

DECEMBER 1991

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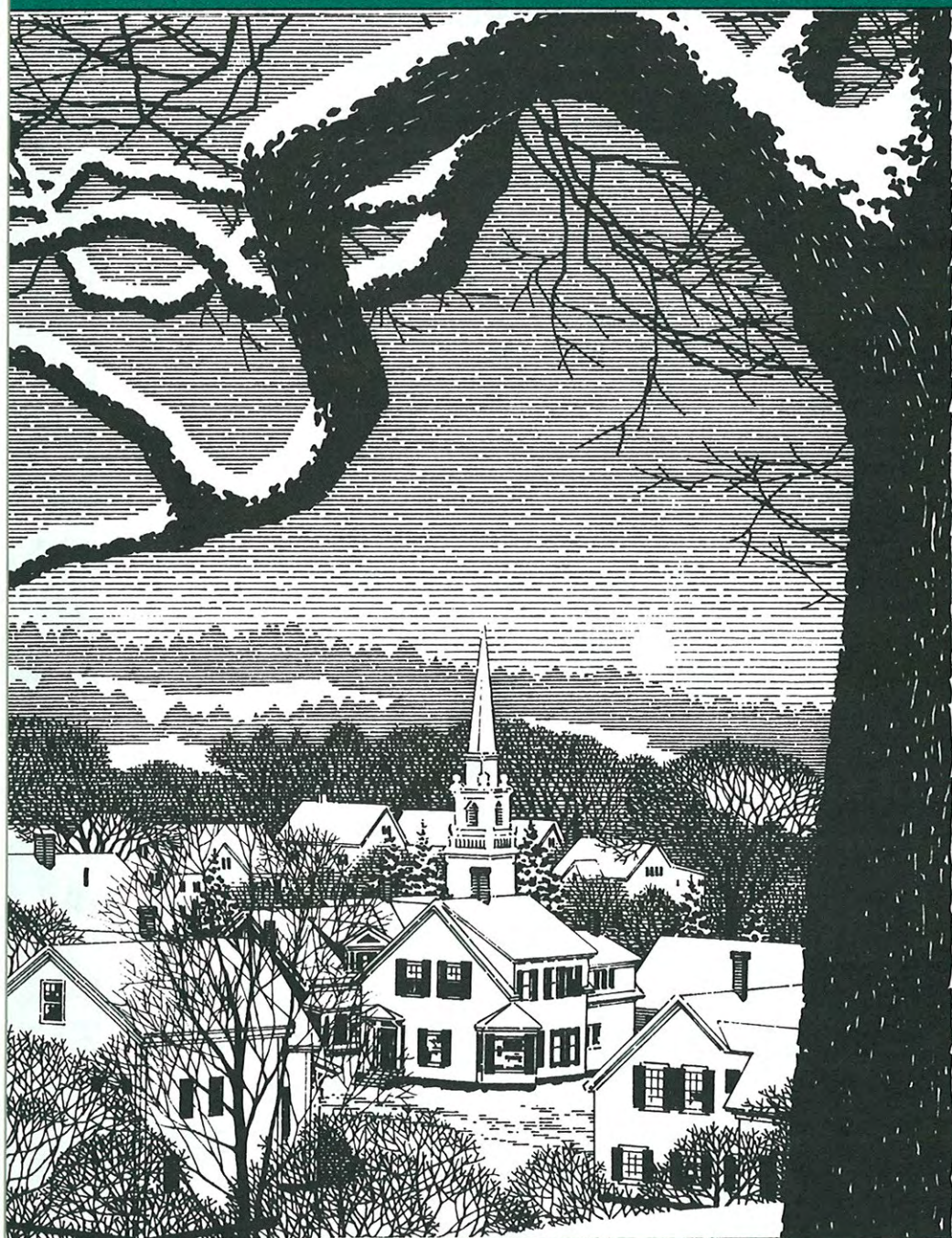
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

Christmas Grinches

Solitary Holiday

What Christmas Means to Christians

Beyond the Police Call



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VOLUME 38, NO. 12

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

Miracle at Mt. View

Six years ago when the possibility of relocating the national offices surfaced, few believed that the dream would ever come true. Inadequate space hampered agency growth necessary to service the denominational constituency. Staff members worked with minimal complaint under less than adequate space confident that God would provide; and He has.

We pause to praise Him for the miracle on Mt. View. We rejoice in the spirit of cooperation throughout the relocation process.

Dedication ceremonies are scheduled for December 3 during the Leadership Conference. Free Will Baptists throughout the country will join in the celebration. We have a facility from which Free Will Baptists will continue to fulfill the mandate which brought us into existence . . . "to extend Christ's Kingdom to the ends of the earth."

The Space

The new building contains 29,700 square feet divided in the following manner: offices—17,951; storage—2,378; common space—9,371.

The square footage allotment for agencies occupying the facility is: Executive Office—2,491 (12%—2,203 office; 298 storage); WNAC—2,050 (10%—1,444 office; 606 storage); Home Missions—4,050 (20%—3,679 office; 371 storage); Foreign Missions—6,114 (30%—5,388 office and 726 storage); Retirement and FWB Foundation—3,933 (19%—3,742 office and 191 storage) and Master's Men—1,691 (8%—1,495 office and 196 storage).

Home and Foreign Missions occupy 50% of the office and storage space in the building while WNAC occupies 12.25%. This means that missionary outreach of our denomi-

nation occupies 62.25% of the square footage of this new facility. Our priorities are right.

The Service

National agencies exist to serve the denomination. They provide resource materials for individuals, local churches, pastors, district and state associations. Each was brought into existence for a specific purpose and given a significant ministry.

The Executive Office serves as an administrative arm to implement directives passed by the National Association. The office serves in the areas of coordination, communication and correlation while planning the national convention, publishing *Contact* and promoting the Cooperative Plan of Support. The office impartially promotes all denominational ministries.

Woman's National Auxiliary Convention serves in the areas of missions and education. Brought into existence in the beginning of our history, WNAC serves a vital role. *Co-Laborer* provides information and inspiration for Free Will Baptist women. The provision closet provides missionaries with needed household goods.

The Home Missions Department serves in areas of church planting and evangelism. Over 60 missionary couples serve under the Home Missions Department. Military chap-



Melvin Worthington

lains are also endorsed by this agency.

The Foreign Missions Department serves as the denomination's overseas outreach arm. Over 100 missionaries serve around the world. This department enables us to fulfill Christ's commission to go into all the world.

