in which "liars always suffered and honesty paid..."

Teachers enforced obedience. But, by the 1970's, little remained in the public schools of the age-old method of "teaching morals like multiplication."

Many schools have accepted programs that essentially say there is no right or wrong. "We are going to present all these different values, and the kids can pick and choose between them," says Marilyn Rauth, ex-director of the Ed. Issues Department of A.F.T.

Our kids may come out with no values at all, but to someone with an amoral philosophy, this is good.

Frustrated parents, conservative groups and educators led by U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett are calling for a new approach for a moral education. "Kids are hungry to know what's right and wrong...and since the time of McGuffey's Reader, nobody has bothered to teach them," says Ray Erlandson, Jr., executive president of American Inst. of Character Ed.

Now, who is qualified to teach our children these "rights and wrongs?" Certainly not the amoral system which spawned some of the recent day's "wishy-washy" young people which we all deal with in our communities and churches. Not to alienate those good, Christian public school teachers, but the answer must not be in the typical American classroom, or else public

education wouldn't be in the shape it's in now!

But without proper Christian training, our future generations—they on whose shoulders the burden of the Lord's work will rest tomorrow—will achieve no further growth for our denomination. Without timely planning and implementation of productive programs, our denominational goal of "50,000 new members and 100 new churches by 1990" will never be reached, nor could that growth be sustained.

What we must face squarely is that our world today is vastly different from 20 years ago. We passed from the "we," through the "me," to the "free" generations; outlooks and life philosophies have, as a result, changed dramatically.

The results can be seen in attitudes toward sin and the lack of accountability in many denominations today. The problems we deal with today are different; older methods are often outdated or ineffective, we encounter new problems and greater demands on our ministry.

As society changes, it becomes in itself a force of change that affects our churches through subsequent changes in our laity (the source of



CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS (from page 11)

future preachers, teachers and educators).

What we really need today is a better biblically-trained and oriented laity. And this need illustrates yet another need, a more extensive teaching of God's Word. Bible teachers are finding that the presence of a humanistic philosophy in society is affecting the students in their Sunday School ministries.

Humanism states that there are no absolutes: man is his own ultimate authority; man is as a mere animal, a soul-less, temporal being which will simply one day cease to exist. This is what the textbooks used in almost all government schools teach.

The results are increasingly evident: an immoral, hedonistic philosophy of materialism that says, "Do your own thing," without any restrictions whatsoever. This attitude manifests itself in every aspect of our world from political leaders to television programming to religious temperance.

Our laws are corrupted by a "laissez-faire" attitude of our judicial system toward social ills. Our schools are breeding grounds of vice, corruption and rebellion. Our children in public schools could therefore become ingrained with values that are definitely not what our churches preach.

**You support your state
university
with your taxes.**



**How do you support your
Bible College?**

What we really need to cultivate is a true hunger for the Word and a "want-to" attitude of service. If we can show our children the need to serve, and if we can instill in them the necessity of seeking God's will, then they will find meaning and values and divine direction for their lives and for our churches and our denomination as a result.

By and large, one or two hours a week of Sunday School training alone is proving insufficient. Even the best Bible teachers find themselves hindered by a lack of time, by a lack of real student interest and by outdated methods of presentation. Sunday School is a good supplement, but not a substitute for Christian day schools.

The government schools traditionally give facts, but few really lay out footsteps for our youth to follow down correct paths. Children can survive and even prosper without Christian schools. But the difference between life-preparation in a Christian school as opposed to that in a secular school is the equivalent of running a race in Adidas as opposed to running in high-top combat boots.

There must be the "3 R's" in the curriculum, to be sure. But the basis of all truth must be a correct theistic view of life in order to apply the knowledge gained. Proverbs 1:7 says the fear (reverence) of God is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Many children today in public schools reject attempts by the teaching staff to give them knowledge of any kind. Frequently, the school administration tolerates unruly students out of necessity, but as a result, the learning environment for those who do wish to learn decays, and in some cases, is practically non-existent.

Many parents are concerned that any departure from the "traditional" patronization of public school will produce less-than-satisfactory results. But has the public school been an agent for improvement in society's standards and morals? I think not.

In fact, the traditional method is not really today's conventional method of one teacher in front of a group of age-graded children. For up to 300 years

the traditional method was a one-room school house, usually a church, with a room full of children, ages six to 20, who received their assignments, instruction and advancement individually.

There was no "social promotion" or "grading on a curve." Learning was the sole criteria of advancement. Maybe they were not exposed to as much as students today, but they learned more about those things which really mattered (Jeremiah 4:22). Why? Because they were taught using God's principles and God's Word (and often they were taught by God's man—the preacher).

By this example, I point out that our children from Free Will Baptist homes can receive something better than even the government schools offer. Our homes, our churches and our community can reap the benefits of a focus on truth and wisdom.

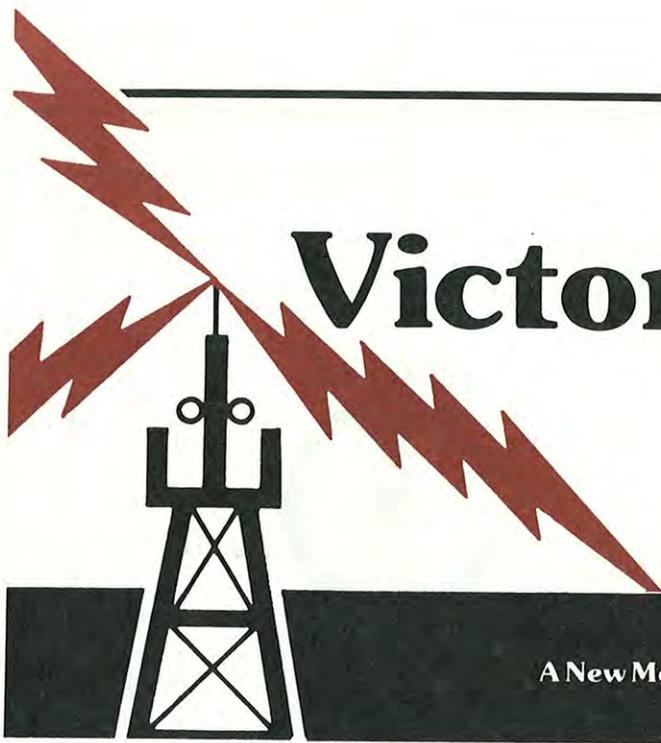
Christian education does cost, but do real convictions ever come cheaply? Our churches need the kind of "return on investment" that is Christian education. We, as a denomination, must not only participate in the Christian school movement, we must also promote the concept.

Our churches can be built for the long haul, but only if we invest in the future of our congregations now through Christian schools in our churches, using our people to guide, instruct and educate our children.

Today, the future is upon us. Let's use Christian schools to insure the cause of Christ in our denomination and in our communities. ▲



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Sam Henderson pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Green Rock, Illinois.



Victorious Faith

By Larry Hampton

A New Means Of Telling The Old, Old Story

A Dream Come True

For years, numerous individuals longed to see the National Association of Free Will Baptists use the broadcast media to spread the gospel. In 1982 the dream moved nearer reality by the creation of the Free Will Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Delegates to the 47th session of the National Association meeting in Columbus, Ohio, instructed commission members to "formulate and execute plans to bring into being television and radio programs commensurate to the needs and opportunities of our people." After careful consideration, the commission decided to limit its present activities to radio.

On The Air

In January 1985, the "Victorious Faith" radio ministry was launched on WGKR in Perry, Fla. From the opening note of the theme song—"Faith Is The Victory"—to the sign-off, the program was totally Free Will Baptist. Pastor Tom Malone of First FWB Church, Florence, Ala., spoke on the 30-minute broadcast.

When Rev. Malone resigned, the commission selected Rev. Robert Shockey as the new speaker and adopted a revised 15-minute format.

Bob Shockey, director of Christian service and campus pastor at Free Will

Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tenn., has been a soul-winning preacher for more than 30 years. The Kentucky native has pastored, served as a home missionary and directed the Department of Home Missions and Church Extension. He's a popular conference and revival speaker.

Shockey, a 1958 graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College, married the former Betty Gambill. The Shockeys who have two daughters—Stephanie and Paula—are members of New Hope FWB Church in Joelton, Tenn.

Sponsors Needed

Would you like to sponsor "Victorious Faith" on your local radio station? If so, follow these simple steps. First, contact the station and secure a weekly time slot. Your cost will be determined by the size of the market the station serves and the time segment you wish to purchase.

Next, request a series of 13 programs from the commission. When you write, indicate when the program will be aired and the station's call letters.

There is a tape fee of \$39—that's \$3 per tape. This one-time charge covers replacement of tapes due to loss or damage. Individual tapes and series are available for purchase.

The next series of tapes will be sent in plenty of time to reach you before

the next quarter begins. Should you stop sponsoring the program, your money will be refunded when the tapes are returned.

Partners in Ministry

The Free Will Baptist Radio and Television Commission needs your help and prayers. Please give generously to enable us to keep "Victorious Faith" on the air. While local churches buy air time, the commission pays all production costs. Whether you include the commission in your church budget or receive a monthly offering for the work, we need your consistent support.

Together we can accomplish our goal "to broadcast plainly and powerfully the Word of God with a view to winning the lost, strengthening believers and encouraging active involvement in Free Will Baptist churches."

Send all gifts and correspondence to

**Free Will Baptist Radio-Television
Commission
P.O. Box 1088
Nashville, TN 37202 ▲**

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Larry D. Hampton is a member of the Radio-Television Commission. He serves as principal of Bethany Christian School, Norfolk, Virginia.



Target 90: How Are We Doing?

