

December 1986

# Contact

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**to the**





# A Shepherd's View of Christmas



By Frank Breeden

**C**hristmas used to mean that it was time to borrow Dad's bathrobe. That's right, his bathrobe. Isn't that the way young boys in your church used to celebrate Christmas, by talking their dads out of their oversized flannel housecoat?

After all, if you were going to play the part of a shepherd in your church's Christmas play, you'd certainly need something authentic looking, like a bathrobe.

Playing a shepherd never took a lot of talent. It was always the best part to give all the boys who didn't want to say anything. The hardest thing they had to do was pretend that a tinsel-draped trio of girls disguised as angels actually scared them.

Probably not one of us rowdy boys knew the importance of the role we were playing. Maybe we still do not realize the significance of God addressing shepherds with the formal announcement of His Son's birth. The shepherds were the first to hear the gospel. Why shepherds? Understand this, and you will probably be close to understanding the essence of the gospel.

The world was busy when Christ was born. Even though God chose a particular time slot in which to send His Son (known as the fullness of time), man was not necessarily eager to make room for this important figure.

The general populace was busy making travel plans to take their families to the appointed places of census and taxation. Roman officials were heavily involved in the duties of administering such a grandiose maneuver. Merchants stood to gain tremendously because of the huge revenues that would be generated from this heavy travel season. Who had time to hear a bunch of angels announce that a Messiah had been born? The shepherds did, that's who.

Surely God surveyed the planet before He gave an order for the royal birth announcement. After all, if He was going to employ a host of angels to light up the sky and announce the most important news the world would

ever hear, He would certainly like an audience that would pay attention. That's why he chose the shepherds.

**Y**ou see, a shepherd doesn't have much to begin with. He certainly isn't regarded by society as significant. His annual paycheck probably doesn't keep people standing in line for his job, either. Working conditions? It's pretty obvious that almost any job would have more prestigious surroundings than smelly livestock and rocky pastures.

While other men in the market place of life were advancing up their own ladders, influencing society and manipulating underlings, the shepherd just influenced his flock and didn't worry about advancement. He was already at the peak of his profession.

Nights on those Judean hillsides were filled with emptiness, loneliness and plenty of time for reflection. There were no distracting influences of city



life to amuse them or divert their attention from reality. The fact is, they were just plain, ordinary, secluded shepherds. They had plenty of time to hear anything anybody had to say. And so, God said it: "For there is born to you this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

We shouldn't be surprised that God would choose this group of men to hear and spread the news of Christ's birth. He knew their lot in life. They were probably the most qualified for the part. While the rest of the world hurried and scurried to be at the right place at the right time, the shepherds waited.

**G**od has always admired the shepherd's heart. To be sure, the profession in and of itself, is nothing magical. But you have to admit that accepting a slower pace and a lowlier station in life has a tendency to make one need God more and listen to what He has to offer.

God used this profession to train some of his choicest servants. It was to a lowly shepherd, Moses, that God chose to appear in a burning bush on the back side of the desert. Who would've guessed shepherd Moses to be the one that would lead the great exodus from Egypt? Could you have accurately forecasted that shepherd David would be a giant slayer and a king of Israel?

Christ blessed the profession of shepherding when He said, "I am the good shepherd." He really "emptied Himself" and "made Himself of no reputation" when He traded the title of king for shepherd.

Isn't it amazing that one of the main concepts of the New Testament pastor is that of being a shepherd. We usually translate that word "bishop." Too often, that translation steers us into the direction of favoring the pastor as an office to be held, rather than a service to be rendered.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Frank Breed is public relations assistant at Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, Tennessee.

He actually is one who is an "overseer." It's his job to feed the flock of God and protect them from the enemies of the church.

Read through the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, and you are bound to come in contact with God's affinity for shepherds. We can't ignore the fact that God is trying to say something to us by saying so much in the Bible about these shepherds.

**A**nd so, here we are again . . . another Christmas season. Just as busy as the first one when Christ was born; people running to and fro to meet last minute deadlines, getting together with family, and spending and making money.

It's really no different now. Very few people have much time for the Christ. Oh, He's knocking on their heart's door. But the answer now is as it was then, "Sorry, there's no room."

The accountant is distracted by the prospects of another tax year coming to a close. The church staff is deluged by moving the great church machine through the maze of December programs and parties. The school teacher and student both see the three weeks of vacation. The grandparent sees a house full of grandkids.

The retailer has his eye on the most lucrative time of his business year. The caterer's appointment book bulges with end-of-the-year parties and special events. The highway patrolman anticipates more traffic accidents and fatalities during the holiday rush. The postal worker dreads the flood of mail that will swamp every station.

Somehow, without fail, the Christmas season always manages to fill our lives with activity and distraction. Add to that the fact that we've given Christmas an alter ego, complete with legends, decorations, presents and more songs than you can sing in a lifetime, and you soon find out that it's almost to the point where we don't even need Christ at Christmas anymore.

And that's just what will happen this year. Christmas, for millions of people, will come and go and Christ will never get in their way. Will anyone out there be able to take time, slow down and realize what it is we are celebrating? Will anyone really need the Messiah this Christmas? Yes . . . the shepherds will. ☐

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# What to Give Teens for Christmas

By Floyd Wolfenbarger

**N**obody told me how hard it would be to pick Christmas gifts for kids as they got older. Gone are the days when a Raggedy Ann would light up her eyes. Down deep, I suspect, the little girl who loves dolls is still there, but her personality gets more complicated as she approaches young womanhood.

In her adolescence she has shown me that intangible needs are real needs. So what do you give that your teen really needs?

*Give them elephant ears.* I don't mean the giant pastry we used to get at the county fair. I mean ears that can hear everything. A recent survey showed that parental approval is more important than peer pressure to teens.

The same survey, however, showed that kids could talk more openly with friends than with parents. Tragic as it is, most young people feel that their parents don't really listen to them. In communicating with parents, teens want to be heard not had!

*Give them keys to the safe.* In other words, trust them. Teens often feel untrusted, not because they have broken a trust, but because "we remember what we were like as teenagers."

They properly resent the intrusion of that teen from the 60's who keeps popping up in the 80's. I'm not talking about permissiveness, but if I don't trust my daughter now, she will never learn to be trustworthy.

*Give them a well trimmed hedge.* By that I mean it is important to establish clear limitations. It's unfair to expect teens to be disciplined according to whim. They need to know what our expectations really are.

*Give them a wallet photo.* Young people learn most by modeling our example. If I want my child to have a kind attitude, then she must be able to see kindness in me. This gift is perhaps the hardest of all, because by my example she will learn how to react to disappointment, frustration, disagree-

## RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	COOP (Undesignated)	Total	Sept. '85	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 167.96	\$ 160.00	\$ 327.96	\$ .00	\$ 7,719.96
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	221.29
Arkansas	.00	3,646.89	3,646.89	5,247.02	36,792.22
California	50.00	776.12	826.12	801.76	7,547.10
Florida	.00	2,220.76	2,220.76	1,791.38	18,658.02
Georgia	4,327.00	.00	4,327.00	2,379.08	40,216.12
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	190.72
Illinois	6,646.03	933.21	7,579.24	5,153.36	65,582.74
Indiana	144.50	411.52	556.02	448.21	4,955.25
Kansas	.00	62.21	62.21	78.84	536.45
Kentucky	63.32	389.18	452.50	51.00	4,169.21
Michigan	3,738.54	320.00	4,058.54	3,636.62	42,865.27
Mississippi	49.82	370.71	420.53	117.83	3,752.69
Missouri	1,206.29	6,683.99	7,890.28	7,988.60	75,822.37
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	.00	311.97
North Carolina	1,176.50	813.33	1,989.83	2,132.69	17,863.55
Ohio	10.00	.00	10.00	2,664.00	22,989.07
Oklahoma	29,579.33	5,459.31	35,038.64	25,601.45	365,650.03
South Carolina	2,707.80	.00	2,707.80	.00	15,719.15
Tennessee	735.09	810.49	1,545.58	849.03	13,817.57
Texas	6,941.83	510.49	7,452.32	5,961.73	67,346.30
Virginia	.00	.00	.00	.00	4,076.75
West Virginia	2,706.89	109.91	2,816.80	3,442.62	28,938.11
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	500.00
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	18.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$60,250.90</b>	<b>\$23,678.12</b>	<b>\$83,929.02</b>	<b>\$68,345.22</b>	<b>\$846,259.91</b>

## DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 901.24	\$13,885.70	114,786.94	\$14,156.65	\$133,082.44
Foreign Missions	34,577.08	2,252.23	36,829.31	32,496.78	426,911.25
FWBBC	2,996.52	2,252.23	5,248.75	5,364.34	56,886.94
Home Missions	18,760.01	1,762.66	20,522.67	9,219.15	156,136.87
Retirement & Insurance	1,083.99	1,370.95	2,454.94	2,288.33	23,847.04
Master's Men	21.80	1,273.09	1,294.89	2,026.79	20,289.58
Commission for					
Theological Integrity	10.25	97.90	108.15	171.26	1,730.85
FWB Foundation	.00	587.56	587.56	922.53	9,673.84
Historical Commission	11.88	97.90	109.78	168.19	1,737.02
Radio & TV Commission	41.88	97.90	139.78	262.93	2,082.87
Hillsdale FWB College	1,715.01	.00	1,715.01	1,231.00	12,704.08
Other	131.24	.00	131.24	37.27	1,177.13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$60,250.90</b>	<b>\$23,678.12</b>	<b>\$83,929.02</b>	<b>\$68,345.22</b>	<b>\$846,259.91</b>

ment, grief and rejection. I must insure that she has a good picture.

It goes without saying that each of

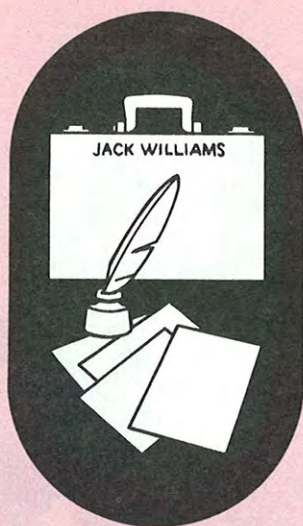
these gifts must be motivated by unfeigned love. ☺



## Cooperative Channel Contributions September 1986



## Briefcase



# Six Passports to Bouna

What was Grandmother thinking? After all, she'd spent 20 years in Africa herself.

Soon, the rest of the family arrived. Clint's mouth tightened as he herded his three boys between passengers and the growing crowd of well-wishers. What was he thinking? Estimating time between flights at New York? Or wondering about the London connection? Any last-minute regrets? Anything undone? He didn't say.

I stayed out of the way as best I could. Suddenly, the private event seemed so public. Is this how all missionary journeys begin—a private missionary call and a public departure? A time when our own children belong more to others than to us?

### The Foreign Missions

Director smiled and offered words of encouragement. The Overseas Secretary stood quietly. Grandmother and Grandfather touched children and grandchildren tenderly, saying little. They'd already said about all that mattered. Everybody looked weary except the kids, so laid back in floppy hats and bright-eyed honesty it made us all grin. No pretense there.

Others joined us—pastors, colleagues, friends. I heard excited voices, turned and saw 30 5th, 6th and 7th graders from Woodbine Christian Academy scurrying down the concourse to say goodbye to former schoolmates. The kids waved colorful posters. I suspect that some of them will remember the airport scene for the rest of their lives. It seemed so right for the youngsters to be there. I'm glad they came.

**Too soon, the boarding** call sounded. Final hugs, hurried goodbyes, wave of the arm and the Morgan family swept up the boarding ramp. I can still see that last lingering hug between mother and daughter, the easy tears, the set of the chin. One

moment frozen in a whirlwind of events.

Then we who were left behind had only each other. It didn't seem to be enough. Part of us was missing. Six lives, intertwined with ours now nestled in the providence of the Almighty for their trans-world flight.

One by one people walked from the gate area, back to their schedules and duties. I watched and waited. Friends left, missions officials left, until just a handful of us tensed for the plane to leave. We'd done all we could. There was nothing left to do but walk away. Is this how all missionary journeys begin—friends do all they can and then walk away?