Retirement and Insurance serves approximately 1,000 pastors and other Christian workers with a retirement program. The program's funds have grown to nearly \$9 million. How we praise God for those whose vision included the retirement years of pastors.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation, established in 1980 serves in the area of stewardship. Wills, living trusts, deferred giving—new terms to some Free Will Baptists—are terms used in estate planning. This department can provide valuable service in stewardship training and estate planning.

Master's Men provides special opportunities for Free Will Baptist men. Laymen need opportunities for service. Free Will Baptist laymen remain an untapped resource. Master's Men provides a vehicle through which men can get involved in missions, the national convention and church building.

The Support

The new office building is finished. We now occupy it. As in any other building program, all do not rejoice, and yet the work must go on. Support must continue if service is to continue. The building can be paid for and the denomination prosper.

Join with us in celebrating what the Lord has done. We give Him praise and glory. It is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous to behold. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

December 2-3	Leadership Conference Nashville, TN
December 3	Dedication Ceremonies National Offices Building Antioch, TN
December 4-5	Executive Committee Meeting National Offices Antioch, TN

Oh, Those Christmas Grinches!

By Suzan Hutchinson



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Christmas! Bright lights. A Babe in a manger. Shepherds. Angels. Family gatherings. Trees. Decorations. Presents. Shopping. Parties. Baking. Caroling. Plays. And—Grinches!

Yes, grinches. Cunning and malicious, these phantoms attempt to steal our peace and good will. Wreaking havoc, they upset schedules, tip emotions, stir fights, raise tension and induce confusion.

What would Christmas be without them? Immediately two words come to mind—peaceful and uncomplicated. But would we enjoy the richness of the season without them. They exercise our faith, our patience, our endurance and test the foundation of our beliefs.

By acquainting ourselves with these grinches, we can avoid their pitfalls and emerge from the Christmas season victorious.

Compromise

Slipping in the back door, compromise eases into the workings of our lives. Unnoticed, it blends in and waits for an opportunity to strike.

As Christmas draws near, our defenses weaken. Caught between the message of Christmas and the celebration of Xmas we waver. The spirit seeks the simple truth. The carnal desires the intoxication of celebration. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Compromise provides the answer. Merge the spiritual with the secular. Incorporate innocuous celebrations into our commemoration of Jesus' birth. Simple. Exciting. But the end result is heretical. The message of the season is diluted by the wine of frivolity.

In II Corinthians 6:17 we are called to be a separate people. Our celebrations must reflect our calling. If Jesus

is truly the reason for the season, we must not allow anything to weaken our ability to shine forth to a dark world. Jesus must shine through in all we do, especially in the way we celebrate Christmas.

Be diligent, ever watchful. Know what you believe. Stand firm. Refuse to compromise. Do not let the priceless become worthless.

Substitution

Walking hand in hand with compromise, this grinch goes one step further and takes up where compromise leaves off. Discontent with simply merging the spiritual and the secular, substitution creates ideas that appeal to the senses instead of the spirit.

Not content with a Savior, it produces a Santa. Instead of pointing toward a heavenly home, it embraces the earthy and dreams of snow and mistletoe.

Once our convictions are silenced and beliefs compromised, it is only a matter of time before substitution steps in. Jesus is pushed out and the god of Christmas enthroned.

We must guard against allowing anything to overshadow the truth. Jesus is the reason we celebrate. Open wide the doors to your heart and home. Present a clear message of the true God of Christmas to those around you.

Greed

Following close on the heels of compromise and substitution, greed slithers in. Wrapping its arms around our necks it whispers, "You've been good. You deserve it. After all, this is Christmas—a season of giving and receiving, of feasting and festivities. A little indulgence won't hurt."

What it does not say is found in James 1:14-16. Look it up. Memorize it!

Let's face it folks. We are greedy people. We want what we want when we want it. If in doubt, visit your local department store. Watch the people. Listen to the children. Notice your own reactions.

Greed turns our thoughts toward what "I" can get and away from what "He" gave. Learn to recognize it.

Learn to combat it. Exercise prayer. Use restraint. Muster the courage to say, "No."

Pride

We have compromised our Savior and substituted our beliefs for those of the world around us. Grinched by greed, we stand ashamed in the mess we've made of Christmas.

Confess or cover up. Which will it be? Pride saunters over, denies our guilt and leads us away. Plying us with excuses, it prevents us from facing up to greed.

Filling our heads with nonsense it puffs our ego and heightens our sense of our own selfworth. Pride fills our schedules with endless activities and empties our purses in pursuit of the praise of others.

"Pride goeth before destruction...." Beware of it. Exercise honesty and humility. Refuse to allow pride to take root. Do all to the glory of God, not self.

Stress

Schedules are upset. Plans fall through. So little time, so much to do. School's out. The house is a mess. Company is coming. Supper isn't ready. Pow! You've been grinched.

Unaware of the grinch that has spoiled our festive mood, we strike out in anger and frustration. Panic seizes us as we realize we are once again in over our heads.

Quick, breathe a prayer for strength and wisdom. Refuse to give in to this grinch. Exercise patience. Then exercise it again. Relax. Realize you are only human. Make a mental list of things you are thankful for. Turn your thoughts away from the spirit of Christmas and all it entails, and turn to the Giver of the Spirit.

Fatigue

Exhausted, we climb into bed. The day was filled with shopping and wrapping gifts. The next day and the days following will consist of normal daily activities interspersed with cleaning, baking, decorating, partying, shopping and more wrapping—as time allows. As Christmas draws nearer the pace grows feverish and we fall pray to fatigue.

Looming over us, it casts a shadow upon our joyful celebrating. Compromise, substitution, pride and stress have taken their toll. No longer anticipating the blessed day, we dread the preparations.

Losing sight of the Reason for the season is a sure way to come across this grinch's path. Keep your eyes focused on Jesus and weed out all unnecessary activities—as well as everything that does not bring honor to Him. Find time each day to get alone with God's Word. It will refresh, relax and rejuvenate you.

Grinches will exist as long as Christmas is celebrated. Instead of allowing them to abuse us, let's use them.

Draw nearer to God through the circumstances and situations they bring our way. Instead of allowing them to steal our joy in the season, make them multiply it in the Reason! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Suzan Hutchinson is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church in Dublin, Georgia.



What Christmas Means to Christians

By Lonnie Skiles

To America and the world in general, Christmas has become a time of commercialization and greed. To others, it is merely a time to visit family and friends, exchange greetings and gifts, and enjoy a bounteous meal. But what does Christmas really mean?