By Robert E. Picirilli

We just finished the first year of the Target 90 campaign. It's only right, then, that we report to the denomination how it has gone so far. Have we reached our first-year goal? Have we done any good?

In case you've forgotten, Target 90 is the name of a growth campaign for Free Will Baptists. First adopted by all our departments of work and the National Association in 1985, the campaign was scheduled for five years and had two major goals. The first goal was to add 50,000 members to our denomination by national convention time in 1990. That overall goal was broken down on a year by year basis, as follows:

1985-86:	5,000	increase in membership
1986-87:	7,500	increase in membership
1987-88:	10,000	increase in membership
1988-89:	12,000	increase in membership
1989-90:	15,000	increase in membership.

The second major goal was for the planting of 100 new Free Will Baptist churches, also broken down into five yearly goals:

1985-86:	10 new churches planted
1986-87:	15 new churches planted
1987-88:	20 new churches planted
1988-89:	25 new churches planted
1989-90:	30 new churches planted.

Have we accomplished these goals? Perhaps we have, but we can't say for sure. And therein lies one of our Free Will Baptist problems, one we simply must solve if we're to determine whether we are growing and how much.

The problem is that we still aren't getting accurate statistics, even though we started off this campaign by stressing that need and by getting the report forms simplified.

Whether we have added 5,000 new members to our denomination this past year depends, then, on how you read the incomplete statistics we have. In one set of columns, it looks as though we reached the goal. The total

"members added" for the year is 12,052. Subtract from that the total "members lost" for the year, 7,314. That should leave a net gain in members of 4,738.

That set of figures is encouraging. It at least means that, for the churches reporting (and assuming the correctness of the figures), there was a gain in membership of almost 5,000 this first year of Target 90.

The trouble comes when you compare another column, namely "total membership." A year ago, "total membership" in the statistical report stood at 217,838. This year, the "total membership" figure reads 205,546. That figure is discouraging. It would seem to say that we have lost ground instead of gaining any.

But the problem is that this figure is completely unreliable, since it is reasonably clear that there are a great many churches whose membership figures are not reported in that total—evidently a lot more than last year!

Actually, we find a great many inconsistencies in the statistics. The

figures just won't hold water. Frankly, we can't tell which columns to believe.

We are going to try to go back to the associations and get more complete, correct statistics all the way from top to bottom. But the first thing we have learned in Target 90 is crystal clear: so far, we do not have the kind of reporting of statistics in our denomination that will enable us to tell anything at all about our numbers—growth or losses. And that's a pitiful fact. Please, please, please—let's all determine that we will get complete and accurate statistics at all levels.

What about new churches planted? The problem of statistics affects us here, too. At this point, then, we simply do not know whether Free Will Baptists have planted 10 new churches in the past year or not. In truth, by the grapevine, as well as by the formal work of the Home Missions Department, those of us on the Target 90 Committee have learned of several new churches planted in the last year. We are trying to trace down specific information. Here is another area where we need better reports.

The news is not all uncertain, however. In fact, much has been accomplished during this first year. Even before we began, we realized that the first year would be mostly a year of organization and consciousness-raising. Our congregational denomination doesn't get quickly at anything. One committee can't make decisions and adopt programs for our churches (thank the Lord for that).

In these ways, we believe the first year of Target 90 has been successful. That is especially true at the organizational level. In the first place, nearly every one of our state associations adopted Target 90 and its own goals. Each of these has a state Target 90 Coordinator.

Here are the state organizations that adopted the Target 90 campaign:

Alabama: Richard Cordell
Arizona: Paul Thompson
Arkansas: David Joslin
California: Nuel Brown
Florida: Larry Montgomery
Georgia: Herbert Waid
Illinois: David Shores
Indiana: Brian Atwood
Maryland: Home Missions Board
Michigan: Charles Cooper
Mississippi: Joyce Gore

Missouri: Clarence Burton
New Mexico: Cleta Adams
Northwest: Terry Stafford
Ohio: Delmar Sparks
Oklahoma: Executive Board and one member from each board
South Carolina: Norwood Gibson
Tennessee: Raymond Riggs
Texas: Billy Walker
Virginia: Jeff Crabtree
West Virginia: Carl Cooper.

(If your state isn't one of these, make sure the next state meeting adopts the campaign.)

In the second place, 375 individuals have personally committed themselves to Target 90 on behalf of their local churches. Most of these represent different churches, many of which named their own local Target 90 committees to spearhead a program of growth. All of these have been sent materials and will continue to receive mailings in the months and years ahead.

Here is where the real growth will take place: at the local church level. We hope every local church will adopt Target 90 and participate in this important campaign. If your church hasn't adopted Target 90 and named its own Target 90 Committee, do it right away. For information, write or call Dr. Melvin Worthington; as our executive secretary, he chairs the national Target 90 Committee.

In summary, we've just got started, but we're off to a good start. More people in more places are talking about growing. More churches are considering specific ways they can go about winning people to Christ and bringing them into the church. When enough of us get burdened for the lost and determine to "bring them in," we'll see the growth we've been missing.

The national Target 90 Committee consists of a representative from each of our departments of work: Melvin Worthington, chairman; Roy Thomas, Home Missions; Don Robirds, Foreign Missions; Herman Hersey, Retirement and Foundation; Mary R. Wisehart, WNAC; Robert E. Picirilli, FWBBC; Jim Vallance, Master's Men; and Roger Reeds, Sunday School.▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Robert E. Picirilli, a member of the Target 90 Committee, is academic dean at Free Will Baptist Bible College and former moderator of the Notional Association of Free Will Baptists.

Directory Update

ARKANSAS

Ken Rieter to Greenbrier Church, Greenbrier from First Church, Arkadelphia

David Bishop to Union Grove Church, Atkins from First Church, Dardanelle

Dale Doss to Grace Church, Newport

CALIFORNIA

Holt Seawell to Oxnard Church, Oxnard from Riverview Church, Bettendorf, Iowa

GEORGIA

Walter Baxley to Cedar Springs Church, Cedar Springs

ILLINOIS

Sam Henderson to First Church, Green Rock from Shenandoah Christian Academy, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Kenneth Edwards to Harmony Church, West Frankfort

IOWA

Joe Braddy to Riverview Church, Bettendorf

MISSOURI

Don Robertson to Hazel Creek Church, Kirksville from First Church, Willow Springs

NORTH CAROLINA

Dennis Wiggs to Ruth's Chapel Church, New Bern from Heritage Church, Williamsburg, Virginia

OKLAHOMA

George Harvey to Felker Church, North Valliant from Greenbrier Church, Greenbrier, Arkansas

Roy Bingham to Liberty Church, Mannford

Gary Shipley to Crowder Church, Crowder

SOUTH CAROLINA

Fred Lockwood to Eastside Church, Florence

TENNESSEE

James Jewell to Lowe's Chapel, Newport from United Church, Cleveland, Ohio

TEXAS

Owen Barger to First Church, Bowie

J. L. (Pat) Burttram to Easley Chapel Church, Comanche

OTHER PERSONNEL

Sam Postlewaite to Gateway Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, as principal of Gateway Christian School

A Pfizer Pharmaceuticals advertisement that ran in numerous national periodicals estimated that over 30 million Americans may be suffering from some form of depression today. The article said that as many as one in five of us will experience depression at some time in our lives.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, more than 125,000 Americans are hospitalized each year with depression, while another 200,000 are treated by psychiatrists or in physicians' offices.

Dr. Nathan Kline of New York's Rockland State Hospital, stated in a *Newsweek* magazine article, "... a lot of depression is unrecognized. It's the chronic under-achiever, the fatigued housewife, the sort of person Winston Churchill described as snatching defeat from the jaws of victory."

Long the leading mental illness in United States, depression is now virtually epidemic and has become as serious a problem as diabetes and leukemia. Dr. Kline says that depression is one of the most misunderstood ailments of our times.

It's important to keep in mind that a certain amount of depression is normal, though no depression should be taken lightly.

Characteristics

Mental health professionals call depression "the common cold of psychopathology." However, it is never "common" to the one experiencing it. Depressions come in all sizes, kinds and degrees. They can range from mild, transient episodes that might be labeled the "blues" to severe forms in which one's bodily processes may be slowed down to a life-threatening degree.

The first symptom of depression is lack of concentration. This can be detected by more time spent day-dreaming. The attention span gets shorter.

As depression increases, the main symptom is deep-rooted boredom, while the individual withdraws from others. Eventually the depression leads to physical symptoms like headaches and other pains.

Eating habits may be affected—the depressed person may eat too much

or too little. These physical symptoms often lead to a lack of energy, a common complaint in the depressed person. Often the depressed cannot sleep, or the opposite may be true. They sleep or stay in bed longer in an attempt to "hide."

Sadness is an obvious characteristic, with a pessimistic outlook on life. Also, depression is characterized by bad feeling for self. A condition marked by feelings of worthlessness, dejection and worry. The depressed individual has an inadequate self-concept, strong guilt feelings and "needs" punishment because of his failures, sins and inadequacies.

According to Dr. Clyde Narramore, Christian psychologist, the depressed Christian misinterprets the Word of God by giving attention only to those verses which judge and condemn. The depressed person typically loses interest in church activities and social involvements.

Causes

Depression may have several causes. Some people are more prone to depression than others. One may get depressed simply because there are problems in the world. He wants the world to be perfect, and it isn't. Depression may also be a way of reacting to external pressures such as divorce, violence in the home or pressure from siblings, peers or co-workers.

Causes and/or reasons for depression may be cataloged: *Mental and physical exhaustion.*

Dr. William E. Bunney of the National Institute of Mental Health concluded from a study that nearly all depressions, however classified, are precipitated by stress. Negative feelings may be signals warning us about inadequate rest or nutrition or the need for medical attention.