**I'll hold in my** mind's eye the sight of Dr. and Mrs. LaVerne Miley (Grandmother and Grandfather) walking alone down the airport concourse, heads bowed, hands touching. Finally, I left too—and as I did Pan Am flight 546 roared off the runway.

Next stop for the missionary Morgan family—six months language refresher in France and then back to Ivory Coast, West Africa for the third time. This was not the ending. No, it was just another beginning. I thought of Acts 13:2-3 in a modern context:

"As we ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Clint and Lynette for the work whereunto I have called them.' And when we had fasted and prayed and laid our hands on them, we sent them away."

**That's the way** God's plan works. God speaks. Children say, "Yes." Parents turn loose. Friends agree to support financially. A few go. Most stay and pray. Nobody can do somebody else's job.

Somebody must go. Somebody must stay. God always has a plan. I'm part of it, and so are you. ■

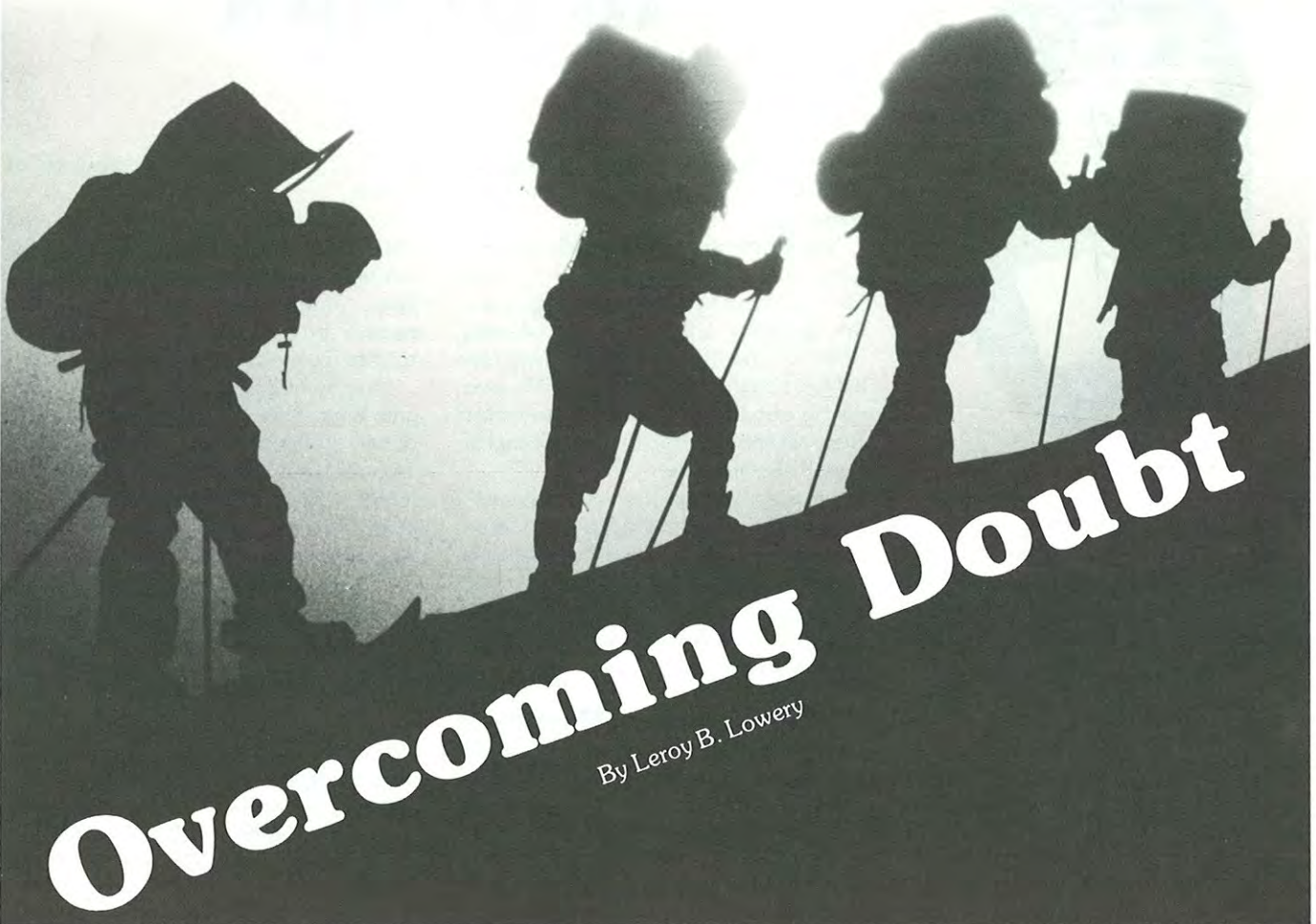
**Y**esterday, I did something that many of you would like to do but may never get the chance. I shared the tears and smiles of a Free Will Baptist foreign missionary family leaving for their third term on the field. Sure, this kind of thing's commonplace in denominational outreach programs, but it was a first for me. Here's what happened.

I got to the Nashville airport before the Clint Morgan family arrived . . . and waited, talking quietly with a friend. The Pan Am gate was obscured by those of the competing airline, so I missed it and had to retrace my steps. Is this how all missionary journeys begin—with confusion and unclear directions?

During the past year Clint stepped into my office several times. I remembered his lazy smile, his relaxed attitude and probing mind. Occasionally his wife stopped by, always a twinkle in her eye. Their children even called my editorial assistant "Aunt Marilyn" (she spent nine months tutoring the two oldest boys in Africa). "Aunt Marilyn" and I waited in the gate area.

**Then it began.** I spotted Grandmother walking slowly down the concourse holding 2-year-old Autumn Joy. That meant that the barrels were all packed for the four-year trip to Africa. The passports in hand, tickets purchased, itinerary locked down, suitcases checked. Autumn would turn 6 before I saw her again.





H. Armstrong Roberts

6 CONTACT/Dec. '86

**O**ne of my favorite characters in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is an unfortunate fellow by the name of Little Faith. He was set upon by three sturdy rogues—Faint Heart, Mistrust and Guilt. They robbed him of his purse, beat him soundly, wounded him severely, then stood by to watch him die. But at the sound of Great Grace approaching they fled away.

Yes, poor Little Faith was robbed of his joy but not his jewels. They got his purse but not his most precious possession. This is the condition of a great many Christians. Because of doubt they've lost the joy of their salvation. They go on toward the Celestial City, but they enjoy not the journey.

They constantly wonder if they're saved, if they're pleasing God, if they're going to make it to heaven at all. Like Little Faith they're as saved as can be, yet because of doubt they're never sure it's true.

The subject of doubt always strikes a familiar chord when we speak of it

from the pulpit or the teaching lectern. Our people are always interested when preachers and teachers reveal something of our own struggles with this monster of misery.

Why is this true? Because many of our people fight doubt, struggle with it and live with it every day of their lives. They're afraid to let others know of their spiritual conflict lest they be considered weak Christians. They go on to the Celestial Land but with no joy or victory in their hearts.

The doubtful Christian does not doubt the existence of God as some men do. He does not doubt that the Bible is the Word of God as the skeptic does. He does not even doubt the goodness and mercy of God. But he does doubt that God's goodness and mercy can be applied to his own life.



Yes, it's easy for the doubter to believe that God loves and accepts others; it's hard to believe that God loves and accepts him.

**F**ree Will Baptists are accused of failing to teach their people the Bible doctrine of the security of the believer. In our zest to defend our biblical position of the possibility of apostasy, I sometimes think the accusation may be true. But that certainly should not be the case. The Word of God does teach the security of the believer, therefore, we have an obligation to teach it and preach it.

Only when the believer is fortified with a clear understanding of his position in Christ will he be able to take the shield of faith and turn away the fiery darts of the wicked one. Satan is a formidable adversary. If he cannot turn us aside by one means he will try another. One of his favorite methods is an accusing spirit. One of his names is the "Accuser of the Brethren."

To discourage the Christian he brings up the past to remind us of our great wickedness before we came to Christ. He gets our focus on our great sinfulness of the past and tells us that we were too bad for God to accept. If that fails he holds up our present failures and accuses us of being hypocrites.

Many devout and sincere believers who desire to please God find that there are times when they fail God and others. When this happens the accuser comes and tempts them to despair of ever knowing personal holiness.

At this point that old serpent will try to convince us that the future will be nothing but failure, so we might as well give up on God and go back into the world. Oh, yes, dear friend, the

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Leroy B. Lowery pastors Deep Creek Free Will Baptist Church, Midville, Georgia.



struggle against doubt is a real and present one in many people's lives. No wonder they listen so intently when we speak about this subject.

**I**f we are to conquer this enemy of our peace, we must understand it in light of the Word of God. Henry Drummond said, "Doubt is can't believe; unbelief is won't believe. Doubt is honesty; unbelief is obstinacy. Doubt is looking for light; unbelief is content with darkness."

For the doubter our Lord said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Did you come to Christ with a sincere heart? Then you were accepted and not turned away. Now you must not trust your feelings for they may change, but you must trust the fact of God's Word.

Again the Bible says, "But as many as received him to them gave he power (authority) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," (John 1:12). Did you receive Him? Are you trusting in His name? Then He has made you one of His very own. Do not doubt, dear one, only believe.

I love that great verse in II Timothy 1:12 that says, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Thank God, Jesus is not only in the saving business but He is in the keeping business as well.

So many come to Jesus and ask Him to save them. They try to live for Him in their own strength. This always results in failure because we neither save ourselves nor do we keep ourselves saved. I am not discounting the need of faithfulness in our own lives, but even the power to be faithful must come from Christ.

Paul said it this way in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

**M**any verses could be quoted to help the one who has doubts about his salvation: John 10:28-29; Galatians 4:6; Romans 10:13; I Corinthians 10:13; I John 5:13; II Corinthians 5:17; Jude

24. But whatever portion of the Bible we use we must urge the doubter to claim these promises from the Word of God.

It was a glorious advance in my own Christian experience when God in His grace helped me to get away from trusting my fickle feelings and put my faith in His Word.

Another incident in Bunyan's classic may be helpful in this matter. When Christian and Hopeful were locked up in Doubting Castle they were treated mercilessly by Giant Despair. For several days they had been in the dungeon unable to break free and make any progress to the Celestial Land.

Suddenly, Christian remembered a key he had in his bosom. Christian said, "What a fool am I thus to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may well walk at liberty! I have a key in my bosom called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle."

With that key he was able to unlock every door and escape from Giant Despair. The promises of God's Word will free us from all our doubts and fears and give us victory as we march on to the Celestial City. May the dear Lord help us to preach, teach and claim His promises as our very own. Then our doubts will be dispelled and hope will fill our souls. ■

## Here's My Heart

By M. J. Pritchard

**L**ord, I come to You with my heart in my hands. It needs strengthening. It needs repairing. It needs encouraging.

Please take my heart and fortify it with Your power. Repair it with Your tender love. Build it up with Your grace. Encourage it with Your joy. Make it strong to work untiringly for You. Meet its deepest needs so it can reach out to help meet others' needs. Fill it with joy enough to share with others. Make it sweet to be a blessing to others.

Here's my heart, Lord. Use it for Your glory. ■

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** M. J. Pritchard is a free-lance writer who resides in Nashville, Tennessee.



# Searching the Scriptures with Teens

By James Forlines

**"Every head bowed and every eye closed," I said, my eyes wandering from face to face in a class of high teens I'd taught for a year. Then I asked the culminating question, "How many of you are devoted to God's Word? How many of you spend time with it regularly?"**

**A** hush filled the room; no one moved (the type tranquility you can only appreciate if you've been in an impromptu testimony service). My words faded, so I modified the question and tried it again.

That's when I realized that, much to my dismay, their honesty verified a hard truth. I'd shared God's Word each Sunday for a year with this group. I'd studied, planned and taught, but they had not absorbed it into their daily walk. I muttered some short prayer and dismissed the class.

As the students filed out I rallied to my defense with, "You did your best; it's their responsibility to apply it." But an emptiness still remained, the same emptiness a teacher feels when students flunk the class.