The answer can be found only in the truths of the Christian faith and only in the pages of the Bible. What does Christmas mean to Christians? Four key words will reveal the answer.

Joy

First, Christmas means joy. The angel proclaimed to the shepherds (Luke 2:10): "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

That this great joy is not the possession of every person on earth is quite obvious. The angel's proclamation must be interpreted in light of other scriptures. The next verse (Luke 2:11) speaks of a "Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Those who share in the joy must also share in the belief of the Savior.

The joy that Christmas brings to the Christian is a joy the world knows nothing about. The Bible speaks of it as "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). It is a *present* joy because of the presence of the joy-giver in the heart of every Christian. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit indwells believers, bringing peace and joy (Romans 8:9).

It is a *future* joy, because of the promise of eternal life with God the Father, in whose presence is "fullness of joy" (Psalm 16:11).

It is an *unconditional* joy, because it is not affected by circumstances, place nor company. Consider the life of the Apostle Paul. He was unjustifiably imprisoned in a Philippian jail, chained with criminals and seemingly forsaken by God and man (Acts 16:24-25). Here were bad circumstances, a bad place and not the best of company.



But here was also an overflowing joy that expressed itself in praise and song. How was this possible? Paul had personally met the Christchild of that first Christmas and his life and destiny were changed forever.

Hope

Second, Christmas means hope. The purpose of Jesus' coming was to bring hope to a people in despair.

Through the sin of Adam, the whole human race had plunged into a quagmire of sin and despair.

But the Christ of Christmas came, not only to be born the perfect man, but to live the perfect life, fulfilling the law of God to perfection, and to die as the perfect sacrifice for all of man's sins. In this, He rescued man from the guilt and penalty of sin, and brought the light of hope to a sin-darkened world.

The Bible says (Romans 8:24-25), "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

This hope sustains the Christian in this life and comforts him at the grave. Because of Christ's first coming, we have hope of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. Because of Christ's promise to come again (I Thessalonians 4:13-18), we have hope and comfort at the grave—the hope of eternity.

Peace

Third, Christmas means peace. The angel announced (Luke 2:14), "peace, good will toward men." G. Campbell Morgan states that this literally means peace "among men in whom He is well-pleased."

The true peace of Christmas, by its very nature, is limited to Christians only. Jesus said (John 14:27), "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Men of the world dream and scheme for peace. But the only real peace is that in the heart of the Christian, and this is provided by the presence of the Prince of Peace, the Christ of Christmas.

Salvation

Finally, Christmas means salvation. The truth is that Jesus did not come just to be born, but rather to die for the sins of the world.

The Bible declares that God demanded an adequate, perfect sacrifice for sins. Since man, in his sinful state, was incapable of providing

such a sacrifice, God, in His infinite love and wisdom, provided His own sacrifice in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus stated (Luke 19:10), "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Again He says (Hebrews 10:5), "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."

The context of this passage in Hebrews proves beyond doubt that a perfect sacrifice for sins was required, and that sacrifice could only be provided by God in the flesh dying for sinful man. Salvation was the main purpose behind the birth of the Christchild.

The cradle at Bethlehem can never be separated from the cross at Golgotha. The salvation of man was planned before the foundation of the world, and was perfected and executed through the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Savior.

Only Christians know of this salvation, for it is exclusive to those who hear and believe in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross of Calvary. To the Christian, Christmas means joy, hope, peace and salvation. The Christ of Christmas makes all these possible to Christians, and only to Christians.

The words of Peter (Acts 4:12) are still relevant today: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Kneel at His manger. Weep at His cross. Rejoice at His empty tomb. Wait for His promise to return. That's the real story at Christmas! ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Lonnie Skiles pastors Bethel Free Will Baptist Church in Festus, Missouri.

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The Solitary Holiday

By Sam Henderson

One of the most common causes of suffering in America is loneliness. At no time of the year is it worse than on special days like Thanksgiving and Christmas, birthdays and anniversaries.

Loneliness is a chronic condition for millions of people. No matter where they live, no matter what their lifestyle; whether they live in small towns or in houses far out in the country, in suburban neighborhoods or in big city high-rise apartments, behind the doors of their homes are lonely people.

Some insulate themselves physically, emotionally and intellectually from people, while others have been isolated from the world by fears, hurts and the callous disregard of those around them. Our culture encourages isolation, a lack of intimacy, a fear of involvement . . . all of which lead to loneliness.

The Problem

Lonely people have an intense desire to be wanted, needed, accepted, loved . . . by somebody. They often search for any kind of relationship that would fill the void, give them a sense of meaning and purpose and worth—someone or something with which they can spend time or share their thoughts.

Some people like to be alone but they're not lonely. They just enjoy short periods of solitude that can be enjoyable, refreshing, even therapeutic. But loneliness is unpleasant, uncontrollable and often unbearable.

Life becomes routine, empty, futile. Lonely people can be overwhelmed by a sense of hopelessness, discouragement, worthlessness, sadness, even restlessness, because of a lack of meaningful, long-term contact with others.

Loneliness hits everyone from time to time: the elderly, teens, wives, husbands—regardless of age,



race or economic status. It can even happen to individuals in large families.

A friend in his early 50's told me that during a family gathering one Christmas season he left his house full of children and grandchildren and went out for a walk. Once off by himself, he broke down and cried because he realized that they would all be going home soon, and he'd be alone again.

Many people suffer from loneliness brought on by our all-too-often unpredictable emotions, by impersonal environments and social situations, by a pervading sense of hope-

lessness or even by a pessimistic attitude.

Bible Insights

Human beings need other human beings. God said, "It is not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). So, for Adam, He created Eve. She fulfilled his need of companionship, intimacy and love.

But when the closeness, the intimacy which we all need is lost or withdrawn, the void that is left causes loneliness, sadness, even depression if not held in check by con-

tact with other close family members and friends.

Solomon, the great king of Israel, had 1,000 wives and concubines. The wisest man and perhaps one of the busiest men who ever lived, experienced loneliness. In Ecclesiastes he wrote, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity" (emptiness)

"... vexation of spirit . . ."

"... madness and foolishness . . . grief!"

"I hated my life . . . I hated my work . . ."

You can almost hear him say, "Oh, what's the use!"

David wrote, "O God! Turn to me, and be gracious to me . . . I am lonely and afflicted" (Psalm 25: 16)

David knew loneliness on the run—misunderstood, betrayed, harboring guilt for secret sins. And, as he, we too often have the perception that nobody knows, nobody cares, and there's no way out of the situation we find ourselves in.