Physical

Imbalance in the physiological system may occur. We are not yet living in eternity where everything is constant, but in time with its continual change. To expect our emotions and vitality to persist on a plateau is unrealistic. Our lives cycle with peak periods of vitality and enthusiasm and low periods when one's inner world cools down and energy subsides to a low ebb.

Dealing Depression

By Mal...

Part four of a five-part series



Spiritual

The depressed Christian is upset by past sin. He has feelings of unworthiness, is unable to accept the forgiveness of God and constantly dwells on his misdeeds. Often he has a sense of being alone in serving God.

When his goals are not obtained, it conflicts with his impatient "instant everything" complex. Inadvertently, the depressed person tries to "box God in" and force Him to work in ways that make sense to the individual. Consequently, the depressed person focuses attention on circumstances instead of on God.

Cure

Sit with Elijah under the juniper bush and learn how he overcame his gloom. Elijah had just come from a

g With ssion

n C. Fry



victorious encounter with 450 prophets of Baal (I Kings 18) and then got frightened and discouraged by the threat of one wicked woman. That ought to tell us something.

Even the best believer is subject to human fears and failures. We all are vulnerable to Satan, even in our strongest point of character and in the hour of great victory. Elijah met apparent defeat on the heels of great triumph. Yet, he soon learned that God did care; He had not forsaken His servant.

Emotional depression follows emotional exhilaration (I Kings 18:37-39). Guard against the let down that follows great victories. This principle shows the inherent danger in religion which stresses emotional exercise. All true workings of the Holy Spirit main-

tain a sound emotional-intellectual balance.

Jezebel's threat (I Kings 19:2) shows that the immediate cause of depression is seldom valid. Nonetheless, Elijah capitulated and became depressed in spirit. He prayed for death and argued with God, revelling in his own pity party.

He seemed to lose confidence in the promises of God and the God of the promises. He saw himself alone. He suffered from what men call megalomania, "an excessive concept of one's own importance." Depression is so horrible because it shrinks one's horizons until life is limited to self, which leads to a total loss of perspective.

Get Rest

The first step suggested to help defeat depression is physical—get away for a rest (I Kings 19:5-8). Elijah had just run 110 miles and was physically and emotionally exhausted. He had been so busy caring for the nation's spiritual needs that he neglected his own personal needs.

Exhausted, he fell asleep under the juniper bush. Twice he was aroused by an angel to eat. After taking a good rest and eating food he traveled 40 days on that nourishment. We will find that a good rest will also help us. Proper diet and sufficient sleep could be a cure for depression.

Share Frustrations

The second step suggested is psychological—share your frustrations (I Kings 19:9-10). God asked Elijah what was bothering him, and so Elijah used that opportunity to get everything off his chest. None of his assumptions was true.

The lesson is—get it out of your system. Tell God what is eating you. Your depression may come from improper repression. God knows all anyway; He is interested and completely understands your problem.

Acknowledge God's Presence

The third step suggested is spiritual—receive a fresh awareness of God's presence and power (I Kings 19:11-14). Note that nowhere did God ask Elijah to confess his depression as a sin. Depressed Christians always feel guilty, but have no need to.

Elijah now knew that he was not alone (v. 13) and that God had not

forsaken him. In those moments Elijah received a fresh awareness of the personal presence and power of God. Depression is defeated when the Lord reveals Himself. The problems may still be there, perhaps, but they will appear small in light of God's presence. We need to seek His presence in the solitude and quietness of reading His Word and praying.

Resume Activities

Go back to work (I Kings 19:15-18). In effect God said, "Elijah, you were commissioned to be a prophet, so get up off your self-pity and be a prophet! Go and anoint three men. One of the three, Elisha, will be your successor. As long as you sit here you will continue to nurse your case of depression."

Once we have rested and had the fresh awareness of the presence of God, we need to leave and get back to work. Idle hands and minds provide fuel for depression. Resumption of activities takes one's mind off his personal problems, and it makes him useful and productive again.

Relate to others

God also told Elijah that he was not alone in the work. Besides him, there were 7,000 who had remained faithful to God. Like Elijah, we need to realize that others are also engaged in God's work and that our work is not in vain. Our depressive moods will be less disastrous if we recall that we are just one in a goodly company.

We all have times when we feel down, gloomy, dejected and worthless. But God did not plan for us to be crippled by depression. When depression overtakes us, we can defeat it by following the steps that Elijah took. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isaiah 26:3).

Whatever its cause, depression is not a phase that will run its course. Early detection and appropriate treatment are vital. Left untreated, depression tends to grow worse until serious, long-lasting consequences result. For the Christian, it robs one of personal victory, limits the effectiveness for the Lord's work and hinders others from coming to Christ. ▲

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



Help! I'm Shy!

By Dennis E. Hensley

Have you ever "postponed" an opportunity to witness because you felt shy and self-conscious? Have you ever turned down an invitation to a church activity because you felt shy and hesitant about being around new people? Maybe it's time you learned how to overcome this outreach barrier.

Shyness isn't something just discovered in recent years. People have suffered from it since ancient times—partly because the problem was so often ignored or passed off lightly.

"What? Shy? My wife? She's just a little moody, that's all."

"Yeah, I know my boy's bashful. No big deal. The kid'll come out of his shell when he gets older."

"My daughter is shy, eh? So, who cares? Little girls are supposed to be coy, right?"

Those responses are naive. The truth is that words like "shyness" and

"bashfulness" are just a cover for the real problem: FEAR. Experts agree that shy people are genuinely afraid of something.

Their fears can be real or imagined. And the sad irony is that Christians are often among the shyest of people. They read scripture passages about walking through the valley of the shadow of death and fearing no evil, yet refuse to go out on calling night because they're afraid to face strangers.

Too, often, our fears become stronger than our faith, and we miss opportunities to receive spiritual gifts from God. When God called Moses to speak to Pharaoh, Moses complained that he was not eloquent enough to handle the job. His complaining angered the Lord (Exodus 4:14).

"I will be thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say," God promised Moses. But Moses lacked faith. As a result, his brother Aaron became God's spokesman. Moses had a

chance to receive the gift of spiritually-inspired oratory (I Corinthians 12:8), but his shyness and fear made him forfeit this blessing.

Religious and lay counselors agree that shyness hasn't been taken seriously enough. It can become an excuse for lack of assertiveness in individuals with poor work records, both in their church and secular jobs. But it can be dealt with if people truly have a desire to overcome it.

"When it comes to overcoming shyness, everything comes down to attitude and preparation," says Dr. L. Stanley Wenck, psychology professor at Ball State University. "People who *anticipate* that they are going to behave awkwardly around other people actually *program* themselves to behave that way. Instead, they should develop an attitude of confidence."

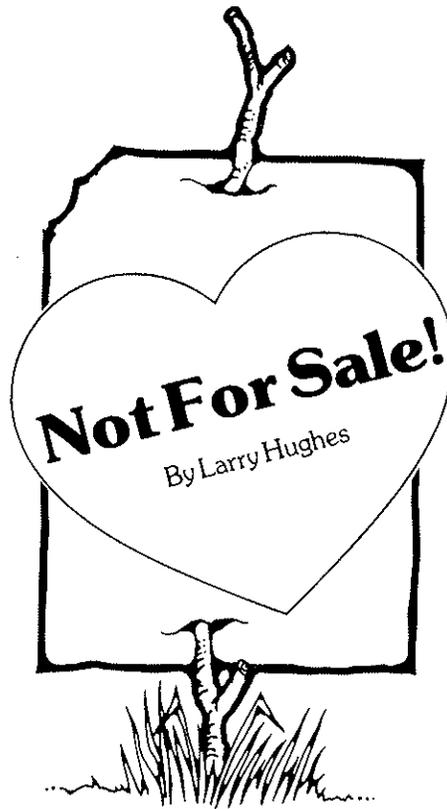
Dr. Wenck works with college freshmen living away from home for the first time who feel shy because of their new surroundings. The tips he

Recently the morning mail brought to our church one of those letters that was no doubt intended for small businesses. I almost threw it into the trash before I saw the lead sentence, "Would you like to sell your business?"

I pondered the question for a moment. I thought, many have sold out my business (the church) for a variety of reasons and prices. Judas first sold the Lord for 30 pieces of silver. Some today sell out the church by unfaithfulness, others by lack of interest, some for the pleasure of sin. The list is endless. All who sell out do so due to a lack of love for the Lord Jesus.

But back to that business letter. It also said, "Avoid high brokerage fees." I thought, no way, it's impossible. You see, to sell out the church is to sell out the Lord Jesus. He bought the church with the supreme price, His precious blood.

Another statement in the letter stood out, "Keep the sale a secret until you are ready to make your intentions



known." You may do this in the secular world but not with the church. God will know it the very moment you sell out His church. Soon others will know as they observe your life.

One last thing in this letter stood out, "So what do you do?" The letter pressed for a decision. The devil presses God's people every day for a decision concerning our relationship with the Lord and His church.

After thinking it over I am thankful that my decision is the same as it was when I first saw the lead question. No, my business (the Lord's church) is not for sale. The church means too much to me. I could never sell as long as I keep my spiritual thinking straight. By the grace and help of God I plan to keep it straight. The church often has problems, but God is still using it to change the lives of thousands of people.

Let us all hang a "Not For Sale" sign on our hearts. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Larry D. Hughes pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

gives these young adults are useful to any person facing shyness.

"Just as shyness compounds itself, so too does confidence," explains Dr. Wenck. "Shy people should build their confidence in small but steady doses. They can begin by approaching friendly people (a reference librarian, a bank teller, a minister) and asking for advice or help on some matter. Each week they can get to know more and more such people."

He adds, "They also should become members of small groups or clubs where they can be with a few people and not be overwhelmed by a large crowd." Church youth groups and school clubs can help shy teens become more self-assured.