In retrospect I found myself questioning my class's lack of interest in God's Word. The reasons condensed into two broad conclusions: (1) They considered God's Word dull and boring; (2) Devotional times were considered ineffective.

When teens can be swept from their drab existence one week to search a deadly jungle for a lost ark





and turn around the next week to fight a Ninja or maybe a Decepticon, the staid truths of God's Word may seem rather tedious.

Many teens feel the same way about personal devotions that Mark Twain did about praying. In an age when industrialization and the quest for inventing was at its zenith, Twain felt that praying was impractical.

Vonnegut described Twain, "He wished to sweep away superstitions and romantic illusions with laughter—because they were so useless." Praying, as opposed to invention and engineering seemed a most impractical way of getting things done.

Now that we've met the problem, what can be done? Do we hire clowns or show movies? What if we hold Sunday School class at an amusement park? If things get too dull we can at least ride the roller coaster.

Sound absurd? Perhaps, but I'm afraid all too often we abate the power and majesty of God and His Word by trying to compete with the world on its own turf. Now that's truly absurd.

The fact is that we have at our disposal the most powerful force on earth. When given in truth with the unction of the Holy Spirit, it can do what nothing else can do—change lives. Let's examine practical ways to make the Bible real inside and outside church.

### Sunday School Class

Almost every church has a class for teens, so we begin here. Teens are trying to gain mastery over their world. Questions continually flow from their minds as they exercise their advancing reasoning processes. They love to talk about issues, and the more controversial the issue the more they love to talk about it.

As teens mature, there should be greater emphasis placed on group communication with a corresponding decrease of lecture-type teaching (Contrary to popular opinion, lecture is the easiest form of teaching. It takes preparation to bring others into the discussion).

Teachers who listen can learn how students feel about issues. Then they can show from God's Word what's said concerning the issue. Young people have to be convinced that the Bible is valid in today's society.

This requires thorough preparation. J. Don Jennings said, "If you do not prepare well in your spiritual kitchen, when people come to your spiritual restaurant they will get the same old crusty message week after week."

### Teen Discipleship

Several years ago while serving as a youth pastor, I talked to a fellow youth pastor in another denomination who taught a group of 300 teenagers each Wednesday night. I inquired about his numerical success. I expected, pen in hand, to get a long list of activities to boost sagging interest, or some promotional bonanza.

However, much to my surprise, this sensitive youth pastor spent an hour telling me, "Pour your life into a few faithful teenagers!"

This was not to be done to the exclusion of the others, but those who expressed genuine interest were to be nurtured. Take God's Word and study it with them individually or in small groups. Plan outings together. Eat with them at school. Visit them on their jobs. Build these young people strong in God's Word and train *them* to reach other teens. Sounds a lot like II Timothy 2:2.

### Prepared Devotions

One of the most effective ways to show teenagers that God's Word is applicable to them where they live is to prepare printed devotions. We've done this for a year in our church. Each Sunday during Sunday School the teacher distributes typed sheets for teens to use the next week in devotions, and they return the filled out sheets for the past week.

We encourage teens to read one chapter in the Bible each day. From that chapter three or four questions are asked and they write down their thoughts concerning what God's Word says. This way the teens can see for themselves that God's Word is relevant.

Here's a sample question from II Thessalonians 3, "According to verses 6 and 14, what are we to do when a friend does not walk with Christ as they should?" This approach has proven to be beneficial for the teens'

spiritual growth and gives them a knowledge of God's Word.

### Family Devotions

If the truth were known, rare indeed is the family that gathers around God's Word each day. We seldom claim the promise of Proverbs 22:6, nor do we read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 to see what God meant by training up a child. If biblical truth and knowledge are passed to the next generation, it will mainly be the responsibility of the home to do it. This is the foundation for anything the church can do. For practical suggestions I recommend Evelyn Blitchington's book *The Family Devotions Idea Book*.

### NYC Bible Competition

As quizmaster for Bible Bowl at our National Youth Conference, I must issue a favorable word for the Bible learning activities sponsored by our Sunday School and Church Training Department. By personal experience I know how beneficial these learning experiences can be. They kindled a desire for God's Word in me when I was a teen and maintained my interest in church activities.

I've heard it said, "What good does it do for our teens to learn how many lavers were in Solomon's Temple?" I'd like to answer that one. When in fifth grade I spent an entire year in II Chronicles. As I studied, God became awesome to me. His glory filled every page. My eyes glimpsed a God who shares His glory with no other, a God whose power and might are supreme.

The song of Helen Lemmel became real to me, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace." Rocky, the Klingons and the host of Decepticons paled in His presence.

I've pastored for the past four years, but my desire to see teens in God's Word remains unchanged. We can show our young people that God's Word is still the same. But to be exciting to them, it has to be exciting to us. As David Mains says on his radio program, "Down with the dulls!" ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend James Forlines pastors Allen's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church, Batesville, Arkansas.



# You Can Witness in the Public School

By Violet Cox



**O**n August 11, 1984, when President Reagan signed Title VIII of Public Law 98-377, it became the law of the land. Title VIII passed the Senate 88-11 and the House 337-77. We know this law as the Equal Access Act.

At this point in history, the Equal Access Act may be just the thing we need to establish or re-establish an organized witness for the Lord in the secondary public schools of America.

The right of Christian students to meet and fellowship through prayer and Bible study fell on hard times after the Supreme Court's ban on prayer in public schools in the 1960's. The Murray case against Baltimore, Maryland schools was considered a First Amendment case by the Supreme Court. It was heard jointly with a case that pitted the Schempp family against the Abington Township, Pennsylvania School District.

The First Amendment to the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . ." and is made applicable to the States by the 14th Amendment.

Because it was a state law in Pennsylvania that "At least ten verses from the Holy Bible shall be read, without comment, at the opening of each Public school on each school day," the Court found that the Establishment Clause of the first Amendment had been violated. The verses were read not only from the King James Version, but from the Revised Standard Version, the Douay (Catholic) Bible and the Jewish Holy Scriptures.

So you can see, we didn't have a perfect situation even before prayer was banned. Do keep in mind that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that state-initiated, state-composed and state-run prayer is against the law in public schools. It has never said that student-run and student-initiated religious activities, including prayer, are unlawful.

**L**et me acquaint you with provisions of the Equal Access Act. Basically, it's a guarantee by the federal government that secondary

school students can voluntarily meet at school for Bible study, Christian fellowship and, yes, even prayer.

The Christian Legal Society of Falls Church, Virginia outlined the guidelines to be followed when establishing a student religious organization.

- 1) The group must be student-initiated and student-led, and membership in the group must be voluntary.
- 2) The group should not be sponsored by a teacher or any other school employee. Any school employee present at meetings should be there as a monitor only and should not participate in the meetings.
- 3) The group's meetings should not be controlled by people from outside such as pastors, parents or representatives of other outside organizations. Such individuals should not attend meetings on a regular basis, but occasional outside speakers are permitted.



- 4) The group's meetings should not interfere with the orderly conduct of regular school activities.

How do you know if you have the right to a Bible study group at your school? Take a look around. If other non curriculum-related groups meet during non-instructional times, then you may meet also. These groups might include Cheerleaders, 4-H Club, Computer Club, Chess, Archery or Drama Clubs and many others.

**C**heck first with a school administrator for the procedure to follow to organize a student group, then follow it properly. Keep in mind that to be Protected by the Equal Access Act, students must take the initiative; teachers only advise.

The Christian Legal Society encourages a group to "be sure that you approach the issue with a prayerful and Christ-like attitude. To 'win' your 'rights' by bringing reproach on our Lord is a loss. We are instructed by our Lord to give thanks in everything—adversity—and to pray for those in authority, even if they oppose us. That includes the most hostile school administrator you may ever encounter. In sum, pray that the Lord will give you wisdom, and a humble and teachable spirit."

A group that's denied the privilege of a Bible study group has a right to enter litigation by bringing suit in a U. S. district court. They may seek an injunction to keep the school from denying them their rights, or they may seek monetary damages.

A school district found in violation of the Equal Access Act may be ordered to pay the student group's legal fees. There's no provision in the Act for withholding federal funds from an indicted district.

Just as surely as we have rights as citizens to let our voices be heard, we have a responsibility as Christians to let our lives be seen. There's a tremendous demand for young people of the Daniel persuasion.

Because of lack of funds, parental opposition or unavailability of a Christian school, we will always have Christian young people in public schools. They need to be challenged to be quick and bright of mind and wise and faithful in the tasks they are assigned.

Oh, for an army of young people who would say, "We cannot drink this beverage or partake of this substance, because it is forbidden by the laws of our God." Let us covenant with God for some Josephs who will flee the Potiphars' wives of this world and keep themselves pure.

father treated his mother. India's Ghandi once said, "I'd become a Christian if it weren't for the Christians I know."

Be kind, but firm, when taking a non-compromising stand. Love your friends to Christ. You can like your fellow students without liking their

**Love your friends to Christ. You can like your fellow students without liking their ways.**

**C**onsecration is the starting point. Our youth need a genuine, vital, living experience with Christ on a daily basis. A nagging, preachy approach is not the answer. It's possible to have a more dynamic testimony by the things we don't say! Christian students should live a consistent Christian life before their peers.

Robert Ingersoll, the famous agnostic, turned against Christianity because of the cruel way his minister

ways. Do not be "holier than thou." Pray for them and let them know that you're concerned. Show respect and politeness to your teachers. An English teacher at a large high school in my area came to know the Lord after observing the lives of my pastor's children.

A public school would seem to be an unpenetrable fortress, an impossible mission field. But it was not excluded when the Lord gave His command to witness and win. The grace of God is sufficient for every task. With every challenge comes the promise that "...lo, I am with you always..."

God bless every young person who tries to live a Christian life in the public schools of this country! ■

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Violet Cox is a member of Central Free Will Baptist Church, Royal Oak, Michigan. The mother of two children (Tonya 18; and Scott, 12), Mrs. Cox has taught 18 years in the Hazel Park, Michigan, public school system. She holds the B.A. degree from Free Will Baptist Bible College and the M.A. degree from Eastern Michigan University, with further studies at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.*



#### **Note:**

Guidelines for implementing the Equal Access Act may be ordered from:

Christian Legal Society  
P.O. Box 1492  
Merrifield, VA 22116



# The Home School

By Sandra Atwood



**W**hat do Thomas Edison, Leonardo da Vinci, Charles Dickens, Patrick Henry, Abraham Lincoln and the Wright brothers have in common? They were all homeschooled children. The list could include many more scientists, writers, explorers, presidents and great men and women. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was family-taught and did not begin formal education till age 9.

History cannot point to a better educational system than the warm one-on-one response of a concerned parent to his child. No one knows for sure how many home schools exist in the nation. Estimates vary from a quarter of a million to three million. But on one point almost everyone agrees—the numbers are increasing. Psychologist Dr. James Dobson says, "Home schools are the wave of the future."

God gave parents the responsibility to instruct their children in principles and doctrines (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Scripture first mentions teaching in Genesis 18:19 where God says of Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Second Timothy 3:15 confirms this principle in the New Testament.

In the early 1800's, American children began formal public education between the ages of 8 and 12. At school and home, they usually studied the *W.H. McGuffey Reader*, the Bible and whatever printed material they

could obtain. By the mid-1800's literacy rose to an estimated 99 percent.

Therefore, as one study of home education concludes, the recent increase in home education is not a novel phenomenon, but "is actually the closing of a circle, a return to the philosophy which prevailed in an earlier America."

**I**s it legal to teach your child at home? Each state has compulsory education laws that vary considerably. In some states, parents need only inform school districts of their plans to teach at home. In states where home schools are not permitted by law, local school authorities may be lenient.

Interested parents should contact the state department of education, state representative or senator, or the local school board. Jordan Lorence,



executive director of Home School Legal Defense Association encourages parents to work with school authorities instead of against them. He adds that parents should keep careful records (attendance, subjects studied, etc.) in case court action ever should be taken.