Are the thoughts Paul expresses in 11 Timothy 4 those of a lonely, isolated man? Did John feel deserted on the Isle of Patmos? And when is a worse time for loneliness than when life becomes hopeless, when nothing's going right, when there's just no "future" in the future? Job probably went through it, and so did Elijah and Jeremiah....

The Common Threads

Even great men and women of God experience loneliness, a sense of isolation and pessimism from time to time. Holidays and other special occasions can be the loneliest time of year when they must be experienced away from family and friends: perhaps in a foreign land or culture, involved in the Lord's work but isolated from those who matter and are needed most.

If we'll be aware of loneliness and care enough to watch for its symptoms in others (as well as ourselves), and are concerned enough to give or get help, we can give or find joy and stability during those special times, and help someone draw closer to the Lord.

Our society causes loneliness for some. We live in an impersonal environment, a modern, mobile society which often dehumanizes personal

interaction. There has been a trend toward isolation due to an individual desire to remain independent and self-sufficient.

Psychologically, loneliness is caused by inner fears and intimidations. Many suffer from low self-esteem due to a lack of self-confidence, which then leads to an inability (or an unwillingness) to communicate or relate to others, which then produces further frustration, fears and feelings of injustice, a lack of fulfillment and even hostility.

Often, past unpleasant experiences, such as separation due to distances, divorce, death, disasters, family disagreements or even due to health reasons, cause a sense of hopelessness, isolation and loneliness.

Of course, there are other spiritual and emotional causes including guilt due to hidden (or exposed) sins, uncertainty, doubts and selfishness, which may be due to rebellion toward or just ignoring God.

How to Help Others

So how can we help others or ourselves overcome loneliness?

Admit Need

First, we must admit the need and try to identify the problem's source. It's not unusual to feel lonely from time to time, and it's certainly not a sin. But there's no need for us to stay lonely. What are the causes . . . are they real or imagined? What can be done to change the present situation?

Face Facts

The most positive thing we can do is face up to any spiritual needs we have. We must seek in order to find, and then we must be willing to accept God's unconditional love, forgiveness and guidance (1 John 1:9).

A popular inscription seen in many homes says,

"Lord, give me the strength to change the things I can change,
The courage to accept the things that I can't,
And the wisdom to know the difference."

We must recognize the fact that if we can't change the situation, we can change our attitude about it.

Develop Positive Interests

Then, we must develop positive interests and outlooks. Rather than waiting on others to reach out to us, learn to take the initiative for a "keep in touch" lifestyle. Brief, light, frequent, timely visits or calls to new acquaintances, as well as to those who are no longer near.

We must pursue a course of action that leads to positive change. Reach out to new people, develop new interests, make a few trade-offs in order to take a different direction in life if that's what's needed.

Develop new skills, especially in communication, through practice. "I just can't talk to people. . . " some might say. But you can listen, and that's really the bigger part of communication.

Look for abilities and strengths, not just weaknesses; progress, not just problems. Don't quit. Take a few risks. Strive for a renewed identity. Reach out. Get involved. Try something new or different. Risk rejection, failure, embarrassment.

Caring Local Church

The best thing we can do about loneliness is not learning how to diagnose it, but learning what we can do to prevent it. The local church can help avert loneliness, as well as serve as its antidote.

We must teach people how to cope with change realistically, positively. Show interest and concern for each other, offer personal assistance, counsel when needed; encourage a sense of personal competence, worth and acceptance.

The church can promote interaction and involvement by being warm, supportive and caring toward others. Encourage spiritual growth. Be more trusting and dependent on God.

The Spirit helps us in our times of weakness, even when we don't know what the problem really is, or how to approach God in prayer. He intercedes for us in words we can't express. He has a direct link-up with God, Who meets the needs of the believer.

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" Is there anything that



Solitary...(from page 9)

can force itself between us and God? No! Will God ever leave us or forsake us? No! The only reason we would ever experience the totally empty feeling of being separated from God is because we turned our back and walked out on Him.

Family

The second most important type of relationship involves our family. They must do their part and we must do ours. But if they're not doing their part, we must take the initiative to go the extra mile (or two), if that's what it takes.

Other Christians

Our third most important type of relationship is with other Christians. More than any other on earth, God has given us the duty and the means of maintaining the kind of loving, caring involvement that says to the world that we are followers of Jesus Christ.

Non-Believers

Believe it or not, another important relationship for a believer is with non-believers. We cannot separate ourselves completely from this world and still hope to be the salt and light God wants us to be. He may hate sin, but He loves the lost, and so should we.

We can not participate in their sins, but we can be a part of their lives. How else will they hear and see the love of God in action?

Self

Last, we need a right relationship with ourselves. If we don't like ourselves, if we have no self-esteem or self-respect, we probably won't like or respect other people either. But if we see how important we are to God and other people, we soon begin to see the importance of other people in our lives.

Loneliness can strike any time of the year but be aware that holidays and special occasions are particularly hard times to be alone. The cure for loneliness is not in things or drugs or suicide. It's people.

We need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. We must be aware of the needs of others around us. Get involved. Take a few risks if necessary. Keep on the move. Don't isolate yourself. Speak to others but learn to listen twice as much as you talk.

Be as willing to give invitations as you are to accept them from others. Take responsibility for finding a solution rather than being responsible for the problem.

Learn to laugh with others. Laughter is the universal language. It creates an instant bond of identity and friendship. When people laugh together (even when it's at themselves), they hold, for that moment, a feeling of joy in common. As long as we feel like we hold something positive in common with someone else, we're not likely to feel so lonely.

Let God become more involved in your life. When everyone else seems to have deserted you, He will always be there as close as a prayer.

Believers are never alone because the Spirit is always with us. That's the most positive thing we can have in common with anyone! ■



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

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(See instructions on reverse)

The Adolescent's God

By Mark Senter III

Many high school students today have immature concepts of God and His working. Historically, however, young people have been at the forefront of theological awareness. Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley were all young men when their impact began to be felt. William Carey, Hudson Taylor and David Brainerd were barely out of their teenage years when God moved them to action.

So what can be done today to help high school students develop mature theological concepts?

The news is good. There are some things youth leaders and concerned adults can do. The most important thing, of course, is prayer. But as you pray that God will raise up spiritual leaders among the younger generation, you must be willing to accept the answer as God provides it.

It is quite possible that God will answer your prayer in a non-traditional manner. Maybe the Christian musicians will prove to be the prophets and teachers of the new generation. If we pray, we must be willing to accept His answer.