Dr. Wenck admits that strange new surroundings and major life changes, like getting married, going into the military or going to college, can cause the sort of anxiety that might lead to shyness in people. But that doesn't have to be the case.

"New situations offer as much opportunity for positive things to occur as they do negative things," says Dr. Wenck. "Maybe someone has been hesitant in other situations. Who

cares? This is *now*. Strangers have no preconceived notions about people they meet. If the shy person will behave with confidence, he or she will be accepted as a capable and strong individual. It's a chance to start a new, more assertive life."

Pastors, psychiatrists and other counselors generally agree that there is nothing baffling or mystical about overcoming shyness. Basically, there are five procedures which counselors suggest to people seeking help:

Be yourself. You have many unique and wonderful God-given personality traits which will attract people to you if you relax and behave naturally (Hebrews 13:5).

Don't exaggerate circumstances. Don't develop needless anxiety about what may happen or what folks *might* think about you. These are manufactured worries. Keep your negative imaginings under control (Matthew 6:25).

Be friendly. You can find many new friends by first being friendly yourself. A simple handshake, a kind word and a warm smile go a long way in increasing social contacts for yourself (II Chronicles 10:7).

Get a new view of yourself. Learn to view your shortcomings as unique aspects of your character. No one except Jesus is perfect; nevertheless, everyone is unique. Capitalize on that (II Timothy 1:7).

Build confidence daily. Try to accomplish something each day which will expand your circle of friends or expose you to new circumstances. Bite off a little at a time. Progress, no matter how slow or how small, is better than standing still or regressing (James 1:2-3).

God built into us some character elements which enable us to be properly cautious and logically careful. But He didn't create us to be shy wallflowers who sit idly, eyes lowered, in back pews while others work and witness.

Instead, we need to overcome bashfulness to be strong witnesses for Christ. Bashfulness is a problem we should not shy away from (Isaiah 41:10). ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Dennis E. Hensley is the author of Staying Ahead Of Time and Uncommon Sense (R & R Newkirk) and two Christian novels written under the pen name of Leslie Holden, The Legacy Of Lillian Parker and The Compton Connection (Harvest House).

CONTACT for every Church

- Why should the official denominational magazine be in the home of every Free Will Baptist?
- As the name suggests, *Contact* is a link between the members of Free Will Baptist churches and the denominational ministries. It's also a tie between the local church and the home.
- *Contact* provides Free Will Baptists with inspirational reading material which many would not have access to otherwise. We feel the official denominational magazine is worthy of being included as a part of any church's regular literature program. The church which provides

its membership with Christian literature beyond the usual quarterlies makes an investment from which it will reap extra benefits of laity participation and leadership in years to come.

- *Contact's* Church Family Plan is the *most economical way* to subscribe. Churches that adopt the Church Family Plan pay only \$7.50 per year for each subscription. That's \$1.50 less than the Bundle Plan rate.

Oh, and don't forget—when a church adopts *Contact's* Church Family Plan, the pastor gets a **FREE** subscription!

Here's How the Plan Works

Contact is mailed directly to the home of each active family. The cost is paid quarterly in advance with one check from the church.

After the church votes to participate in the *Contact* Church Family Plan, the following steps are all that are necessary:

1. Select a responsible person to obtain the names and complete addresses of *all* active families in the church. Forward one copy of this list to *Contact* and retain a duplicate copy of the list for church records. It is not necessary to send any money initially.

2. This list will be checked against our current subscribers. Any current subscribers will continue as they are until their subscriptions expire, at which time they will automatically be added to the Church Family Plan.

3. The church will be billed quarterly in advance at the rate of \$1.89 for each subscription. The cost, for example, would be \$37.80 quarterly if 20 families were enlisted.

4. A form to update the Church Family Plan list will be sent quarterly with each billing. Additions, deletions or changes may be made more frequently than quarterly if desired.

5. This plan continues in effect until the church gives a 30-day written cancellation notice.

(Clip and mail to: Contact P.O. Box 1088 Nashville, TN 37202)

Dear Editor:

- Yes! I am interested in presenting the Church Family Plan to my church.
 Please send sample copies of *Contact* to be used in presenting the Church Family Plan.

PASTOR'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CHURCH _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____



FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

SUNDAY SCHOOL FALL ENLARGEMENT THEME SET

NASHVILLE, TN—The fall enlargement campaign is different, according to officials at Randall House Publications. It offers resources and training for leaders as well as "how to" information for a successful enlargement.

The "Go For the Goal" theme allows participants to set their own realistic goals for short or longer periods. The program is flexible and adaptable to any size church.

The fall campaign begins Sunday, October 5 and continues through Sunday, October 26 for competitive purposes. Sunday Schools in each division who experience the greatest percentage of gain over the 13 weeks average attendance for March-April-May 1986 will be declared winners and awarded appropriate trophies denoting first and second place winners.

The following divisions have been set:

- Division A over 500 average
- Division B 400-500 average
- Division C 300-399 average
- Division D 200-299 average
- Division E 150-199 average
- Division F 100-149 average
- Division G 50-99 average
- Division H under 49 average
- Division I Newly Established

The present Sunday School size does not prevent any church from being eligible to win their division. Campaign materials are available from the Sunday School and Church Training Department. Entry blanks must be received by October 4.



Pastor Vernon Long (L.) and Evangelist Darvin Oakes display banner with revival results.

PERSONAL CONTACTS KEY REVIVAL EFFORT

JACKSON, TN—Members of Victory FWB Church, Jackson, participated in a week-long revival blitz that resulted in 3,677 personal contacts in the city June 13-20. Pastor Vernon Long said the church youth, several adults and the Darvin Oakes Evangelistic team shared visitation duties during the week.

The combination vacation Bible school and revival saw 16 people saved and 11 rededications in this west Tennessee city.

Victory FWB Church began as a joint project of the Tennessee State Home Missions Board. That arrangement ended June 30.

HILLSDALE COLLEGE LAUNCHES SPORTS PROGRAM

MOORE, OK—The Board of Trustees at Hillsdale FWB College announced that the college will begin an intercollegiate sports program this fall. The college has been accepted into the Mid-South Conference of the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA). The new sports program includes basketball and baseball.

Mr. Aaron Lawrence has been employed as student recruiter and coach. Mr. Lawrence, an Oklahoma City native, attended Moore High School, Oklahoma City College and Grace Bible Institute. Before joining the Hillsdale staff, Lawrence coached three years at Logos Christian Academy in Oklahoma City, compiling a 60-18 won-loss record.

When asked what his goals for the program were he said, "I want to stress the spiritual values that are important to any program, and help young men to realize God's will for their lives. Also, I want to have a good relationship with all the players that would allow them to talk to me not only about sports, but about anything that might be on their minds. Last of all, I think we can be very competitive on the court. I can promise one thing, we will play hard all the time."

Reverend Edwin Wade, president of the college, said, "A sports program provides a rallying point for the student body and personnel, thus boosting morale. This does not exclude or replace spiritual training but it is a practical aid to accomplishing it."

newsfront

(continued)

ARKANSAS CHURCHES GIVE \$962,000 TO DENOMINATIONAL OUTREACH

CONWAY, AR—Arkansas FWB churches contributed almost \$1 million to state and national ministries in 1985, according to Promotional Director David Joslin. Delegates to the 89th state association learned that more than \$360,000 of those funds went to Arkansas home missions (\$72,000), national home missions (\$56,000) and foreign missions (\$132,000).

Officials confirmed that 599 delegates and visitors registered for the August 12-14 session which met at Camp Beaverfork near Conway. That number included 89 ministers and 30 deacons.

Moderator Carl Cheshier, re-elected for his 10th year, presided during

the business sessions. Delegates approved budgets for all state agencies and endorsed a 1987 Cooperative Plan budget of \$170,000. Thirty-two percent of the state Cooperative Plan receipts will be channeled to national ministries while 68 percent will fund state outreach projects.

Four Arkansas ministers preached messages developing the state association theme, "The Promises of God." The ministers included Reverends Larry Montgomery, J. W. Blanks, Paul Payne and Darwin Kelton.

Pastors George Harvey (Felker FWB Church, Valliant, Okla.), and Dwayne Roper (Yorktown FWB Church, Star City) preached during

the Tuesday Bible Conference at First FWB Church in Conway.

James Vallance, general director of the Master's Men Department, addressed 91 men at the 12th annual state Master's Men meeting Wednesday at Bowen's Restaurant in Conway.

The 32nd session of the Arkansas Woman's Auxiliary met August 12 using the theme, "Thy Word Hath Called Us." Missionaries to Brazil Earnie and Willie Jean Deeds spoke to the attendees. State president Genelle Scott presided.

The 1987 Arkansas State Association will meet August 11-13 at Camp Beaverfork.

SOUTHEASTERN COLLEGE ADDS MUSIC MAJOR, FACULTY



VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—Southeastern Free Will Baptist College will offer a major in sacred music beginning with the fall 1986 semester, according to Dr. Lorenza Stox, college dean. Randall Sawyer, chairman of the music department, says the music major will benefit Free Will Baptist churches by filling a growing need for qualified music personnel.

To assist in the music program development, the college employed Mrs. Terri Siebert as a full-time faculty member. Mrs. Siebert has worked as a part-time professor at the school. She brings 29 years of experience as pianist at Gateway FWB Church, 26 years as a private piano teacher and seven years teaching music in Gateway Christian School.

Mrs. Siebert will teach music theory, sight-singing and ear training, evangelistic hymn playing as well as private piano lessons.

Coming Next Month . . .