In western New York state, five couples who taught their children at home were challenged for truancy. They agreed to let the local school superintendent give their children the Stanford Achievement Test. Although the national test average is 50 percent, all seven youngsters scored between 90 and 99 percent.

In Nebraska, high school graduate Vicki Rice decided to home-school her daughter, Leslie Sue, who was failing sixth grade. She taught her daughter one or two hours and the two worked as a team at their small family motel the rest of the day. Nine months later, Leslie Sue's academic standing had risen almost three grade levels.

**A**re these exceptions rather than the rule? Not so say home school experts. Dr. Raymond Moore, author of *Home Style Teaching*, *Home Grown Kids*, and *Home Spun Schools*, says, "The proof of the pudding is in the taste."

Home-schooled children averaged 30 percent higher on standardized tests than conventionally schooled children, according to Hewitt Research Foundation, which specializes in educational research. He believes the home is the ideal training ground for children.

Dr. Moore says, "The greatest home schooling advantages are free exploration under the adult shepherd, singular adult example and values not undermined by peer dependency, and 50 to 100 times as many adult responses per day as children usually receive in a formal classroom."

Must parents possess teaching certificates for formal education to achieve these results? Dr. Moore says the average high school graduate or the person with some college does just as well as the person with a degree. Credentials seem less important than encouragement and guidance.

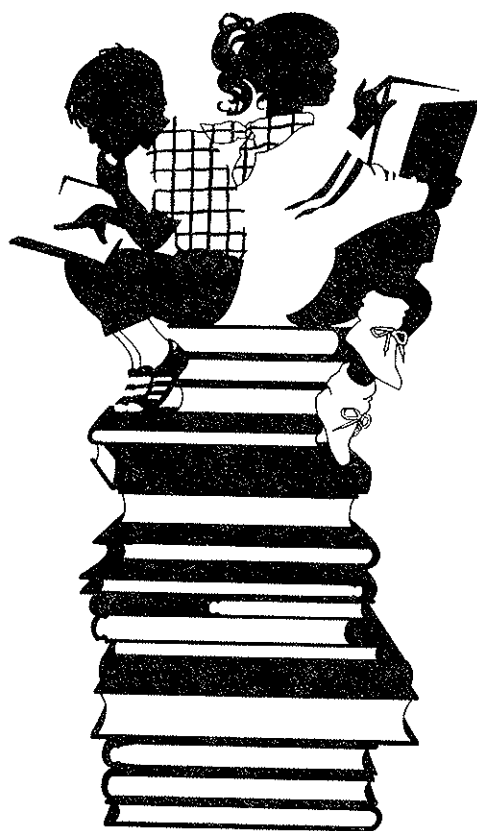
Today several high quality curricula are available for parents. Correspondence courses offer help and accountability. Parents may also order text-

books directly from the publisher which allows more flexibility.

**S**ome home schools operate under the umbrella of a Christian school. These satellite schools, as they are called, are then allowed some access to the Christian school's resources and activities. Richard Fugate, author of *What The Bible Says About Child Training* says, "I believe the next major movement in Christian education will be satellite schools."

Some home schools join with other home schools to form a support group. They meet together for field trips, to present plays and programs, for specialized classes and service projects. This provides a positive option for encouragement and for meeting the children's social needs.

Parents need to recognize some problems before they start. The first is time commitment. Although home



schoolers require only two to three hours a day to accomplish what they would in a full day of school, mothers are directly involved on a daily basis. Teaching with other siblings (especially younger ones) present requires planning and patience.

Another problem concerns questions and misconceptions of well-

meaning friends and relatives who have little knowledge of home schooling. These can best be handled when parents are well informed and able to articulate their convictions.

**W**hy teach your child at home? The answer varies. Many worry about present conditions in the public school system. Some feel that a child of 5 or 6 isn't ready to leave the nest. Christian schools are nonexistent in some areas, and when they are available, many parents cannot afford the tuition. Other parents believe home schooling allows a closer bond between family members.

Not all parents are able to undertake home schooling. And a home school education doesn't make anyone more precious before the Lord. Both husband and wife must seek God's will for their child, and it may be different for each child. Circumstances change and this can affect a family's decision.

We felt that we should teach our oldest child at home this past year. While it was a rewarding year, we chose to send him to a Christian school next year. Each of us will give an account to God for the training of our children, regardless of the educational mode. ■

For more information on Home Schools write:

(When requesting information, please send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope.)

Christian Home Schools  
8731 Northeast Everett Street  
Portland, Oregon 97220

Christian Life Workshops, Inc.  
180 Southeast Kane Avenue  
Gresham, Oregon 97030

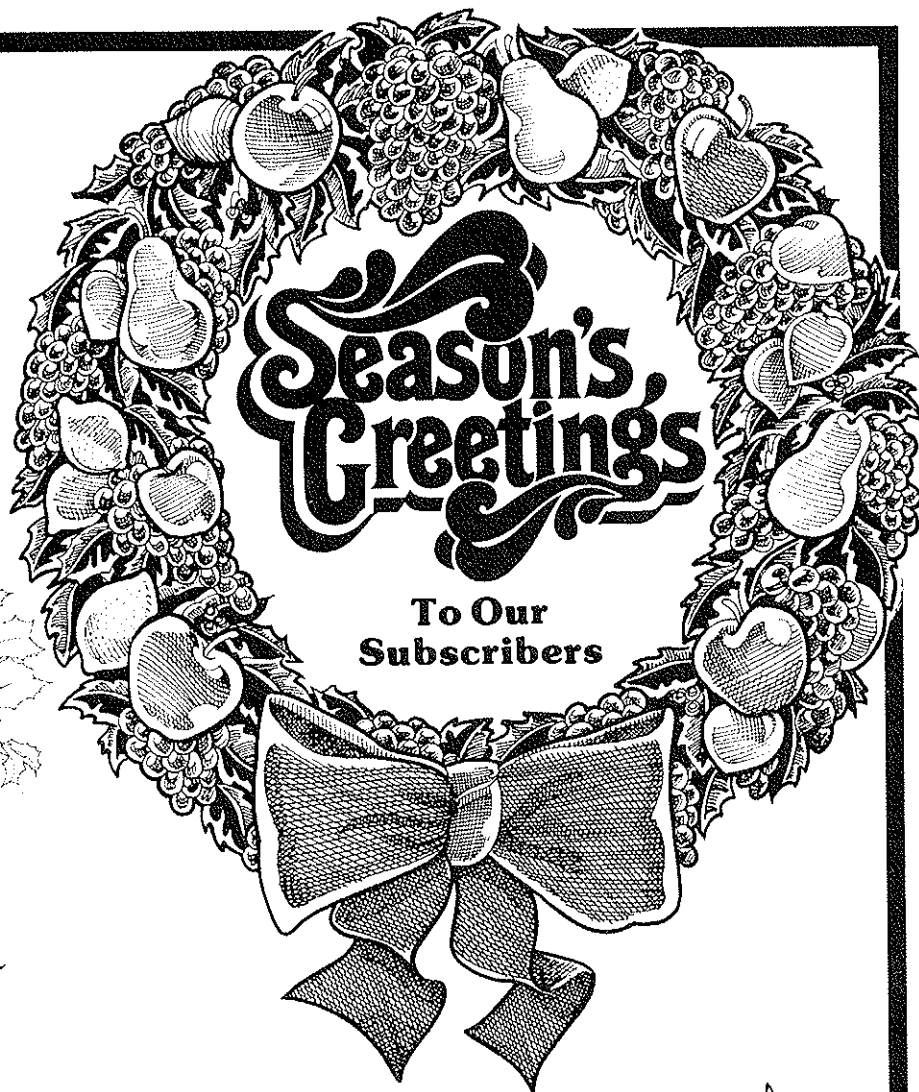
Hewitt Research Foundation  
P.O. Box 9  
Washougal, Washington 98671

Home School Legal Defense Association  
P.O. Box 2091  
Washington, D.C. 20013

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Sandra Atwood is a member of the Free Will Baptist Church in New Castle, Delaware.



Love —  
May it touch  
your holidays,  
May it live  
in your heart.



Geneva Trotter  
Dr. Melvin L. Woulough  
Anne Warrington Marilyn Ditchard  
Melody J. Good Jack Williams  
Jack Trotter

—CONTACT STAFF



# Divine Desperation

By David Kirby

**F**undamental Christianity is in trouble! The "moral majority" in our churches is afflicted with mediocrity and needs *real* revival. In spite of optimism derived from the Gallup and Harris polls, if what I've seen of fundamental Christianity is any indication of the state of affairs in the church in this country (or the world), we need a massive dose of Divine desperation.

Dr. Leonard Ravenhill once said, "The reason we do not have revival is that we are content to live without it!" What will shatter this contentment with coldness that promises to cover us in a shroud of lukewarmness? I'm convinced it must be a Divine desperation aroused by:

1. The extinguishing of our light quantitatively, and
2. The expiring of our life qualitatively.

In noting the first point, I must say that I'm grateful to those in our fellowship who boldly draw our attention to the facts regarding our lack of numerical progress. Now, it's true that numbers in themselves do not prove orthodoxy.

However, the early church started off as very small *and* very orthodox. Yet, though an island of truth in an ocean of corruption, it grew by leaps and bounds as they "daily in the temple and from house to house ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42). Perhaps the Lord will use our declining numbers to arouse desperation on our part to return to full obedience to Him.

In consideration of the second point, I'm bothered by my lack of concern so far as the daily practice of biblical Christianity in my own life, my church's life and our denominational life. I'm compelled to express my concern that the tide of spiritual life is low on many shores.

Do not misunderstand. I do not refer to a lack of emotion (as necessary as some amount of emotion is). We have in many of our churches a great deal of holy hijinks occurring but not much in the way of holy habits. Those who live by emotions die by emotions. The same folks who shout in the church sometimes split the church because they've never learned to control their emotions, whether positive or negative.

**T**hen what do we need in the way of revitalizing our lives qualitatively? As we see the real life oozing out we should hasten to:

1. *Repent* of every known sin against God and man. (Hint: As you read the Word, the Holy Spirit will remind you of lacks in your life. Make notes about them.)
2. *Restitution* to those you have sinned against (whether God or man) should be made if at all possible.
3. *Return* to simple, faithful obedience to all scriptural requirements.
4. *Retire* to the place of prayer often. "The secret of prayer is secret prayer!" (Olford)
5. *Rekindle* by private adoration that first love for Christ Jesus.

Other things could be said here, but this marks a starting point. I challenge you to become a revival man, a revival woman, a revival youth. If enough will seek God on His terms, He will choose to visit us with revival. It is time for Divine desperation!!

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend David Kirby pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

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(Revised 10/86)





FREE WILL BAPTIST

## newsfront

### PALMER NOT AFFILIATED

NASHVILLE, TN—In response to inquiries about the relationship of Lonnie Palmer to Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, the board issues the following statement:

Lonnie Palmer was dismissed from missionary service in July of 1977. Since that time there has been no official relationship between him and the Board of Foreign Missions.

### FOREIGN MISSIONS BOARD REAFFIRMS POLICY

NASHVILLE, TN—In light of questions which surfaced at the 1986 National Convention in Tulsa, Okla., about policy and practices of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, the board issued a reaffirmation of its goals and subsequent ministries abroad:

1. We are a church planting mission. By nature of this, every missionary effort must directly or indirectly contribute to the winning of the lost, the discipling of believers, and the building up of local churches. This also applies to any institution whether medical, educational, or humanitarian which operates under the board. These principles have been officially sanctioned by the National Association of Free Will Baptists.
2. Every missionary sent out under this board is commissioned to help establish and strengthen local churches. Missionaries are to lead these churches to join together on that field in an association of FWB churches. These associations become the official channels through which national workers are trained, pastors are ordained, evangelism is stimulated, new churches are founded, and fellowship is enjoyed. This is in contrast to the independent missionary who extends his work with little regard to the unity of the body of Christ.

Free Will Baptist foreign missionaries have labored to bring into being such associations and have succeeded in a number of fields. One case in point is that of the Ivory Coast which has worked for 28 years to bring together churches of several ethnic groups. The grace of God has enabled this to be accomplished in spite of numerous tribal prejudices.