1. Employ fresh, appropriate methodologies.

Though less dramatic than a spiritual awakening, methodological changes have provided significant periods of healing and growth. Teachers of youth need to move students into experiences that will cause them to hammer out their faith in the reality of daily life.

Douglas Hyde, reflecting on his days as a member of the Communist party in England, stated that his first assignment upon conversion to Communism was not to attend a class on the basic tenets of Marx and Engels, but to go out to a factory and sell Communist newspapers. By the time Hyde returned to the party headquarters, he was so full of questions as a result of his confrontations with non-Communists around

the factory that he couldn't be taught fast enough.

The implications of this for church ministry are quite interesting. In the first place, youth ministry must be response—or experience—oriented. At times it may have to be experience oriented even to the extent that students leave the church on Sunday morning in order to engage non-Christians in dialogue, then return to discuss the theological issues that have been raised and what the Bible has to say to them.

2. Help parents fulfill their roles.

Parents are students' primary teachers of theology. If learning is to be response based, answers will be needed as conflicts arise in the thinking of adolescents. You can help parents become sensitive enough to raise dilemmas in the minds of their children in order to stimulate theological thinking.

To wait for the Sunday School hour for answers will only insure that the questions will be forgotten or answered in less depth. The dinner table or the floor between the teen's bed and stereo can be the most significant classroom for learn-

ing to know the God of the Bible.

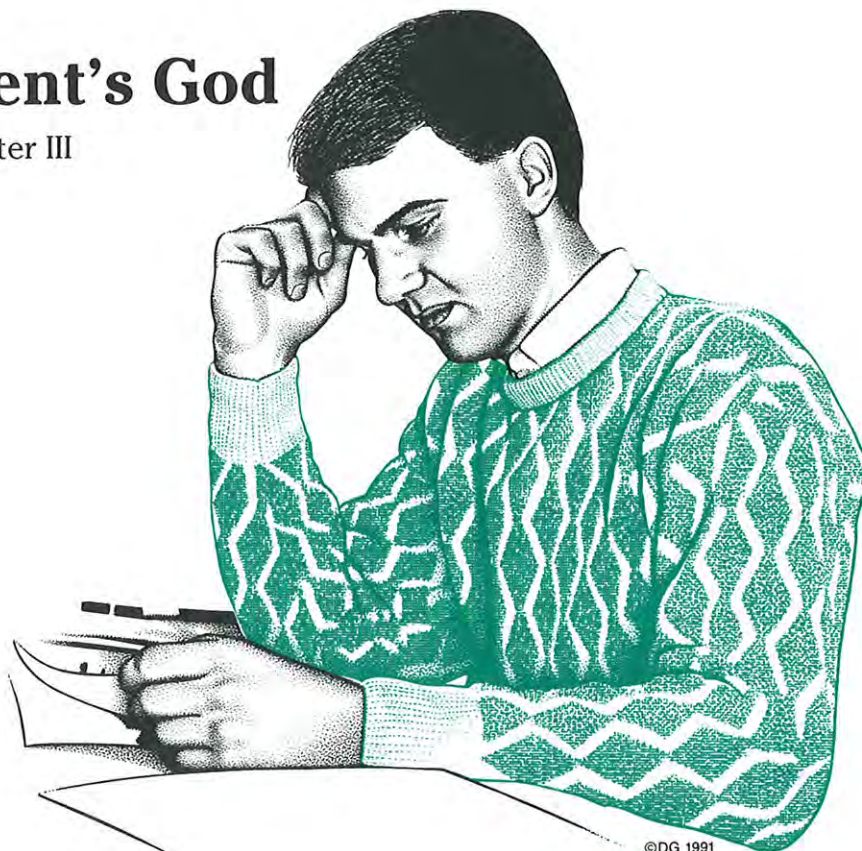
3. Wait patiently during the growth process.

Let's not confuse patience with apathy. The biblical concept of patience is waiting with confidence in God, the time when the results will be evidenced.

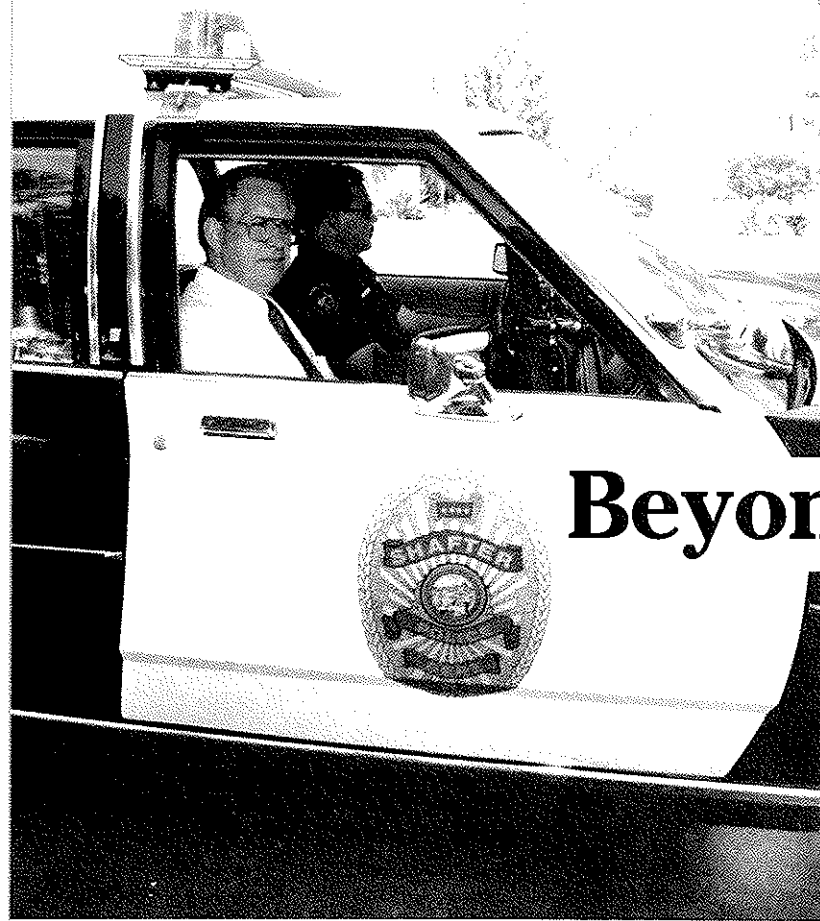
Watching teenagers emerge from spiritual immaturity may be a bit like watching a butterfly emerge from a cocoon. As an observer I might wish that the butterfly would emerge more rapidly so that I could be about my other tasks.