- Make Big Days Work For You**
- If The Missionary Hadn't Come**
- God's Word—Handle With Care**
- Start A New Church**
- Worry—It's Causes and Cures**
- Why Go To Church?**
- The Whiner's Wail**

Ever had one of those weeks when nothing turned out right? Talk with Pastor **Chester Rineer** at **First FWB Church, Valdosta, GA**. The church installed a large sign that Pastor Rineer used to display eye-catching quips in eight-inch letters. One week he used the sign to ask this probing question, "What have you done today that a Christian would not do?" Some wag responded by stealing his movable letters!

Members of **Pleasant Hill FWB Church, Vienna, GA**, honored one of their own. They called it "Viola Hunt Day." The special occasion honored Mrs. **Viola Hunt** for 60 years of service to the church and community. Mrs. Hunt has served as church clerk/treasurer since 1959. Members also presented her with a plaque of appreciation. The tribute to Mrs. Hunt, titled "A Woman God Uses" attracted more than 100 family members and friends. **William Sumner** pastors.

Pastor **David Dollar** reports that **White Rock FWB Church, Phenix City, AL**, dedicated a 250-seat sanctuary. The dedication service followed two years of work to erect the sanctuary which includes four classrooms and office space. Members invested \$75,000 in the structure now valued at more than \$140,000. They borrowed \$5,500 to buy pews. Pastor Dollar related that many of the 80 members are on social security.

Two special dedications were observed at **Trinity FWB Church, Bridgeton, MO**, according to Pastor **Millard Sasser**. A new church sign was erected by P.V. Barnes Construction Company in memory of **Ryan Merrihew**. Members also dedicated the church library as a reading center in honor of founding pastor, the late Reverend **Russel Spurgeon**.

Easley Chapel FWB Church, Comanche, TX, celebrated its 100th birthday in September. Members planned two days of fellowship and prayer activities, according to Pastor **Pat Burtram**. The Centennial Homecoming Committee was composed of **Sue Rainey, Jimmy Plumlee, Joyce Collins** and **Faylene Brown**.

Members of **First FWB Church, Benton, IL**, celebrated their 15th anniversary this summer. **Larry Clyatt** pastors.

Two high school seniors from **Blue Point FWB Church, Cisne, IL**, were especially pleased with the baccalaureate speaker at Cisne High School. The two seniors—**Steve Conrad** and **Roxanne Rahn**—heard their pastor, **Ernie Lewis**, preach to the graduating class.

Members of **Grace FWB Church, Lake City, SC**, surprised Pastor **Mircheal Jones** with a special Pastor Appreciation Day. The surprise began Sunday morning when the church spread a huge banner proclaiming that they appreciated the pastor. Members presented Pastor Jones with a book containing pictures and letters regarding his early ministry. Then to top off the special day, the congregation presented Pastor Jones with a \$1,081 love offering.

Pastor **Kenneth Klaiber** of **Pine Grove FWB Church, Ironton, OH**, says the church began a Sunday morning radio broadcast at 9:30.

Members of **St. Johns FWB Church, Patrick, SC**, gave a \$1,400 gift toward the purchase of a vehicle for Missionary Sherwood Lee. **Mike McAuley** pastors.

The junior church at **Midlands FWB Church, West Columbia, SC**, raised \$41 for Missionary Sherwood Lee. The youngsters presented a check to Missionary Lee following a Wednesday night missions service. **Ernest Barnes** pastors.

Members of **Beulah FWB Church, Pamplico, SC**, completed a \$12,000 renovation project including paint, carpet, seat cushions and other repairs. **Joe McKnight** pastors.

Pastor and Mrs. **J. B. Smith** unwrapped the biggest surprise of the year one Sunday morning. The congregation at **First FWB Church, Chester, SC**, gift-wrapped a 1986 Chevrolet Caprice Classic!

Pastor **Wilburn Beasley** reports that a fire destroyed the auditorium and educational building at **High Hill FWB Church, Scranton, SC**. Pastor Beasley said the fire was apparently caused by lightning. The blaze took almost two hours to extinguish. In the course of fighting the fire, a young volunteer fireman was killed when the roof of the building collapsed.

Oklahoma's Progressive Association raised more than \$1,800 for missionaries **Eddie Payne, Steve Reeves** and **Danny Hester** during their annual missionary conference.

How's this for a change of pace? **John** and **Claudette Bell**, members of **Southwest FWB Church, Oklahoma City, OK**, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary by cooking and serving dinner for the entire church. The Bells wanted to express their appreciation for the support of the church family. **Joe Blair** pastors.

Pastor **Sam Henderson** reports that attendance at **First FWB Church, Green Rock, IL**, increased from the thirties to almost 80.

Pastor **Luther Sanders** preached to 150 inmates at the Hawaii State Prison. Sanders pastors **Waipahu FWB Church, Waipahu, Hawaii**.

Pastor **Jerry Norris** celebrated eight years at **Calvary Fellowship FWB Church, Fenton, MO**. When Norris preached his first sermon as pastor, the Sunday morning attendance was 69. That attendance is now almost 200.

Southeastern Free Will Baptist College, Virginia Beach, VA, will observe its fall "Get Acquainted Days" for high school sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduates November 20-22. Prospective students will arrive on campus Thursday and leave at noon Saturday. College officials plan special programs for the visiting students including class sessions, chapel and a giant youth rally. The spring "Get Acquainted Days" will be conducted April 16-18, 1987.

Pastor **Brian Atwood** said members of **Emmanuel FWB Church, Wahash, IN**, are praying and waiting on the Lord regarding the possibility of relocating the church. Pastor Atwood said the church advisory board investigated several properties. The church also renegotiated their mortgage at a lower interest rate which will save several thousand dollars annually. The group voted to purchase portable classrooms to accommodate dual morning services this fall.

Members at **First FWB Church, Guin, AL**, gave more than \$6,500 in a bus ministry offering, according to Pastor **Richard Cordell**. ▲

The Scarecrow

By Wanda Bankhead

I must have stood by that old tree in the garden for an hour, gazing at the scarecrow pushed against the garden fence. Put there for a reason, his frame was now worn and his hay body and limbs molded and gray.

His clothes were tattered and torn, his slump quite impressive, for he had stood faithfully, guarding this small garden against predators for long years. There seemed to be a personality in the tired figure that cried out.

Although a lifeless weatherbeaten form, he captured my mind as if he were alive and in pain. The expressions in his straw face were only spots that took on a mysterious gaze of sadness, yet of hope. His slumping frame bespoke years of service in this place.

Why was I so captivated? What was so dynamic about a form of straw and rags? Then I realized—the scarecrow captured the roll of a servant.



Perhaps the scarecrow reminded me of a pastor who held his faithful place in the church, the outstretched arms of one who cared and loved his "garden." A man placed by God to warn and protect against predators. He could never be haughty or desirous of worldly gain, but always remains humble knowing that time would take its toll on his life.

He would suffer storms of life, never relaxing or feeling smug. He would minister to the needs of his people, no matter how tired he might be, always loving and bearing the burdens of his people.

He would be the Lord's right hand, willing to stand, to love and to watch his Master's garden grow. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Wanda (Mrs. Jack) Bankhead is a member of Friendship Free Will Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, where her husband pastors.

Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



Hugh F. Pyle, *What Every Preacher Should Know* (Murfreesboro: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1981, 382 pp., paperback, \$5.95).

The pastor is the key to church growth. He must not only be committed to it, he must know how to achieve it. Many pastors are frustrated by a lack of knowledge about how to grow. No book can guarantee that a pastor will build a growing church, but this one gives practical, down-to-earth advice about this vital area.

The opening chapter discusses how a pastor should begin a new pastorate, some things to do and some things to avoid. The new pastor must take some time, get to know the people and let them get to know him. If he disrupts

the situation in his first six months, it will be hard to put it back together later. He should be slow to change long-established ideas.

Throughout the book the author stresses the importance of good interpersonal relationships. The pastor needs a good working relationship with his staff and the leaders in his congregation. No simple formula can guarantee success in this area, but this book contains useful suggestions.

One of the most helpful sections deals with the pastor's relationship with his family. The author stresses that the pastor is, first of all, a husband and father. If he fails at home, it will be almost impossible for him to build a growing church. Many pastors make unrealistic demands on their wives.

This volume contains information on how to have a successful revival meeting. Pyle outlines what the pastor should expect of an evangelist and what an evangelist should expect of a pastor. This section alone is worth the price of the book. He reminds us that

no church can grow without an emphasis on evangelism.

There are a few areas where I must take issue with the author. His negative comments about pastoral counseling are most unfortunate. In our day a pastor who has some training and ability in counseling is a great blessing to his church and community.

Unfortunately, the author reflects little appreciation for modern compositions in the area of church music. Much modern church music is of high quality and deserves a place in worship.

The list of books which he recommends for pastors is at least 40 years out of date. Much excellent research and writing has been done in recent years, and the pastor needs to make use of it in his ministry.

In spite of these limitations, this book should be read by all pastors, especially young pastors. It can help the pastor build a growing church and save him many heartaches along the way. ▲

TEEN Scene



Local Scene

Rev. Dale McCoy hosted a mini youth revival in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Scheduling for a full-length revival had been difficult to plan because of work schedules and summer activities. As an alternative the Homer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church youth group planned a youth Sunday at their church.

The all-day activity included two worship times, one in the morning and

one in the evening. Between the services, youth loaded up picnic lunches and headed for Fort Geiser Park where fellowship time was divided between games, eating watermelon and water balloons. One source said, "We all got soaked."

The speaker for the youth Sunday was 15-year-old Scott Suttles. Special music was provided by Tracy Walker, a member of the Homer's Chapel youth group. Rev. McCoy said, "The project was great for the morale of our youth group, and the picnic gave us a time for fellowship and fun."