We have evaluated the work and efforts of all our missionaries presently serving in the Ivory Coast. All of their ministries including medical, educational, and literature contribute directly to the accomplishment of our basic objective of planting fundamental Free Will Baptist churches. Our missionaries are biblically sound and loyal to our denomination. They are worthy of our support and confidence.

We have encouraged these missionaries to keep up their dedicated, sacrificial ministry of preaching Christ to the lost people of Ivory Coast. We have further asked them to make every effort possible to preserve the unity of the believers in spite of the numerous difficulties which are being caused by an independent effort that is being supported from the U.S.

### ARKANSAS SPONSORS SENIOR RETREAT

CONWAY, AR—The Arkansas Christian Education Board sponsored a "Tribute to Trail Blazers" retreat for senior citizens September 12-13, according to Promotional Director David Joslin.

Joslin said 139 senior citizens from 42 Free Will Baptist churches registered for the two days of activities at Camp Beaverfork near Conway. O. D. Winfrey of Hoxie kept the services moving with lively song leading.

Rev. Cecil Garrison, retired pastor from Springdale, spoke concerning the power of the Spirit, evidenced by great movings and revivals in the past,

but now markedly absent from many services and churches.

Rev. Rupert Pixley, pastor of First FWB Church of Forth Smith, spoke Friday night. Pixley cited statistics concerning the number of senior citizens (2,000,000 currently) in nursing care facilities, and the need for ministry to elderly Christians. He titled his message "Moving On" and stated, "My philosophy is not to get old, but to grow old."

Rev. J. W. Blanks, pastor of Eastvale FWB Church, Blytheville, used John 6:1-12 as his text. He spoke of hope for the hopeless age, stating,

"We all have something to give, therefore give what you have to give to Christ."

Rev. Ben Scott, pastor of First FWB Church, North Little Rock, concluded the service with a message concerning Enoch's walk with God. He emphasized that the Christian walk should be a walk in good faith, a walk in good fellowship, and a walk with a good finish.

Christian Education Board members promised more conferences of this type in the future. Board members include Fred Scott, Bobby Shepherd, Jim Mullen, Jim Bundy and Darwin Kelton.



## NATIONAL AGENCIES SET ALL-BOARDS CONFERENCE

NASHVILLE, TN—The first annual Free Will Baptist All-Boards Conference will meet December 1-3 at the Executive Inn near the Nashville airport, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. Some 80 board and commission members are expected for the three-day session. Dr. Worthington said that board and commission members as well as staff personnel will share a 5:30 p.m. dinner December 1. Following the dinner, the group will move to an adjacent meeting room for a two-hour share and exchange time.

Nine boards and commissions will participate in the December conference: Executive Committee, Board of Retirement, Home Missions Board, Foreign Missions Board, Free Will Baptist Bible College Trustees, Master's Men Board, Sunday School and Church Training Board, Woman's National Auxiliary Convention Executive Committee, Radio & Television Commission and the Commission for Theological Integrity.

After the December 1 plenary session, the boards and commissions will meet separately to conduct their own business. Master's Men Board and WNAC Executive Committee members will complete their work on Tuesday, December 2. Other agency boards and commissions expect to complete their agendas by late Wednesday, December 3. The Foreign Missions board may meet as late as noon Thursday, December 4.

## 53 ATTEND FIRST SERVICE AT MEMPHIS CHURCH

MEMPHIS, TN—Home Missionary Glenn Poston said 53 people from 19 families attended the first service at Grace FWB Church in Memphis. The September 21 service met at 6430 Kinston Park Drive. Thirty-one returned for evening worship.

Reverend Poston said that "15 local families are all good prospects." After welcoming the worshippers, Poston preached his first sermon at the Grace Church titled, "A New Beginning." He spoke on the *possibility, process and proof* of a new beginning.

Reverend Poston plans to start Home Bible Fellowship groups on Wednesday nights. His goal is 60 Home Bible Fellowship groups across the city, with all 60 groups meeting for a "celebration of worship" each Sunday. Poston said he chose to start 60 groups because "60 families are about all I can effectively pastor. If I can train 60 families to direct a group of five or six families in their home, then my ministry will be multiplied to more than 300 families."



The church also started a Saturday visitation program which sends men into the neighborhood distributing church brochures.

This is the second home missions church that Glenn and Sara Poston have begun. They also organized the Liberty FWB Church in nearby Millington.

## 'LOG CABIN' REVIVAL SPURS NEW WORK

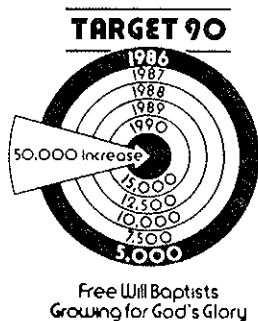


Reverend Maynard, a member of the Kentucky State Home Missions Board and one of the founders of the Sandy Valley Quarterly Conference, became burdened for the lower Brushy Creek community on his trip to the National Convention in Tulsa, Okla. After he returned from the convention, he contacted the owner of the 150-year-old log cabin and made arrangements to conduct preaching services.

Members of the Piso FWB Church assisted Pastor Maynard in renovating the log cabin for worship. Forty-four people attended the first revival service. The crowd grew to 86 before the meeting ended.

Billy Maynard (son of Reverend Maynard) said, "It was like going back in time to the way our forefathers conducted their church meetings. I witnessed a resurrection, new hope in a place that was nearly abandoned."

BRUSHY CREEK, KY—Pastor William (Bill) Maynard of Piso FWB Church near Brushy Creek conducted an eight-night August revival in a two-story log cabin that resulted in a new work established that conducts preaching service each first and third Sunday nights.





# newsfront

(continued)

## OHIO BUILDS NEW STATE OFFICES

COLUMBUS, OH—Ohio Free Will Baptists completed work on and moved into new office facilities at 2777 South High Street in Columbus, according to Promotional Secretary Alton Loveless. The just-completed structure houses the Ohio State Office as well as the Ambassador Bible Book Store. Officials completed the move in early October.

The split-face block building is 95' x 85' deep with an entry porch across the front. There are 6,200 square feet of display floor space, and more than half of the 185' x 300' lot is paved for parking.

The inventory includes religious supplies from books to baptistries. There are music, records, Sunday School supplies, Bibles, pictures, VBS materials, gifts and cards.

The book section includes reference, commentary, pastoral, self-help, Bible dictionary, children's, fiction, biography, women's and more.

## FLORIDA CHURCH HONORS PASTOR W. E. GEORGE



COTTONDALE, FL—Members of Salem FWB Church, Cottondale, honored Reverend W. E. George in special "Pastor Appreciation Day" ceremonies September 7.

Reverend George's 30-year ministry includes the past 16 as pastor of the Salem Church. In an effort to demonstrate their support for Pastor George,

members planned day-long activities that brought Reverend John Gibbs, director of development for the Home Missions Department to the church as guest speaker.

The church deacons and building committee presented Pastor George with a plaque of appreciation. Members gave him a red blazer. The Woman's Auxiliary gave him tools and a tool box.

Pastor George's four daughters praised him in speeches of tribute, citing the role that Reverend and Mrs. George played in their lives through the years. Several church members lauded the pastor for outstanding leadership in the church and community.

The 68-year-old minister serves as moderator of Florida's Salem Association. He's a World War II veteran of the U.S. Army.

Dr. Loveless said, "Ohio churches and individuals helped purchase the land. A loan from the Board of Retirement helped finance the building and land preparation. While we have raised thousands, we still owe about \$16,000 on the land."

Twelve years ago the state office and bookstore occupied a building at

1542 Parsons Avenue. After 10 months the business moved to 3501 Parsons Avenue, where it underwent three expansions.

Dr. Roger C. Reeds, general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department, preached the dedication message during special services October 27.

## Thanks, Jeff

By R. F. Smith, Jr.

**J**eff is my new friend. He's about five, that exciting, nothing-is-yet-impossible and full of faith age. Jeff and I were having a serious conversation shortly before Christmas.

"What are you going to get for Christmas?" I asked. His eyes

danced and a smile took over

his entire face. "Everything!" he shouted, and

stretched both arms to encompass the whole universe.



Adults standing in earshot smiled and perhaps parents would have urged him to be less general in his expectations, but I like exactly what Jeff said.

Thanks, Jeff, for reminding me that at Christmas we get everything. As you get older your theology may be more refined but it will not be any more defined than your five-year-old expression of what Christmas is all about.

Jeff, we did get EVERYTHING for Christmas. A lot more than the world can ever receive. We are given in that little Bethlehem Barn Baby everything that God can give us.

He has given us all sorts of promises—promises of peace and love and joy and all the beautiful expressions and experiences we dream about.

As you get older, Jeff, you will come to know just how meaningful your definition of Christmas really is. It's an old, old story that is told and retold, but it becomes new every time a little person like you begins to grasp

what the Christmas gift is all about.

And as you grow, Jeff, you will find that the "mass of things" at Christmas have less meaning than the "Christ of all things." He makes "things" in life have new meaning because we come to experience Him in whatever things we hold.

Jeff, you may not understand all I'm saying, but that's what happens when we give someone a gift—we never know exactly what meaning it will have for them.

You gave me a gift by reminding me that I get "everything" for Christmas. And maybe some who read my "thank you note" will find that they too received EVERYTHING for Christmas.

So, Jeff, you see just how far a genuine Christmas gift can travel. Keep receiving EVERYTHING and keep giving what you receive. Thanks. ■

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Dr. R. F. Smith, Jr. is senior minister at Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, Huntington, West Virginia. This article appeared in his "Pastor's Perspective" column, and is reprinted by permission.



The centennial session of **Alabama's State Line Association** met October 10-11 at **Union Hill FWB Church, Slocomb**, and at **Howard Grove FWB Church, Cottonwood**, where the association was organized. Oklahoma Executive Secretary **Connie Cariker** preached the anniversary messages. **John Edwards** moderates.

**Macedonia FWB Church, Millport, AL**, remodeled the church auditorium, according to Pastor **Larry Reynolds**. The church also sponsored a community awareness and appreciation day with ALCAP Director **Dan Ireland** as guest speaker.

Pastor **James Pittman** says the congregation at **Freedom FWB Church, Havelock, NC**, averaged 52 this fall. The group submitted several offers for land in Havelock. Pittman said the church needs to find an auditorium to seat 125 with six or eight classrooms.

The **Michigan State Home Missions Board** sent word that they plan to start three new churches in Michigan as their part of the Target 90 campaign.

**Hillsdale FWB College, Moore, OK**, conducted its annual missionary conference November 10-12 on the college campus. Hillsdale missions director **Sam Wilkinson** said four speakers addressed the missions theme "Commit to Christ's Command." Speakers included **Lonnie Sparks** (Spain), **Earnie Deeds** (Brazil), **Mike Cousineau** (Ivory Coast, West Africa), **Howard Gwartney** (Phoenix, AZ).

A memorial fund for the Hillsdale FWB College library has been established in memory of Reverend **Eddie Altis**. Reverend Altis, a former Hillsdale employee, worked closely with the Hillsdale library in 1968-69. Officials said "Altis' foresight in setting up the Library of Congress classification system has proven to be an asset to the college." Reverend Altis died April 12, 1986.

Contact welcomes *The Promoter*, publication of **First FWB Church, Washington, NC**. **Jack Lassiter** pastors.

**Hazel Creek FWB Church, Kirksville, MO**, honored several members, according to Pastor **Don Robertson**. Senior deacon **Boyd Filkins** received a plaque engraved with the words, "Deacon 50 Years." Faithful membership plaques were awarded to **Boyd Filkins** (61 years), **John Filkins** (61 years), **Wendell Sevets** (56 years), **Lola Filkins** (50 years). Former pastor **Rolla Smith** delivered the morning message on the special day.

**Friendship FWB Church, Branson, MO**, conducted dedication services to celebrate completion of their church building and furnishing it with appropriate furniture, according to Pastor **Bud Arnold**. Missouri Promotional Secretary **Clarence Burton** preached the dedication message. He commended the congregation and said, "This church will probably host more visitors in a year than any other church in Missouri. Only God knows the ulti-

mate good that will be accomplished as a result of this gospel witness."