But I must wait until the process runs its natural course. Or I may seek to give assistance to the nearly exhausted butterfly. But if I do, the poor creature will never fly. Instead I must stand by, gazing on in fascination, while the natural process ordained by God in eternity past, plays out its role before my eyes. ■

.....
ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Mark Senter is a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He has varied experience in youth ministry and Christian education in a number of churches and is the father of two teenage daughters. Article offered by David C. Cook Publishing Company.



Police Chaplain Program Involves Free Will Baptist Pastor



Beyond the Police Call

By Barry Ginsbarg

Pastor Dean Long accompanies officer in squad car.

One year ago the Shafter, California, police department, with the aid of local clergymen, initiated what appears to be one of Kern County's most unique chaplain programs. And those involved say the program is working extremely well.

"It's been an overwhelming success," said Shafter Police Chief Greg Greeson. "The chaplains have done an outstanding job working with our officers in providing the citizens of Shafter with a service that's not normally offered by a police department."

Greeson said the Shafter program is "not a typical chaplain program" because of its focus on helping community members.

"Most chaplain programs focus just on employees," the chief said. "One of the unique aspects of our program is the chaplains' outreach to citizens in need."

The non-denominational chaplain program, coordinated by Pastor Dean Long of Shafter Free Will Baptist Church, began in September 1990 as a way of "picking up where officers leave off" after responding to calls, the pastor said.

Officers responding to a wide variety of calls for service have a primary responsibility to ensure the safety of those involved and remedy each situation as quickly as possible, although they also provide personal assistance whenever possible. The role of the nine chaplains taking part in the program, according to

Pastor Long, is to follow up after each call with more personal contact with those involved.

They provide comfort and counseling to prevent recurring situations, make referrals to drug and alcohol dependency programs or other organizations that can help, deliver death notices or "simply lend a caring, compassionate ear to those in need," Long said.

"I believe the chaplain program provides a level of assistance and compassion to those in need far beyond what communities typically offer to their citizens," he said. "Our goal as chaplains is to let people know that the city of Shafter really cares about the people it serves."

"I think it's worked real well. We've been able to help elderly people, transients and others, and to be

It seems such a small thing to give a child a ride to church. It doesn't take much extra time. After all, it's on the way. And you were going anyway. It's no big deal. Or is it?

If you hadn't stopped, the little girl couldn't have gone to church. She wouldn't have heard truths her hungry soul longed to hear. The young Christian might not have experienced the slow, steady growth necessary for a strong foundation upon which the Lord could build later.

If your kindness had not been expressed in this small way, she might have decided that no one cared. She might not have experienced the warmth of fellowship with God's people. She might have taken a different path in life—away from the Lord. After all, if His people didn't care, He must not care either, right?

No Big Deal

By M. J. Pritchard



If you hadn't been faithful Sunday after Sunday, Wednesday after Wednesday, to stop by her house, she might not have learned that God is there when things get tough, that He is faithful.

And yet, you used your gift in this small way. And now that little girl has grown up, finished college and serves the Lord. She ministers to many people through her job. She knows the Lord is faithful, that He honors His Word.

It's been years since you took that little girl to church. You can't take her to church anymore; she lives in another city in another state. And yet . . . there's this other little girl in your town who needs a ride to church. *Yes, you tell her mother, you'd be glad to stop and get her. You were going anyway. And it's on the way. Don't mention it. It's just a little thing. No big deal.*

Or is it . . . ? ■

involved in comforting families in times of need."

The chaplain program has since been expanded to the City of Shafter Return-to-Custody Facility which opened in January 1991. Five of the

rect, positive impact on the day-to-day operation of the facility," Chief Greeson said. "The services get them involved, occupy their time, provide them with more peace of mind and help them overcome the

"That means we're doing something right," Long said. "We can't help everyone, but we minister anyway. If we can help one or two it's worth it."

The clergymen, who minister at churches of various denominations throughout Shafter, have enjoyed the challenges and new experiences associated with being a chaplain, Long said. He and Greeson said the chaplains and police officers have developed strong working relationships with one another, which makes the program even more effective.

Each chaplain is assigned one duty week on a rotating basis with the rest, according to Long. During that week, they review the daily police log for potential opportunities to help and also are urged to ride along with patrol officers for a minimum of three hours. ■



The chaplain program picks up where officers leave off after responding to calls. . . .

—Dean Long

nine chaplains work with inmates on a regular basis, providing Tuesday and Friday Bible study and Sunday church services. Free Bibles are given to inmates every third Sunday by local Gideons, and Christian concerts sponsored by the chaplains are held at the facility periodically.

"With 80 to 100 inmates participating, the religious services provided by the chaplains have a di-

personal struggles of in-custody living."

Pastor Long said working with inmates has been "challenging, but gratifying too, because we've been able to see some results." He said he has received letters and telephone calls from inmates who have since been released from the facility and have continued to be involved in church activities elsewhere.

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Barry Ginsbarg is public information officer for the city of Shafter, California. Photos courtesy of Mr. Ginsbarg.

Editor's Note: You may wish to encourage your local police department to begin a similar program. Contact Barry Ginsbarg at 320 James Street, Shafter, CA 93263. Phone: 805/746-6361.

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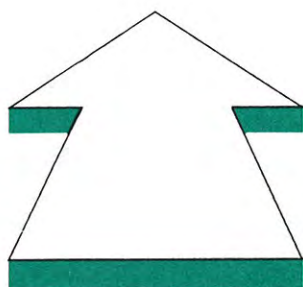
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RECEIPTS:

State	Designated	CO-OP (Undesignated)	Total	Sept. '90	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 160.88	\$ 30.00	\$ 190.88	\$ 81.49	\$ 3,190.45
Arizona	423.37	46.00	469.37	.00	1,247.80
Arkansas	.00	4,792.30	4,792.30	6,356.37	50,382.09
California	.00	.00	.00	.00	10,217.59
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	4,007.16	4,007.16	3,419.33	15,182.53
Georgia	7,747.35	799.50	8,546.85	7,981.44	82,086.68
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	219.91
Illinois	.00	.00	.00	10,251.54	71,419.26
Indiana	413.98	64.35	478.33	474.30	5,636.35
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	79.58	522.16
Kentucky	.00	.00	.00	343.12	1,448.79
Maryland	.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	3,743.56
Michigan	4,082.12	742.66	4,824.78	170.00	44,160.04
Mississippi	38.04	.00	38.04	293.91	4,586.64
Missouri	7,430.65	.00	7,430.65	100.00	76,906.03
New Mexico	54.40	17.20	71.60	30.36	1,527.84
North Carolina	50.00	250.00	300.00	850.00	18,214.18
Ohio	384.00	2,538.00	2,922.00	3,361.00	25,437.21
Oklahoma	26,874.52	6,373.10	33,247.62	39,588.69	369,898.08
South Carolina	13,522.38	25.00	13,547.38	18,892.16	113,865.18
Tennessee	15,269.80	664.56	15,934.36	2,404.34	51,580.95
Texas	.00	.00	.00	9,828.47	77,211.84
Virginia	.00	.00	.00	300.38	2,815.11
West Virginia	.00	.00	.00	2,686.25	30,284.09
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	86.97
Northwest Association	.00	31.70	31.70	12.70	178.79
Other (Computer)	.00	.01	.01	.01	.28
Totals	\$76,451.49	\$20,531.54	\$96,983.03	\$107,655.44	\$1,062,050.40

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 5,927.93	\$15,693.35	\$21,621.28	\$ 20,166.68	\$ 194,591.48
Foreign Missions	40,875.67	1,112.78	41,988.45	62,868.40	546,599.29
FWBBC	4,286.07	1,112.78	5,398.85	4,598.33	69,650.01
Home Missions	12,732.13	870.85	13,602.98	15,192.22	165,735.10
Retirement & Insurance	329.65	677.35	1,007.00	885.07	19,207.20
Master's Men	456.65	677.35	1,134.00	965.79	19,800.65
Commission for					
Theological Integrity	20.58	24.20	44.78	79.52	919.55
FWB Foundation	325.80	290.28	616.08	899.33	12,265.12
Historical Commission	18.25	24.20	42.45	37.62	884.66
Music Commission	9.34	24.20	33.54	77.18	682.38
Radio & TV Commission	87.59	24.20	111.79	69.66	967.95
Hillsdale FWB College	322.56	.00	322.56	571.88	12,432.33
Other	11,059.27	.00	11,059.27	1,243.76	18,314.68
Totals	\$76,451.49	\$20,531.54	\$96,983.03	\$107,655.44	\$1,062,050.40

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

FWBBC Sets \$150,000 Christmas Goal

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College's 1991 goal for the Paul Kettelman Memorial Christmas Fund Drive will be \$150,000, according to Bob Shockey, public relations director. Last year the denomination raised \$197,174, exceeding the \$140,000 goal.

Mr. Shockey placed a major responsibility for meeting the goal on students and staff. He challenged them to raise \$85,000, more than half the total amount. He promised a gift to every student and staff member who raises anything in the drive and a special gift to all who bring in \$500 or more. Last year, members of the college family raised more than \$86,600.

Any gift, from a church or individual, in December will be credited to the drive. Gifts designated for the drive and received by January 31, 1992, will also be counted. The special campaign is in honor of the late Rev. Paul Kettelman, who served 25 years as the college's public relations director.

Hymn Book to Cost More

ANTIOCH, TN—The price of *Rejoice, The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book* will increase by \$2 per copy effective December 1, 1991, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. The decision to raise the price was made by the Executive Committee and announced in Charleston, W.Va., at the national convention.

The new prices will be \$11.98 each for regular bound hymnals, \$23.98 each for loose leaf hymnals, \$53.98 each for leather bound hymnals.

Rejoice, The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book was published in 1988. The hymnal is marketed and distributed through Randall House Publications, the trade name for the Free Will Baptist Sunday School and Church Training Department.

More than 75,000 copies of the new hymnal have been sold in four years. Less than 25,000 copies remain from the original press run.

Directory Update

KENTUCKY

Wade C. Parker to First Church, Glasgow
from Tippet's Chapel, Clayton, NC

OHIO

Paul Keener to Lewis Center Church,
Lewis Center

Billy Sharpston to Heritage Temple
Church, Columbus from White Oaks
Church, Macon, GA

Don Hix to Woodstock Church, Wood-
stock from Union Church, Plain City

Gene Brammer to Friendly Church,
Columbus

SOUTH CAROLINA

Mike Creech to Bay Branch Church, Tim-
mons ville

Randy McCraw to Lesslie Church, Rock
Hill

John Hudson to Black River Church, An-
drews

Tim Hackett to Fairview Church, Spartan-
burg

CURRENTLY...

Director **Marion Pettus** reported 68 conversions among the 425 campers at **Cumberland Camp** in Tennessee this summer. The camp is operated by Free Will Baptist churches in the Cumberland Association.

Poplar Ridge FWB Church in **Bidwell, OH**, received 10 new members and baptized seven. **Henry Hatfield** pastors.

Pastor **Jim Eberts** reports a first-ever Vacation Bible School at **Truth FWB Church**, a member of Ohio's Jackson Conference. The church reported an average of 57 children each day as well as 12 adults. More than 140 attended the closing program.

Members of **Blackfork FWB Church** in **Oak Hill, OH**, watched seven baptisms this summer. **Gerald Lewis** pastors.

Forty years ago **First Dayton FWB Church** in **Dayton, OH**, was organized. Pastor **Hobert Ashby** said members celebrated with an all-day service and dinner on the grounds.

Missionary pastor **Mike Criswell** said members hoped to occupy their new building at **West Side FWB Church** in **Eugene, OR**, by Thanksgiving. Thanks to the labor of 14 men, the building was framed, roofed, electrical work started, doors and windows installed by church members.

Members expect to install a new sound system in **Victory FWB Church** in **East Wenatchee, WA**. **Terry Stafford** pastors.

They do it differently at **New Hope FWB Church** in **Kent, WA**. Pastor **Lloyd Plunkett** said the church conducted an outdoor Bible School/Day Camp this summer. Must have worked—they enrolled 36.

Contact welcomes *New Horizons*, monthly publication of **Bethany FWB Church** in **Broken Arrow, OK**.

Pastor **Doug Little** and members of **First FWB Church** in **Russellville, AR**, celebrated completion of the first phase of their building program with an open house and dedication in September.

Betty Romine, wife of Pastor **Orville Romine** at **Cedar Grove FWB Church** in **Francis, OK**, was hospitalized 26 days after receiving second and third degree burns over 25 percent of her body. She was working in her garden when the accident occurred.