National Scene

This year's Truth and Peace Leadership Conference was held at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College in Moore, Oklahoma, and also at the National Youth Conference in Tulsa. The program emphasis centered on leadership qualifications. Resource

speakers were recruited from Oklahoma.

The undeclared theme of the conference seemed to be unity. The group became a close-knit community concerned about each member's needs. The Truth and Peace staff enjoyed watching the growth that took place in the young people during the three-week conference.

Four awards were given to the best all-around boy and girl and to the Truth and Peace representatives with the most leadership potential. The group chose all-around winners. The leadership potential awards were decided by the Truth and Peace staff. This year's winners:

Best All Around

Truth Member: Barry Harris, Alabama
Peace Member: Elizabeth Sizemore, Ohio

Leadership Potential

Truth Member: Tim Sizemore, Alabama
Peace Member: Tanya Getz, Texas



1986 Truth and Peace Participants and workers.



ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

Megan's Big Letdown

"Mama! Mama! Guess what?" cried Megan, glowing with excitement as she burst through the back door.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Lane.

"I got the part. Can you believe it? I'm going to be Cinderella in the class play!" said Megan.

"That's wonderful," said Mrs. Lane. "I knew you could do it."

"We've got four weeks to practice. And I've got to have two costumes. You'll make them for me, won't you, Mama?" Megan couldn't slow down to wait for an answer. "And we're giving two performances—one during school on Thursday and one on Friday night. You'll come, won't you? I can't wait to tell Christy. I hope she can come."

"Of course we'll come. We wouldn't miss it. Just imagine, my little Megan, Cinderella," said Mrs. Lane. "As for Christy, you can tell her at church tonight. It's Wednesday, remember?"

Christy babysat for the Lanes a few times, and Megan adored her. Christy was 16, pretty and talented. What's more, she was friendly, not at all stuck up like some teenagers. She made Megan feel like her friend—not like a little kid.

Megan told Christy her good news at church. "That's super," Christy said. "You'll never believe it, but I was Cinderella in the third grade play. I can help you learn your lines, and you can even wear my costumes. I had the most gorgeous white gown."

Megan couldn't believe her good luck—first, getting that dream part, then sharing it with a friend like Christy.

Megan's class worked hard on the play. Everyone had a job to do. Some were actors, like

Megan. Some, like Marty, helped build the set and paint the scenery. Some worked the lights and curtains, while others made sure the props were in place. It was hard work, but fun.

The days turned into weeks, and finally, it was Wednesday, the day before the first performance. It was 3:30 p.m. and time to start dress rehearsal. Megan was shivering with nervousness. Then Christy walked in.

"Oh, Megan, you look super!" she cried when she spotted the ragged little maid.

"Christy, what are you doing here?" asked Megan in surprise.

"I'm on my way to work, but I wanted to stop by and wish you luck," answered Christy. "I know you'll do great."

"Oh, I'm so scared," confessed Megan. "I don't think I can remember any of my lines."

"Sure you will," said Christy patting her shoulder. "You've just got stage fright. It will all come back to you once you get started."

"Do you really think so?" asked Megan.

"Sure," called Christy as she turned to leave. "Gotta run now, or I'll be late."

Suddenly Megan felt fine. A few kind words had stopped her jitters and boosted her confidence. The rehearsal went perfectly.

At church that night Megan eagerly thanked Christy.

"I couldn't have done it without you," said Megan.

"Glad I could help," said Christy. "And I don't have to work tomorrow, so I'm going to come see your play."

"Great!" said Megan. "See you then." Somehow Megan knew she would do better if Christy were there for support.

On Thursday afternoon the rest of the school filed into the auditorium to see Mrs. Curtis' class present *Cinderella*.

As the cast took their places on stage, Megan peeked out from the curtain to find Christy. She searched every row, but couldn't find her.

"Places everyone," said Mrs. Curtis. "One minute 'til curtain."

Megan grabbed her broom and started to the fireplace where she would be sweeping when the curtain opened. But instead of going to the fireplace, she ran quickly over to take one last look for Christy.

"She said she'd come backstage to wish me luck," muttered Megan under breath. "Where could she be?"

The music started and Megan heard someone whispering to her to get in place.

"I can't do it," thought Megan. "Christy, where are you? I need you!"

Throughout the play, Megan had trouble concentrating. She fumbled her lines, missed a couple of cues and forgot to put much enthusiasm into her acting. When it was over, Megan knew she hadn't done a very good job. But she was so hurt by Christy not showing up, that she didn't much care.

The twins walked home from school and told their parents what had happened.

"Oh, Honey, I'm so sorry," said Mrs. Lane.

"She promised," said Megan. "And I needed her. I thought I could trust her."

"Megan, she may have had a very good reason for not coming to your play," said Mrs. Lane. "Just forget about her and concentrate on doing a good job tomorrow night."

"That's right," agreed Mr. Lane. "I know it's hard, Megan, but you learn

as you grow up that people just aren't perfect. Sometimes they let you down."

"But you can count on us," said Mrs. Lane. "Wild horses couldn't keep us from seeing you be Cinderella."

On Friday evening Mrs. Lane and Jeff took the twins to school. Then they went to pick up Mr. Lane at his office. Traffic was heavy, and Mrs. Lane was late getting there.

"We'd better hurry," said Mr. Lane sliding under the steering wheel and taking off. "We don't want to be late."

"The traffic light was out of order on Main Street," said Mrs. Lane. "Do you know another way?"

"Sure," answered Mr. Lane. "I know a shortcut."

Back at school Megan was once again peeking out of the curtain. "Have you seen Mom and Dad?" she asked Marty.

"No," answered Marty, "but don't worry. They wouldn't miss your play for anything."

Meanwhile, Mr. Lane's shortcut was not working out so well. "I thought for sure that Cedar Drive came out on Blakewood," muttered Mr. Lane as he dodged traffic and tried to read road signs.

"Honey, please slow down just a little on these curves," advised Mrs. Lane. "You know how Jeff is in the car . . ."

But Mrs. Lane's warning came too late. For Jeff was already carsick. Mr. Lane pulled into a service station and asked for directions while Mrs. Lane tried her best to clean Jeff and the car.

At the school Marty paced across the stage looking at his watch. Megan and the other members of the cast were taking their places. Megan was about to cry. "Where are my parents? How could they do this to me?" she thought as she took her broom and started sweeping the fireplace cinders. "Don't they know I need a friend at a time like this?"

Marty was really afraid for Megan. He could tell that she was nervous. "If she starts crying, she'll ruin the whole play," thought Marty. In desperation he ran out the door and onto the parking lot to look for his parents' car. But there was no sign of them. He could picture Megan, back inside—jittery, jumpy and bungling the whole play.

But when Marty went back inside, he was amazed to see that Megan was calm, confident and doing a marvelous job.

Mr. and Mrs. Lane and Jeff pulled out of the service station just in time to be caught by a train. After counting 139 cars, the Lanes spotted the caboose and then took their turn crossing the track.

At the school, the final curtain was coming down, and this time Cinderella was a smashing success. When Megan came out to take her bow, she saw her parents come in the back door. Why she had been so caught up in being Cinderella that she had forgotten about them.

"Tough luck," said Marty when it was over. "I mean if you can't trust your own parents, who can you trust?"

The Lanes apologized to Megan and tried to explain what happened. But they were constantly interrupted by people telling Megan what a good job she had done. And they were right. Megan remembered every line. She had been so enthusiastic and expressive that the audience truly did not see Megan Lane but Cinderella.

"Sounds like you were a hit, even without us," said Mrs. Lane.

"I didn't think I could do it without someone here cheering me on," said Megan, "but I guess I did."

"That's because your best friend was here," said Mr. Lane quietly.

Megan looked surprised.

"Jesus, the friend that sticks closer than a brother, was here with you," he explained.

"When we realized that we weren't going to make it—right after our flat tire—we prayed for you," said Mrs. Lane. "We asked Jesus to help you do your best and help you not be scared."

"That's right," said Mr. Lane. "Since we couldn't be here to give you a hug and say 'You can do it,' we asked Jesus to do it for us. I believe He did."

"I'm sure He did," said Megan. "I was so sad that you weren't here, and I had a terrible case of butterflies, but then they went away."

"Megan, we're so sorry that we missed your play," said Mrs. Lane. "But I think you learned something much more important. Jesus is always with you. He will never leave you or let you down. And He's all you need."

"Yep," said Megan, "specially when He's all you got!" ▲



OUR READERS COMMENT

'MOST SPIRITUAL' CONVENTION EVER

I am still reaping benefits of the most wonderful National Association we've met in Tulsa, Oklahoma, July 21-26. I believe it was one of the most spiritual National Associations I have ever attended.

I attended the Oklahoma State Association and the First W.M. Baptist Church of the Tulsa area for their work and dedication in obtaining such fine facilities. There was no smoking in the Tulsa Convention Center.

I have been called out of retirement to pastor the First Free W.M. Baptist Church in Bowie, Texas. There were two children in the church. On August 1 in the morning service a family of five was added to the church.

We closed the program of our church every-where.

Chad of retirement at age 71. Pastor the Laurel

Reverend Chas. Harmon, Pastor
First Free W.M. Baptist Church
Bowie, Texas

17 YEARS!

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Mark Meeks
Cedarville, Oklahoma

Editor's note: Anyone else care to subscribe for 17 years? Send your \$150 today. You won't hear from our billing department again until 2003 A.D.!!

LIKES 'YOUNG PREACHERS' COLUMN

The series of articles by Dorcas Wynn (Especially For Young Preachers) has been very practical. It has provided sound advice for young (and older) preachers.

Reverend Larry Hampton,
Pastor
Baptist Church, Seaford
North Carolina

CHOPS NEED MORE FACTS

Larry Hampton had a good story on "How to Get the Most Out of the National Convention" (12/14/00).