Members of **Homerville FWB Church, Homerville, GA**, surprised Pastor and Mrs. **Curtis Alligood** with a plaque and a church family name quilt on a special pastor appreciation day. The Alligoods have served the Homerville church six years.

Pastor **Charles Bigger** said members of **Eastside FWB Church, Muldrow, OK**, observed their 25th anniversary in August. Pastor **Biggers** reported 182 for Sunday School and 218 for morning worship on anniversary Sunday. Oklahoma Executive Secretary **Connie Cariker** preached the 11:00 message. Former pastor **Jim Purcell** spoke Sunday afternoon. The Eastside Church was a member of the Unity Association in Arkansas until 1984 when they voted to join the Poteau River Valley Association in Oklahoma.

Fifty members from **Northside FWB Church, Pocahtontas, AR**, traveled to **Davisonville State Park** for a church-wide fellowship, according to Pastor **Melvin Shelton**. The church also reports an attendance surge with converts and baptisms.

**First FWB Church, McAlester, OK**, sponsors a 9:00 a.m. Sunday radio broadcast over station KNED. **Homer Young** pastors.

Pastor **Jim Smith** reports 20 conversions at **Weatherford FWB Church, Weatherford, OK**.

Victory Sunday at **North McAlester FWB Church, McAlester, OK**, resulted in \$400 raised for foreign missions. Pastor **Allen Moore** reports more than 200 in attendance for Sunday School and worship services.

Pastor **Bob Thomas** and youth minister **Brian Tippet** at **Mineral Springs FWB Church, Muldrow, OK**, will remember August 24 for a long time. That was the day the church had 17 people saved and rededicated.

Pastor **Meryl Erickson** led members of **First FWB Church, Sulphur, OK**, through an extensive building program. The group recently dedicated their 6,000-square-foot educational wing, nursery, offices, kitchen and sanctuary entrance.

Reverend **Clyde Hamar** was honored by the **Elk City FWB Mission** in **Elk City, OK**, on September 14, marking the beginning of his 60th year in the ministry.

**Evergreen FWB Church, Iola, TX**, reports 29 conversions and 29 baptisms in the past 12 months. Members honored Pastor **Herbert Richards** with a celebration lunch at the church and a money tree.

Members of **Hollywood FWB Church, Hollywood, FL**, managed to beat the summer slump, according to Pastor **Larry Montgomery**. Montgomery praised the intern ministry of **Kevin Riggs**, citing his work with the church youth. He said the church averaged 154 in Sunday worship during summer months. The church also received 13 new members.

**Exeter FWB Church, Exeter, CA**, concluded 20 years of meeting mortgage payments with a special mortgage burning ceremony. Speakers for the occasion included **Lee Ramsey**, **John Redfern** and Pastor **Dan Steigman**.

The second annual **Alabama Pastor's Retreat** met October 6-8 at Bear Creek Educational Center near Hodges, AL. The three-day retreat included seminars, fellowship, relaxation and recreation.

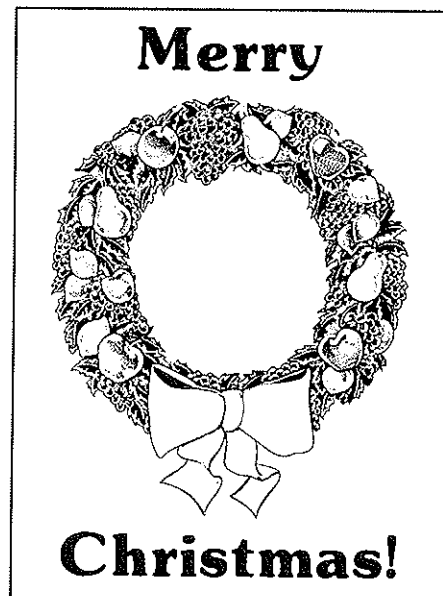
Five high school students who attend **Bethany FWB Church, Norfolk, VA**, were listed as members of The Society of Distinguished American High School Students. The students are **Ricky Barker**, **Lisa Brummond**, **Mark Hampton**, **William Hall**, **Sam Stephens**. The honor society chooses its honorees through local churches nationwide. Members are selected on the basis of excellence in leadership, scholarship and civic contribution. **W. B. Hughes** pastors.

**First FWB Church, Raleigh, NC**, conducts two services each Wednesday evening. Pastor **Randy Cox** reports that a new Bible study prepared for adults (meets at 7:15) entitled Christian Growth Studies (CGS) increased Wednesday night attendance to the same number as Sunday night. The program offers a variety of up-to-date topical studies running in 4-6 week sessions. Adults choose from three tracks of studies. Each Wednesday evening service averages between 220 and 239 in attendance.

Pastor **George Harvey, Jr.** baptized 10 during his first two months at **Felker FWB Church, Valliant, OK**. The group now averages 117 in Sunday School and 160 for worship services.

For the first time in 14 years Free Will Baptists have a new **Air Force** chaplain. He is **Chaplain Tim Sturgill**.

**Collinsville FWB Church, Collinsville, OK**, observed pastor appreciation Sunday and surprised Pastor **Johnnie Hale** just before he left on vacation. As the Sunday morning service closed, a member of the congregation asked permission to speak. He suggested that the congregation provide Pastor Hale with a green coat. Members then moved forward and began pinning green bills to Pastor Hale's brown coat. ☼





## Green Tree Bible Study

Robert E. Picirilli



# Jesus in Prayer

**If** you want some prodding about your prayer life, make a study of the gospel references to Jesus' prayers. Not what He taught about prayer (as important as that is), but what He *did* about it.

Go carefully through all four gospels. You'll find that there are at least 25 different references to Jesus praying—not counting duplicate references to the same circumstance in more than one gospel. Luke mentions 15 such occasions, Matthew and Mark 8 each, and John 5; some of these refer to the same occasion.

One thing that impresses me is that Jesus prayed on all sorts of specific occasions.

He prayed at His baptism (Luke 3:21).

He prayed at the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:11).

He prayed at the deliverance of the deaf mute (Mark 7:34).

He prayed at the raising of Lazarus (John 11:41-42).

He prayed at the Passover (Matthew 26:26-27).

He prayed for Simon Peter (Luke 22:31-32).

He prayed in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46).

He prayed on the cross (Luke 23:34; Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:46).

He prayed with the two in Emmaus (Luke 24:30).

He prayed at His ascension (Luke 24:51).

For another thing, He prayed in various kinds of ways and circumstances.

He often withdrew to pray alone (Luke 5:16).

He sometimes prayed for the public ear (John 11:41-42).

He often prayed at night (Luke 6:12).

He habitually blessed the food at meals (John 6:11).

He often blessed persons, especially children (Matthew 19:13; Mark 10:16).

He not only prayed when others did not know but also when they did (Luke 9:18, 28, 29).

Also instructive is the way Jesus addressed God in prayer. Most of the time He called Him "Father" (Matthew 11:25-26; John 11:41; 12:27-28; 17:1-26; Matthew 26:39, 42; Luke 34, 46). Once it was "Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth" (Matthew 11:25), and once each "Holy Father" (John 17:11), "Righteous Father" (John 17:25), "my Father" (Matthew 26:39), and "Abba, Father" (Mark 14:36).

Always it was that relationship that He had with God as His *father* that encouraged Him to pray. (And He taught us to pray out of that very same relationship, Matthew 6:9, 7:11, etc.)

If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to pray, how much more do we. ■

### Top Shelf



**Ebbie C. Smith, *Balanced Church Growth* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984, 178 pp., paper back, \$5.95).**

**M**ost of us tend to emphasize one aspect of our Christian lives while we neglect others. The same holds true of churches and denominations. Some churches invest their time and resources in evangelism. Others invest most of their efforts in discipleship and training or in social action.

Dr. Smith warns about the danger of such a one-sided approach. If a church is to be successful in winning,

retaining and training, it must have a variety of programs which meet the needs of people.

Winning people to personal faith in Christ must always take top priority in the work of the church. Jesus' teaching leaves no doubt about this. The author argues that the church must first seek to measure its growth accurately. It must find out how many people received Christ, where they came from, how long they stayed, and how they matured in the faith.

A church must be willing to take a hard look at itself. If it is not being effective in evangelism, it must find out why and take steps to remedy the situation. Smith offers excellent suggestions to help a church do this.

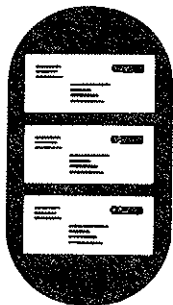
Yet, the church should not devote all its time and resources to evangel-

ism. It must assist those who are won to grow and develop as Christians. Once again, the church must take a hard look at itself. It must seek to determine if its services and programs are really doing the job. If they are not, the church must be willing to change.

The church also has a responsibility to help meet the physical needs of people. Jesus did this and so should His church. Social action is not contrary to evangelism. If it is properly used, it's a tool of evangelism.

This book contains valuable information on a variety of subjects. It points out that social, political and economic factors can greatly influence church growth. A church must understand the culture in which it works and must seek to minister effectively in that culture. ■





## OUR READERS COMMENT

### BETTER THAN EVER

I enjoy getting *Contact* again. We had not received it for a while. It's better than ever.

I especially enjoy the "shorts" by Floyd Wolfentarger.

Mrs. Verla Fletcher  
Fresno, California

### COMES OF AGE

The October issue is good! *Contact* is doing a very fine job. The magazine has come of age in our denomination.

Evangelist Wade Jernigan  
Lexington, Oklahoma

### 'HAMMER' HITS HOME

I enjoyed the editorial about the hammer (October issue). It made me do some serious thinking about a hammer or two in my own tool box.

I appreciate the job you do for the denomination and our Lord on *Contact*. I know you often receive some criticism, but I hope you won't let that dull your wit or repress your zeal to wield the pen for the glory of God and the edification of His children.

Reverend Shelby J. Farmer, Pastor  
South Union Free Will Baptist Church  
Bakersfield, California

The author gives a number of helpful suggestions concerning the location of new churches. A church built in the wrong place will always be hindered. He also makes some helpful comments concerning the relationship between a mission church and sponsoring mission board. The members of the mission church must never be made to feel that they are second class citizens.

This book is certainly worth reading. It contains a great deal of valuable information. It also presents a most helpful analysis of key terms and concepts which are used today in books on church growth. The field of church growth is developing its own specialized terminology, and it's difficult to understand what's going on without understanding that terminology. ■

### CPA DISAGREES WITH ARTICLE

I am a C.P.A. in public practice. I take exception with practically everything Mr. Johnston wrote about the IRS in the April 1986 issue of *Contact*.

Asking the IRS for tax information is somewhat like sending the fox to guard the hen house. IRS rulings and positions taken on audits are regularly held by the courts to be unreasonable.

Mr. Johnston also failed to distinguish between tax evasion and tax avoidance. While tax evasion is obviously illegal and certainly sinful, tax avoidance is commendable. Judge Learned Hand, one of the most respected jurists of our time, said it best almost 40 years ago in *Newman* [35 AFTR 857]:

... if I understand the Commissioner, he wishes us to consider that these deeds may have been a preliminary step in a reprehensible scheme to lessen the wife's income taxes. There is not the faintest ground for imputing any such purpose to the parties at bar; and, if there were, it ought not to count. Over and over again courts have said that there is nothing sinister in arranging one's affair as to keep taxes as low as possible. Everybody does so, rich or poor; and all do right, for nobody owes any public duty to pay more than the law demands: taxes are enforced exactions, not voluntary contributions. To demand more in the name of morals is mere cant.

Certainly Christians should pay all taxes due. However, nowhere does the Bible instruct us to pay more than we owe.

P. Stephen Patterson  
Certified Public Accountant  
Lubbock, Texas

### MY HAT'S ON!

I know whereof you speak about hard hats and construction jobs. You hit the nail on the head in the October Briefcase. Thanks for the parallel.