Where and when was the National Convention? There's no mention in the story or in the rest of the issue.

Chops had heard date and location in "The Secretary Speaks" article on page 10 last page.

Bob Hall, Jr.
North St. Tennessee



Green Tree Bible Study



Robert E. Picirilli

The Church in Acts— Bold Witnessing

If there are any growth “secrets” about the church in Acts, at least one of them must be this: those first Christians were consistent in speaking forth *boldly* the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

The Greek word translated “boldness” (noun: *parresia*) or “be bold” (verb: *parresiazomai*) contains within it the idea of boldness of speech. It suggests speaking openly, publicly, forthrightly, freely. It does not necessarily imply that the speaker is unafraid; but even if his knees are knocking, he speaks out anyway.

The interesting thing is that this pair of Greek words occurs several times throughout Acts in connection with the ministry of the original apostles and of the apostle Paul.

Consider Acts 4:13: the Jewish Sanhedrin had Peter and John on the carpet, threatening them with serious punishment, possibly death. Peter, in the power of the Holy Spirit, spoke forth *boldly* about the fact that the very Jesus whom they had crucified not only had healed the lame man but also was the only source of salvation (vv. 8-12). The members of the Sanhedrin observed this boldness.

Consider also Acts 4:29, 31: Peter and John returned to the assembled church after the Sanhedrin had released and threatened them. The church went straight to prayer, asking for boldness to speak the word of the Lord. The prayer was immediately

answered; they were all filled with the Spirit and spoke God’s word with boldness.

Paul’s boldness in witnessing to the gospel is seen in numerous places. Right from the start, following his conversion, he boldly proclaimed Christ (9:27). He and Barnabas “waxed bold” to preach in Pisidian Antioch (13:46) and in Iconium (14:3) on the first missionary journey. He spoke boldly about the things of the kingdom of God in the Jews’ synagogue in Ephesus (19:8), as well as in the presence of royalty as a prisoner in Caesarea (26:26, where “freely” is the same Greek word). Acts ends with a reference to Paul’s boldness to preach even as a prisoner in the capital city of Rome (28:31, where “confidence” is the same Greek word).

Even a relatively minor character in Acts, Apollos, is characterized as speaking boldly about the Lord in Ephesus (18:26).

We can hardly miss the point: the witness of the early church was a bold witness. Nor do we need to limit our understanding of this to the times the word “bold” appears in the record. Everywhere their boldness is evident.

They were bold when they were misunderstood and falsely accused: consider Peter’s forthright message at Pentecost, in the face of ridicule (2:13-14).

They were bold when persecuted and threatened: consider not only the

response of Peter and John to their first appearance before the Sanhedrin, as mentioned above (4:7-8), but also their response when arrested the second time. Miraculously delivered from prison, they were told to stand right in the temple precincts and speak publicly the words of life; and they did it (5:19-21). Beaten soon afterward, they ceased not teaching and preaching Christ—with public boldness (5:40-42)!

In the face of religious rejection they were bold: Stephen’s “sermon” certainly testifies to that, even in the face of death (6:9-7:60). They were bold to preach Christ when misunderstanding was inevitable, as Peter’s visit to Cornelius shows (10:1-48).

And is there anything about Paul that is more noticeable than his boldness? He was bold before Jews and Gentiles, in new and familiar places, when appreciated or rejected, whether contradicted or agreed with, in the home of a friend or shut up in jail, on land and sea, whether his hearers would stone or embrace him, even facing death. The record of his ministry is a record of bold witnessing.

We cannot miss the point: the growth of the church in Acts is directly proportionate to the boldness that was the single most outstanding characteristic of its witness.

Let’s face it: haven’t we lost that? If we have, we need to recapture it. And if we can, we can get Christ’s church growing again. ▲

Especially
For Young
Preachers

Type and File Your Sermons

"My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion" (Proverbs 3:21).

The sermons the young preacher prepares and preaches, if anointed by the Holy Spirit, are worthy of recording. Material that is neatly placed in notebooks will be of inestimable value.

1. Purchase a large spiral notebook. Five-subject notebooks can be bought on school opening specials at a good price. In that notebook write down all your thoughts and notes as you prepare sermons. Don't be concerned about being neat. When the notebook is full, place it on your study shelf for later reference and begin a new notebook.
2. Determine the size paper on which you want to keep your sermon notes. $5\frac{1}{2}$ " by $8\frac{1}{2}$ " is a good size. Get a local printer to cut several thousand sheets and punch holes to fit your notebooks.
3. Purchase at least two notebooks the size of the paper the printer cut. Mark the notebooks "New Testament" and "Old Testament." As your sermon material grows you will want to subdivide the books of the Bible and other subjects in other notebooks. In just a few years you will have several notebooks full of valuable sermon material.
4. Type all your sermon outlines and place them in the notebook immediately after they are preached. If you cannot type, learn to type at a local school or use the hunt and peck system. You could get a church member or your wife to type for you, but you remember the material better if you type it yourself.
5. Write the place and date preached at the end of the sermon.
6. Prepare separate notebooks for illustrations, funeral messages and wedding outlines. The material may look lost in the notebook at first, but as the years pass the notebooks will fill up quickly.
7. Prepare the sermon outline for filing before you preach it. If you don't, your delay may cause you to forget to file the material.
8. Why notebooks? Helps you be systematic and neat in preparation. Provides material at your finger tips for future references. Assists in writing your book later in life. Retains some precious memories in your old age.

Besides, you never can tell--your wife may edit the material, sell it, and provide an income for herself after you die.

Next Month: Ministering from the Automobile

Dennis Wiggs



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP GROWS NEARLY ONE PERCENT

NEW YORK, NY (EP)—Churches in the U.S. registered an overall growth in membership of nearly one percent in 1984, continuing a pattern in recent years in which membership figures have kept pace with population growth, according to statistics in the newly published *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* in 1986.

A large religious body reporting significant membership increase was the Assemblies of God, with a net increase of 2.19 percent, to a total membership of 2,628,133. The Southern Baptist Convention, with a net increase of 1.16 percent, reached a total membership of 14,341,821, remaining the largest Protestant denomination in the U.S.

Mainline churches showed only small membership losses compared to past years. The United Methodist Church reported a 1.16 percent decline from 1982 to 1983, the most recent year for which they have statistics available, and other large mainline bodies reported losses of under one percent from 1983 to 1984.

Leading the smaller church bodies in membership growth was the Presbyterian Church in America, with a 7.85 percent increase to 168,239. Jehovah's Witnesses showed a 7.38 percent increase to 697,660, and the Christian Reformed Church grew 5.2 percent to 224,764.

Other smaller bodies showing gains that exceeded general population growth were the Christian and Missionary Alliance (3.37 percent to 223,141), Seventh Day Adventists (2.46 percent to 638,929), Church of God-Cleveland Tenn. (2.4 percent to 505,775), Church of God-Anderson, Ind. (1.76 percent to 185,404), Church of the Nazarene (1.66 percent to 516,020), Wesleyan Church (1.36 percent to 109,140) and Baptist General Conference (0.99 percent to 130,193).

One smaller body showing a significant membership decline was the Mennonite Church with an 18.09 percent decline to a total membership of 90,347.

Collective U.S. Church membership grew by 0.96 percent in 1984, the most recent year for which membership figures are available from most of the 224 U.S. religious bodies listed in the 1986 Yearbook. With a new growth of 1,355,753 new members, those churches' total U.S. membership came to 142,172,138. U.S. population growth was estimated at 0.9 percent in 1984.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS SAY TEACHER SHORTAGE MISSIONS OPPORTUNITY

ANAHEIM, CA (EP)—Hundreds of Christian public school educators who gathered for the second annual Christian Congress for Excellence in Public Education, were told by Executive Director Forrest Turpen that the shortage of teachers in public schools provides an exciting mission field that is going unnoticed.

"Christian schools are fine," says Turpen, who spent 20 years working in Illinois public schools, "but that's less than 10 percent of the kids. We're dealing with the 90 percent of the kids that are still there. You can't abandon those. We have to encourage and equip the Christian teacher, and show those parents how they can be salt and light right where they are.

"There are a lot of committed Christians who are serving in the public schools," he continues. "Our concern is not to overlook the mission field that is there. If we totally abandon that situation, who's going to run the country? What happens in the classroom is going to make a significant difference in society. We have to be involved."

Turpen says legal battles for religious rights in public schools are important, but are only part of the answer. "We need to be out in front leading, instead of trying to put out the fires created by humanists, the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) and the NEA (National Education Association). We need to confront them on the legal issues, but there's another whole aspect we've forgotten about. We've got several hundred thousand missionaries—born-again teachers—sitting in those schools, and the church hasn't even recognized it. We need to recognize that God has given us the opportunity in our age to make a difference in the public schools."

TRAFFIC AND PARKING PROBLEMS THREATEN DALLAS CHURCHES

DALLAS, TX (EP)—A plan to restrict church building in residential areas because of problems with traffic and noise has the religious community of Dallas up in arms. The proposed plan would prohibit construction of churches within a half-mile of existing churches on two-lane streets.

The Rev. Bill Weber, pastor of the 7,000-member Prestonwood Baptist Church, said churches are being used as scapegoats for "a general frustration in this city about traffic."

Dallas has 1,300 churches, including nine of the nation's 100 largest congregations. A homeowners group is urging an overhaul of city zoning to ease traffic and parking problems in residential neighborhoods.

A church lobby group, "Citizens for Churches," spent \$50,000 fighting the plan. Its members include Dallas Cowboys coach Tom Landry, cosmetics queen Mary Kay Ash, and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar.

PRESIDENT REAGAN URGES BIBLE WEEK OBSERVANCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—The Bible should be an important part of every person's knowledge, President Reagan said in his message for National Bible Week 1986. The President said, "In the pages of the Bible, the history of Western Civilization begins. Our laws, our sense of justice and charity, our moral standards—all these find their roots in the Bible."

National Bible Week will be celebrated November 23-30. It marks the 46th consecutive nonsectarian educational observance of Bible Week, which has as its purpose increasing Bible reading and study throughout America.

Reagan said, "The theme for the 46th annual observance is an invitation to knowledge and understanding: 'Bring your mind as well as your heart to the Bible.' All Americans can profit from following this rule, and by observing National Bible Week with reverence and enthusiasm. Such an effort will deepen our understanding of liberty as a right bestowed by God, and of responsibility as a duty fortified by belief in Him."

National Bible Week is sponsored by the Layman's National Bible Committee. Since National Bible Week began in 1941, each President has issued a Bible Week message.

DONATIONS TO RELIGIOUS CAUSES RISE TWICE AS FAST AS INFLATION

NEW YORK, NY (EP)—American gifts to religious organizations rose to \$37.7 billion last year, a jump of 6.5 percent over the previous year, growing nearly twice as fast as inflation. But religious organizations lagged behind the general gain in charitable giving, which was up by 8.9 percent, according to a report by the American Association of Fund-Raising Council.

Americans contributed \$79.84 billion to charitable causes in 1985. Religious causes received 47.3 percent of that amount. Those figures may be misleading, since a study by the Council on Foundations indicates that religious bodies give away 27 percent of what they receive in grants to human welfare projects. That study found that religious groups give more than twice as much to such causes as corporations or foundations.

Religious denominations put a large share of their funds into charitable work, a practice not shared by television ministries, according to the report. "While the lion's share of contributions to TV evangelists goes to pay expenses connected with reaching their audiences, church groups spend a considerable portion of their receipts on social service work," says the report. Giving to the electronic church has not subtracted from financial support of local churches, the report says.

The report includes annual donation figures for major television ministries. They include Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (\$233 million), Jim Bakker's PTL network (\$100 million), Jerry Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour" (\$100 million), Oral Roberts (\$120 million), and Jimmy Swaggart (believed to be \$140 million). ▲



THE SECRETARY SPEAKS
By Melvin Worthington

Looking For A Layman



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Free Will Baptists

God chose to use human beings as instruments to do His work. Biblical examples—Noah, Abraham, David, Gideon, Daniel and others—confirm this fact. The Great Commission, given to the church, further illustrates the truth that God works through men.

The well-known Ezekiel 22 passage leaves no doubt that God searches for men, "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none" (v. 30).

The Situation

Ezekiel 22:1-12 describes the condition of Jerusalem. Instead of being full of truth and righteousness, the city boiled with falsehood and wickedness.

Idolatry oppressed the people. The inhabitants made, worshipped and defiled themselves with idols. False priests paraded the streets.

Injustice shamed the population. While the blood of thousands of children had been spilled in offerings to Moloch, justice also was sacrificed when those who protested against the people's sins were hated and slain by their fellows.

Insensitivity toward spiritual obligation and sabbath observance blanketed the city. Few felt the need to serve God or to keep His commandments.

Immorality raged. Verses 9-11 set forth the impurity, intemperance, indecency, incest and indulgence stalking the city.

Indifference eroded the foundation of society. The inhabitants turned indifferent faces to the sanctity of life, the standard for living and the Lord's sovereignty. Verse 12 graphically underlines the problem. Jerusalem

was disgusting, depraved, disobedient. God needed a man.

Ezekiel 22:13-23 capsules God's dealing with the wicked city. Time after time He sent prophets among them to protest the evils which existed, but events steadily grew worse until judgment hovered like a thunderhead over Jerusalem.

The Search

God looked among the prophets for a man (vv. 25, 28). The prophets made the people comfortable in their sins, daubing society with untempered mortar, claiming false visions and divining lies in the name of truth. God did not find His man among them.

God looked among the priests (v. 26). The priests failed to discriminate between clean and unclean things. They violated the law, hid their eyes from the sabbaths and profaned holy things. God found no man among the priests.

God looked among the princes (v. 27). The princes as wolves ravished the people, shed blood and were dishonest in their practices. God found no man among the princes.

Then God sought for a man among the people (v. 29). But the people

followed unreliable spiritual guides and gave themselves to oppression, robbery and affliction. No man could be found.

The Solution

The Sovereign seeks for servants today who will make up the hedge and stand in the gap. He seeks for special men—submitted, surrendered, sincere, steadfast and strong.

God looks for a converted man, transformed by the grace of God and the new birth. A man with character. One who is blameless and honest in dealing with the Sovereign, with self and with society.

Where is the consecrated man, the man whose life is set apart from sin to God? God looks for a consistent man, one who can be counted on both in season and out of season in his church and community.

God wants the courageous man, the man who believes God and behaves under all circumstances. The man who demonstrates love in his daily work, walk and witness.

God wants the confident man, confident, that is, in the Word of God. He demonstrates that confidence in his walk with God and work for God.

God looks for a compelled man. God's man is motivated from within by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He's cooperative, cheerful, congenial and maintains a considerate spirit.

God needs the competent man who walks with God and learns to communicate His Word correctly and concisely. The man God seeks is careful and cautious. He's not careless. He does not compromise nor is he contentious.

The Sovereign seeks simple, sincere servants to stand in the gap and make up the hedge in this hour.

Will you be that servant?▲

Secretary's Schedule

October 6-10	Little Miami River Quarterly Conference First FWB Church Dayton, Ohio
October 13-16	Oklahoma State Association
October 19	First FWB Church Checotah, Okla.
October 29-31	Florida State Association
Oct. 31-Nov. 1	Mississippi State Association

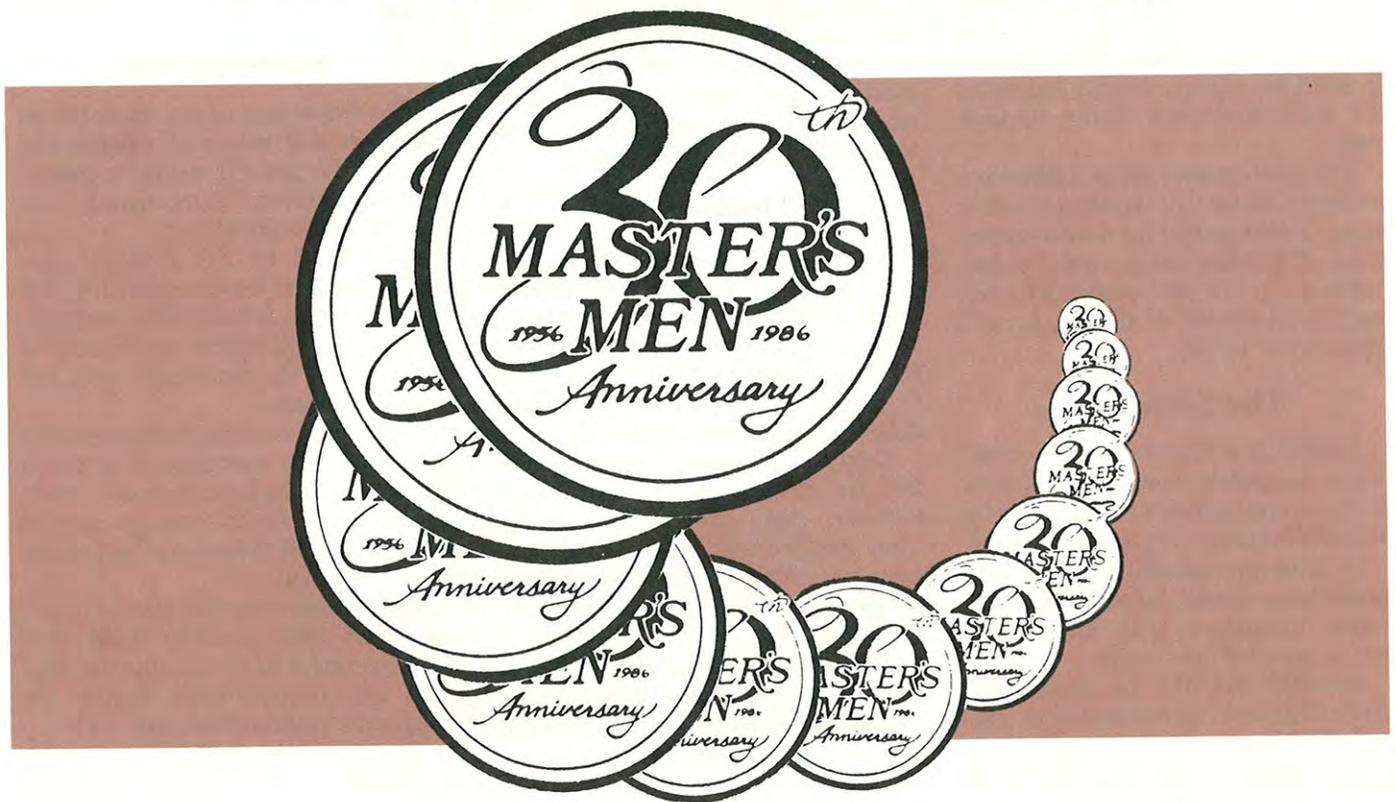
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1986 MASTER'S MEN



DAY

Your local Master's Men Chapter can have a vital part in helping Master's Men Department operate. A lot of times the National Master's Men Department is taken for granted. We forget that the Department budget is dependent upon SPECIAL DAY offerings in order to operate. Laymen have an opportunity to help the Master's Men do the Master's work. Please help. Give a generous offering on Master's Men Day. Be one who cares! The offering is for the General Fund which keeps the office operating. Mail your Master's Men Day Offering to:

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October 5, 1986