I just want to share about the feel of finished concrete. Not long ago, while building a shopping center, I asked the Lord for His closeness one day. We had poured concrete footers earlier, so there was no finishing needed. In the process of removing the forms, I noticed that the concrete was smoothed by the grain of the wood which left its design on the concrete.

Now, when I work with or think about concrete, the Spirit of God seems to say, "If you will get as close to Me as that concrete gets to that form, I will rub off on you."

As the form predicts the characteristics of the concrete, I pray just now that the Holy Spirit might show through my life as He creates the finished product. I want to be a "whosoever will." My hat's on!

Jim Teague  
Builder  
Newport, Tennessee

## Directory Update

### CALIFORNIA

Dennis Clariday to Earlimart Church, Earlimart

### COLORADO

Billy R. Buchanan to Highland Hills Church, Greeley from Hope Church, Plymouth, NC

### FLORIDA

Michael P. Barton to Suwannee Springs Church, Live Oak from Macedonia Church, Monticello

Dennis Biele to Mt. Olive Church, Davie

### KANSAS

Warner Collier to First Church, Garden City from White Hill Church, Eupora, MS

### MISSOURI

Warren Hall to First Church, Kirksville  
Tim Eaton to First Church, Farmington  
Bill Eden to Merl's Chapel Church, Cassville

Ronnie Blanks to First Church, West Plains

Curt Holland to Verdella Church, Liberal

Gene Howell to First Church, Viburnum

Jim Brown to First Church, Salem  
Randy Bishop to Victory Church, Alton

Mark A. Turrell to Faith Church, St. Louis

### OKLAHOMA

Don Goddard to Freedom Church, Sand Springs

Jimmy Lane to Central Church, Muskogee

N. R. Smith to Cedar Grove Church, Francis

Harry Withers to Liberty Church, Broken Arrow

Charlie Levi to New Home Church, Broken Arrow

Steve Robinson to First Church, Miami

Don LeForce to Earlsboro Church, Earlsboro

Philip Bender to Hillcrest Church, Wagoner

### TENNESSEE

Ken Dodson to Woodbine Church, Nashville from First Church, Monett, MO

### OTHER PERSONNEL

Keith Fletcher to Camp Hope, Ewing, IL as camp manager from Oak Valley Church, Geff

Toby Jenkins to First Church, Monett, MO as youth minister

Lester B. Cahoon, Jr. to Calvary Church, Georgetown, SC as assistant pastor from Florence, SC as dean of SC Bible Institute



## ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

# A Present for Jesus

**J**ust two weeks before Christmas, Marty, Megan and Jeff had been Christmas shopping. Now they were locked in Megan's room unpacking their treasures.

"Look at all this stuff!" squealed Megan. "Isn't Christmas exciting?"

"Exciting," agreed Jeff with dancing eyes.

"Do you think Mom will like the perfume I bought her?" asked Marty as he removed the cap and sniffed. "It's called 'Gardenia,' and this big bottle only cost \$1.89."

"Hmm, pretty," said Jeff as he took a whiff.

"Look at this tie I bought for Daddy," said Megan proudly displaying a bright red tie. "It's called a 'Proud Papa Tie,' and the salesman painted all our names on it."

"Presents, present. I like presents!" cried Jeff unpacking one shopping bag after the other.

Marty and Megan began wrapping the gifts, while Jeff picked out bows.

"I hope we didn't forget anybody," said Megan, checking her list.

"I don't see how we could have," commented Marty. "It looks like we've got enough stuff here for everybody in town."

"Presents, presents," chanted Jeff again. "Presents for everybody."

"You know," said Megan thoughtfully, "if Christmas is supposed to be Jesus' birthday, why doesn't He get any presents?"

"I never thought of it that way," added Marty. "We've got presents for each other, Mom and Dad, our grand-

parents, our friends, our teachers, but I never thought about getting something for Jesus."

"What do you give Him?" asked Megan. "And how do you give it to Him?"

"Beats me," said Marty.

"Presents, presents," sang Jeff prancing about the room. "Presents for everybody 'cept Jesus."

**T**he days were filled with the usual bustle of Christmas activities—choir practice, play practice, parties, shopping and baking. But through it all the question came back to Marty and Megan—"What could they give Jesus for Christmas?"

One afternoon when the twins got home from school, their mother and Jeff were busy decorating cookies.

"Oh, boy," shrieked Marty, reaching for a warm gingerbread man.

Megan started cutting out stars, trees, bells and angels from the rolled-out sugar cookie dough, but then she paused and said, "I wonder what Mrs. Douglas is doing."

"Megan, I'm sure she would love to help us," exclaimed Mrs. Lane. "Marty, give her a call and ask her. Tell her I'll pick her up in 10 minutes."

Baking and decorating Christmas cookies was always a favorite with the Lane children, but with Mrs. Douglas sharing the fun, it was even better. She told wonderful stories of when she was a little girl, and she had wonderful recipes to share.

When the last batch of jam thumbprints was cooling on the rack, Mrs. Douglas sat down at the kitchen table

and said, "I can't remember when I've had so much fun. Thank you for including me."

"It was our pleasure," said Mrs. Lane warmly. "And now we want you to stay for supper." After a pot of homemade soup and cornbread, the Lanes gathered around the piano and sang Christmas carols.

When Mr. Lane and the twins took Mrs. Douglas home that evening there were tears in her eyes. "You know," she said, "Christmas is a sorta sad time when you're alone like me, but you dear folks have put the 'merry' back in it for me. Thank you kindly," she said hugging them all.

**T**he twins went in to breakfast the next morning singing cheerfully, "Hark the herald angels shout, one more day till school is out. No more work and misery, one more day and we'll be free!"

"Oh, is this the last day of school?" teased Mr. Lane. "I had forgotten."

The twins gobbled their breakfasts and rushed to school. The last day was always fun. Mrs. Curtis let them finish their Christmas crafts, and they sang and read and told stories. Then it was finally time for their class party. They played games, ate cupcakes, candy canes and punch, and then—the best part—exchanged gifts.

The girl who drew Megan's name gave her a shiny red purse filled with gum and mints. Marty received a model airplane. Mrs. Curtis gave each student a piggy bank with a penny in it. Then the bell rang ending the party and beginning a two-week vacation.



The twins skipped out of the school building with their treasures. Then Marty spotted a lone figure sitting on a tree stump at the edge of the school yard.

"Who's that?" he asked Megan.

"I think he's the new boy in Sally's class," answered Megan. "Look, he doesn't even have a coat on, and it's freezing out here."

The twins went up to the little stranger. "Hi," said Marty, "I'm Marty Lane and this is my twin sister, Megan."

The boy had sandy hair with a cowlick and a smattering of freckles. The twins could see tears in his blue eyes.

When he didn't say anything, Megan asked, "What's your name? You're new here aren't you?"

"Yep," he said. "I'm Jonathan Cain."

"Well," said Marty, a little unsure of what to say, "is something wrong?"

**T**he little boy, who looked like he was about six or seven, fought to hold back the tears.

"It's all right," said Megan kindly, "you can tell us. Are you lost or something?"

"No," answered Jonathan. "I wish I was, then I wouldn't have to go home."

"What?" exclaimed Marty. "Why don't you want to go home?"

Jonathan looked at the Lane twins suspiciously. He tried so hard to be brave, to be a man. But his heart was aching, and he burst into tears. "My daddy's gone, and Mama cries a lot, and there's not much food, and my little sister Shirley Ann won't have any presents for Christmas."

"Oh, no," said Megan reaching out and holding his hand in hers.

"Listen, Jonathan," said Marty, "everything's going to be all right. I know it. Now, you tell me where you live."

"In the trailer park behind B. J. Grocery," answered Jonathan. "It's the last trailer, number 11."

"OK," said Marty, "now you go home and don't worry about a thing."

"Here," said Megan, as Jonathan rose to leave, "take these things. I really don't need them." And she handed him all her presents. Marty did the same.

"Thanks," said Jonathan sincerely. "Thanks so much." And off he ran.

"Marty Lane," scolded Megan, "why did you tell him everything would be OK? What can we do?"

"I don't know for sure," admitted Marty, "but I'll think of something."

When the twins got home, their mother and Jeff wanted to see all their presents.

"Well," said Megan, "we don't have them any more."

"What?" cried Mrs. Lane. So Marty and Megan told them all about Jonathan.

"You did the right thing," said their mother proudly. "And we're not finished yet. Get your coats back on. We're going shopping."

**M**arty, Megan and even Jeff had never had so much fun shopping for Christmas presents. Though they barely knew Jonathan, and had never met Shirley Ann or Mrs. Cain, they tried to choose things they thought they would enjoy. A toy robot, a truck, a coloring book and crayons, and a winter coat for Jonathan; a doll, a set of dishes, a stuffed teddy bear and a pair of pajamas for Shirley Ann; and for Mrs. Cain, Mrs. Lane chose a warm sweater and a copy of the New Testament. Then they went to the grocery and filled their shopping cart with food for the needy family.

It was almost dark when they drove into the trailer park. Mrs. Lane parked near the entrance, and they walked down the road to trailer number 11. The Lanes placed the sacks on the steps and hid behind some bushes. Marty rang the doorbell, jumped off the top step and joined his family behind the hedge.

Mrs. Cain came to the door. "Who's there?" she called. "What in the world?" Jonathan and Shirley Ann were close behind her. The three of them carried the sacks inside. From their hiding place, the Lanes could hear their squeals of delight through the thin trailer walls. Then they walked quickly back to their car and drove home.

Mr. Lane had come home from work wondering where his family and supper were.

Everyone was so excited they all told him at once what they had been doing.

That night during family devotions Mr. Lane read from Matthew 25. "For

I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Marty and Megan looked at each other and smiled. So this was the answer to their question, "What could they give Jesus for Christmas?" Now they knew. By giving to others they had given to Jesus. And they couldn't have received more. ■

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# TEEN Scene

## California

This past summer, youth from Sherwood Forest FWB Church, El Sobrante, Calif., participated in a "Youth Celebration." This was the third summer for the event that's an alternative to traditional VBS programs. Here are the program basics.

Monday through Friday, children in grades six and below shared a morning program entitled "Joy Celebration." Evenings from 7:00 until 9:00 the youth had their own "Youth Celebration."

Volleyball claimed the first 45 minutes. Each night different church youth groups competed with the Sherwood Forest youth. Then the visiting youth stayed for the remainder of the evening's activities.

Girls who did not want to participate in volleyball attended a cake decorating class. They also prepared refreshments for fellowship time that followed volleyball games.

Paul David from Southern California conducted the services portion of the evening's program. He ministered through comedy, mime, drama and testimony.

Dr. Milburn Wilson pastors the church. This creative program was directed by Joseph Cutler, assistant



pastor. Cutler, who serves in music and youth areas reported more than 50 youth each evening.

The celebration concluded Friday evening with a special family rally service.

## Florida

The Sonshine Puppets brought Sonlight to 38 handicapped people recently. The puppet team consists of five teens from First FWB Church, Deerfield Beach, Fla., and is directed by Mary Davis and Youth Pastor Mike Hollis.

This program was conducted at a local recreation center and sponsored by the county school board. The program centered on the theme that they were special people and that Jesus loved them. The group plans to minister to other area handicapped groups.

The Sonshine Puppets perform regularly for the children's church service. They frequently are asked to minister to adults.

The Sonshine Puppets also ministered during an area-wide youth rally at First FWB Church in Deerfield Beach. Reverend Kenneth Walker pastors the church.



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### Jan.-Dec. 1986

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—Compiled by CONTACT Staff

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## Where and when did Free Will Baptists begin? Who were our early leaders and what were they like?

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BAPTISTS  
IN  
AMERICA  
1727-1984**

**William F.  
Davidson**



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## KNOW SOMEONE WHO DESERVES A JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP?

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Especially  
For Young  
Preachers

## Your First Months at a New Pastorate

"He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Proverbs 18:9).

1. Write an informational article for the local newspaper about your becoming the new pastor of the church. Include your picture.
2. Print a well-prepared calling card.
3. Order several thousand pocket calendars from Good News Publishers, Westchester, Illinois 60153.
4. Prepare a well-written brochure to advertise your church. Get a printer that does quality work to print it. Be sure someone proof-reads it for grammatical mistakes before you print it.
5. Print matching letterhead and envelopes. Do not order too many at first. You may want to change the copy or style once you learn more about the church and area.
6. Order several thousand good tracts. Install a tract rack at church to display them.
7. Subscribe to the local newspaper. Take information to them about every special event at your church.
8. Use your church bulletin to educate members regarding what to call you (pastor, preacher, brother, etc.), your study and visiting hours, your position on standards and matters of conviction, and your goals for the church.
9. Provide a form in the bulletin for members to list their name, address, employment, telephone numbers and birthdates.
10. Prepare a file from the above information.
11. Record the birthdates of your church family in a yearly calendar book. You may consider sending birthday cards to them.
12. Distribute your calling card and calendars widely to introduce yourself in the community.
13. Place an ad in the yellow pages; include church service times.
14. Learn the church members' names.
15. Be slow to make organizational changes. Preach the Word of God. Love the people. Plan to stay there the rest of your life.

*Dennis Wiggs*





### ANTI-PORN GROUP OFFERS A SUMMARY OF COMMISSION REPORT

CINCINNATI, OH (EP)—An inexpensive summary of the report by the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography is being distributed by the National Coalition Against Pornography (N-CAP). The 39-page summary of the commission's 2,000-plus page report was prepared by Richard McLawhorn, N-CAP's executive vice president and general counsel, and reviewed and approved by the executive director of the commission, and by some commission members.

Profanity and explicit descriptions of hard core pornography contained in the commission's report were omitted from the N-CAP summary. "This means Americans who want to can study our summary and learn about the report without encountering extremely offensive material," said McLawhorn.

"The pornographers and their defenders have worked overtime distorting the facts about the battle on obscenity and the commission's report," he added. "If every concerned citizen would obtain a copy of the summary and learn the truth, the stage would be set for immediate, dramatic improvements in our moral environment."

Individual copies of the N-CAP summary are available for \$3 each, plus 50 cents postage for each copy ordered; bulk prices are available. Copies may be ordered from: National Coalition Against Pornography, 800 Compton Rd., Suite 9248, Cincinnati, Ohio 45231.

### MISSIONS AGENCIES NOTE BOOM IN SHORT-TERM WORKERS

PASADENA, CA (EP)—The most striking trend revealed in the newly-published Mission Handbook is the gain and concentration in short-term missionaries, according to Missionary News Service. Almost 30,000 short-term workers were overseas for the reporting year, compared with less than 18,000 at the time of the previous edition six years ago. The short-timers are concentrated in slightly fewer agencies; while the total number of agencies has grown, fewer are reporting short-termers.

When short-termers are added to career missionaries, the total reaches 68,000 people serving overseas from the United States and Canada, compared to 51,000 six years ago. Career missionaries increased by 3,000. If the present trend continues, short-termers will outnumber career missionaries within five years.

More women than men are engaged in active missions work. Samuel Wilson, who directs Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center—publishers of Mission Handbook—said, "Early analysis indicates that at least 55 percent of the nearly 40,000 career missionaries are females." He said the figure could actually be higher, because of incomplete data.

### AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC AFFILIATION RESPONDS TO SAGAN'S 'COSMOS'

HOUGHTON, NY (EP)—"This [the cosmos] is and was and ever will be," says astronomer Carl Sagan in the popular "Cosmos" series. Not so, responds the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA), a 2,100-member organization of Christian science teachers and researchers.

The ASA has nearly completed its guidebook on the teaching of origins, and is planning a series of television programs to respond to Sagan's "Cosmos" series. Many ASA members feel "Cosmos" presents a false dichotomy between science and religion. "Sagan said that modern science arose in spite of religious values," says Robert Herrmann, executive director of ASA. "That is totally fallacious. He also made some dogmatic statements that are pure religion, a kind of secular humanism."

ASA plans five one-hour programs, targeted for a general television audience, and budgeted at about \$2 million. The series will also be available in half-hour programs, for school and church use. Herrmann expects the programs to take a "historical developmental viewpoint to show a complementarity between religious faith and the scientific productivity of early people in science."

The ASA's guidebook, titled *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy*, was scheduled for release in October. The book urges teachers to turn arguments over evolution into "a discussion that becomes a rewarding educational experience," and to show respect for opposing views.

ASA member Kenneth Olson, professor of science education at the University of Northern Colorado, said the ASA guidebook "deals with controversy from the position that honors the religious convictions of citizens and children while emphasizing the teaching of good science. We're trying to help science teachers teach good science and nothing more. We're not trying to sneak in the gospel."

Herrmann hopes the guidebook and television series will build ASA's credibility. "We want to be a voice which people take seriously," he said. "We want to say to Christians and non-Christians, 'Let us put aside confrontation and reason together.'"

### SURGEON GENERAL CONDEMNS PORN

CHICAGO, IL (EP)—Pornography poses a danger to American public health, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop says. Koop told doctors meeting in Chicago for the National Federation of Catholic Physician's Guilds that they had a moral obligation to fight pornography.

"Today, the hucksters of pornography have made an invasion into cable television, telephone communications and, unfortunately, the field of home videos," Koop said. He called pornography an "evil influence in our society," and suggested that porn consumption leads to "mental aberrations."

Pornography makes deviant sexual behavior seem acceptable and spurs crimes such as rape and child molestation, he said.

### ICLU CAN'T FIND PARENTS THAT WANT TO SUE SCHOOL

MUNCIE, IN (EP)—The Indiana Civil Liberties Union (ICLU) has abandoned plans to file a lawsuit challenging religious practices in public schools because no parents can be found who want their names used on the complaint.

The public schools in Muncie, Indiana, are continuing several religious practices which the ICLU feels are impermissible, such as voluntary group prayer before the start of the school day, singing religious songs, and prayer meetings among teachers.

Ross Rowland, chairman of the ICLU's Muncie chapter, announced that the ICLU will not file a lawsuit challenging the practices because no parents are willing to go public with their complaints. "We have to have a plaintiff willing to file suit," he said.

### DEADLY GAS DEVASTATES CAMEROON CHRISTIANS

WHEATON, IL (EP)—Nearly half of the reported 1,500 people killed by lethal gases spewing from a Cameroon lake were Christians, according to a report by Missionary News Service (MNS). MNS says Baptist General Conference missionary Ken Gullman surveyed the rugged terrain for several days, and said 500 to 700 people affiliated with the local Baptist community had died.

One church with 170 adult members lost 105 adults and 117 children. The pastor of the church survived, but lost his wife and four children. Of 28 adults enrolled in a membership class, only nine survived.

Another church, organized just two weeks before the disaster, lost all 29 of its charter members. Missionaries and pastors visiting the disaster scene four days later reported that bodies had not yet been buried.

### SOVIETS ARREST HANDICAPPED WOMAN FOR LETTING CHURCH MEET IN HOME

TASHKENT, U.S.S.R. (EP)—She has no legs, but may go to prison camp. Authorities filed a criminal case against Nedezhda Matiukhina for allowing the local Baptist congregation to meet in her home for worship services, according to Georgi Vins of the International Representation for the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union, Inc. (IRCEBCSU).

Matiukhina, 56, a double amputee, has already served two terms in Soviet labor camps. She now faces a possible sentence of 3-5 years and confiscation of property.

IRCEBCSU reports that this is not an isolated incident. In 1981 Vladimir Protsenko of Leningrad was arrested and sentenced to three years imprisonment for allowing the church to meet in his home. In other cases Soviet authorities have confiscated and even demolished private homes where Baptist congregations were meeting.

An estimated 2,000 Evangelical Baptist congregations across the Soviet Union meet in homes and apartments for worship services, since they are denied the right to own a church building. As homes are confiscated, some are forced to meet outdoors in forests and meadows, even in Russia's cold winters. ■





## THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

# The Word in the World



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Free Will Baptists

**T**he celebration of Christmas holds special significance for the Christian. It means more than thrills, toys, tinsel, trees and travel. In a special sense Christmas presents a unique privilege to proclaim the gospel to those who do not understand the significance of the season.

Perhaps no better book in the Bible can be read during this season than the Gospel of John. The purpose of John's Gospel is to present Jesus in such a convincing way that readers can recognize Him as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

John declares his purpose clearly, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:30-31).

John's presentation validates and verifies that Jesus is the Christ. The power of Jesus transforms those around Him. The lame walk, the blind see, the hungry eat, the dead rise. What amazing power this Jesus demonstrated. He spoke with power and authority. His words arrested, analyzed and appealed to those who heard. They brought conviction, confession and conversion.

The principle of faith as the condition for life illustrates every chapter of John's Gospel. Those who receive Him become sons of God and possess life through His name.

John's Gospel is all about the Word. Lenski affirms, "It is all a most wonderful story, this about the Word: He shines. He comes. He appears incarnate . . . John attests the humanity of the Son as full and as completely as the divinity and godhead. The miracle of the ages is that the Word became flesh and dwelt among men. Some of

the most intimate human touches regarding the Savior are recorded for us by John; and yet the person to whom these human features belong is God's Son."

### His Identification

John's prologue (1:1-5) presents the proper identification of Jesus Christ. He declares, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

These verses declare that Christ is eternal. He was before all things. He co-exists with and is co-equal with God. He is distinct from the Father yet one with Him. Christ is God, the Creator of all things.

During this season we must be sure to correctly present the Man as well as the Manger. He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, the God-man.

### His Incarnation

The proper understanding of who Jesus is makes the truth of the incarnation more meaningful. What a marvelous message.

Paul describes the incarnation when he says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:5-7).

### The Secretary's Schedule

**Dec. 1-3** All-Boards Conference/Executive Committee Meeting  
Nashville, TN

The incarnation means that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah became a man. He took human nature upon Him in order to save sinners.

J. C. Ryle aptly described it, "Like ourselves, he was born of woman, though born in a miraculous manner. Like ourselves, He grew from infancy to boyhood, and from boyhood to man's estate, both in wisdom and in stature (Luke 2:52). Like ourselves, He hungered, thirsted, ate, drank, slept, was wearied, felt pain, wept, rejoiced, marvelled, was moved to anger and to compassion.

"Having become flesh, and taken a body, He prayed, read the scriptures, suffered being tempted, and submitted His human will to the will of God the Father. And finally in the same body, He really suffered and shed His blood, really died, was really buried, really rose again, and really ascended up into heaven. And yet all this time He was God as well as man!"

### His Invitation

Christmas is a time when careful consideration should be given to three questions asked and answered in John's Gospel. John asks, *Who* is Christ? He answers by saying the God-man, the eternal Son of God and the Son of man.

He also asks, *What* is faith? He answers with words such as "receive," "believe" and "hear." As many as receive Him. He gives the power to become the sons of God. Whosoever believes will not perish but have everlasting life. He that hears Christ's word and believes has everlasting life.

Jesus invited two disciples of John who asked where He dwelt to "Come and See." We should invite those who are lost to receive, believe, hear, look and "come and see" the Messiah. ■



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# **1986 Christmas Project**

## **for**

### **Free Will Baptist Bible College**



## **Goal: \$42,500**

The students at Free Will Baptist Bible College—335 from 25 states and five foreign countries—need your help this Christmas.

They are trying to raise \$42,500 to meet the 1986 Christmas Project goal. That is an average of about \$125 per student.

The money they raise helps to keep down the cost of their education and helps the college to provide the very best faculty and facilities possible for their training.

Here are some ways you can help:

- ☐ Encourage your church to receive a special Christmas Project offering during December. If you have one or more students enrolled at the Bible College, use them during your services or Sunday school assemblies.
- ☐ Sign a monthly checkbook for \$10 or \$15. You can request one from the college, or see one of our students during the holidays.
- ☐ Organize a Christmas Project fund raising drive. Use your church young people to have a rock-a-thon or winter walk-a-thon. They can take pledges for the hours rocked or the miles walked, and collect the pledges afterward.
- ☐ Make a generous personal gift to the Christmas Project through your church. Encourage a friend to do likewise.

**Make Christmas special at Free Will Baptist Bible College.**  
**Support the Christmas Project.**