Reverend **Charles Martin** celebrated 50 years in the ministry this year. He is a member of **Antlers FWB Church** in **Antlers, OK**.

Pastor **Orville Hood** led the golden anniversary homecoming celebration at **First FWB Church** in **Checotah, OK**. The church which averages 208 in Sunday School was organized in 1941 by **Thomas H. Dixon**. Trucks hauled the original bricks from the state prison at McAlester to erect the church. The pews were handmade using one-by-fours, the floor was made of sawdust.

Here's another **Oklahoma** church celebrating a birthday. **First FWB Church** in **Seminole** turned 41 this year. **Allen Wood** pastors.

Pastor **Wayne Smith** reports construction in full-bloom at **Folsom FWB Church** in **Coleman, OK**. The 140' x 40' building will include a 3,600-square-foot sanctuary. Pastor Smith also reported 91 people in attendance during their Vacation Bible School.

Pastor **Steve Turner** did something that not many people ever get a chance to do. Turner, who pastors **Bixby FWB Church** in **Bixby, OK**, baptized a 90-year-old lady who was converted this summer. That same night he also baptized a 16-year-old convert.

Pastor **Terry Pierce** led members in a homecoming celebration at **First FWB Church** in **Thomaston, GA**. The congregation celebrated 39 years of ministry in their community and recognized all charter members who were present.

Contact welcomes *The Midweek News*, publication of **First FWB Church** in **Inman, SC**. **Earl Hendrix** pastors.

Members of **Hope FWB Church** in **Parkersburg, WV**, dedicated the Billy Samms Youth Center in September. West Virginia Promotional Director **Ottis Hensley** preached the dedication service. **Kenneth Samms**, son of the late **Billy Samms**, pastors the church.

First FWB Church in **Raleigh, NC**, began an "Early Light" worship service this summer with 106 present the first Sunday at the 8:30 a.m. service. Pastor **Randy Cox** reported 745 present at the 11:00 a.m. service. **Raleigh Christian Academy**, a ministry of First FWB Church, enrolled a record 614 students.

Pastor **Jerry Norris** conducted a new kind of class at **Calvary Fellowship FWB Church** in **Fenton, MO**. He con-

ducted a prospective deacon's class one Thursday night. The class included studies on deacons' qualifications, duties, ordination questions, FWB doctrine and the shepherd ministry.

Pastor **Claudie Hames** reports an average Sunday School attendance of 612 and CTS attendance of 137 at **First FWB Church** in **Bakersfield, CA**. He also baptized 38 converts.

When Pastor **Don Harbert** led **Buena Park FWB Church** in **Buena Park, CA**, into the West Coast Association, he brought some excitement with him. Harbert reported 63 conversions this summer.

Members of **East Nashville FWB Church** in **Nashville, TN**, surprised Pastor **Fred Hall** and helped him celebrate 35 years in the ministry this September. The church presented Pastor Hall a plaque of appreciation and a book of letters. Hall's son, David, a sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, was the surprise guest speaker.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Decatur, IL**, reports steady growth in the past six months. Sixteen converts enrolled in the new converts class. **Ed Hollis** pastors.

Vacation Bible School at **Harmony FWB Church** in **West Frankfort, IL**, attracted 93 children. Pastor **Kenneth Edwards** reports 12 young people who accepted Christ as Savior.

Ten members of the youth group at **First FWB Church** in **Duncanville, TX**, traveled to Mexico August 11-17 and ministered to Free Will Baptist churches there. During the day they painted seven Sunday School classrooms at the church in Reynosa. During the evenings they attended worship services at local churches. Youth leader **Bob Williams** led the group.

Forty-five charter members were present at **South Fremont FWB Church** in **Springfield, MO**, to celebrate the 20th anniversary. Pastor **Dale Skiles** welcomed 185 members and friends to the special occasion. Missouri Executive Secretary **Clarence Burton** delivered the message. During Pastor Skiles 10-year ministry, the church enlarged the auditorium, added a new wing of Sunday School rooms and purchased new parking area. ■



BOARD OF RETIREMENT

The Minister's Housing Allowance

Do you know how to have your church designate a housing allowance correctly? Is it too late to designate a housing allowance?

Congress has given ministers a wonderful tax break by allowing them to exclude from income an amount designated as housing allowance. This amount in turn is used by the minister to pay all the costs incurred with providing a home for himself and his family. This can significantly lower a minister's income tax and is easy to set up.

The allowance is established by having the church designate a part of the minister's income as housing allowance. The church's designation should be in writing and contained in "an employment contract, in minutes of or in a resolution by a church or other qualified organization, or in its budget, or in any other appropriate instrument evidencing such official action." Treas. Reg. 1.107-1 (b).

What happens if the church fails to make the designation until the end of the year? Can they go back and make a retroactive approval?

The regulations require that the allowance be designated in advance of the payment. The designation does not have to be made before the beginning of the calendar year, but it will be effective only from the date of official church designation.

In other words, if the church waits until the end of the year to approve the allowance, they cannot designate the allowance retroactively and their minister will not get to exclude the housing allowance from income tax.

What happens if the minister's housing situation changes during the year and his allowance needs to be increased?

As long as the church approves the new designation prior to the minister receiving it, the housing allowance may be increased during the middle of the year if necessary.

The housing allowance is a significant tax benefit for ministers. Churches should be careful to make the designation for their ministers before the beginning of the year and make sure they designate it in writing.

One safeguard would be to include the phrase, "... housing allowance for 1992 and all future years." This wording will allow a

minister to claim a housing allowance in subsequent years even if the church doesn't designate it in time. He will just use the prior year's designation.

The law allows for designating an ordained minister's housing allowance. Take advantage of this tax break by making sure the allowance is approved and recorded on a timely basis. ■

(Reprinted by permission: *Benefit Bulletin*, Presbyterian Church in America)

Note: Before applying the above regulation to specific circumstances, seek competent counsel.

In Memory of . . .

By . . .

John B. Ewing

1st FWB Church Auxiliary
Hot Springs, AR

George Miller

Verdella Day Auxiliary
Liberal, MO

J. B. Weathered

1st FWB Church Auxiliary
Malvern, AR

In Honor of . . .

By . . .

Mr. Jesse White

Carlos Kelsey
Smyrna, TN

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY



Woman's Window on the World

By Mary R. Wisehart

From My Window

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length are free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Shells fascinate me. I have on a shelf in my office one of my favorites, the chambered nautilus. The shell, cut in half, reveals a series of chambers, each one larger than the one before it. Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem by that name assumes that this sea creature moved from a smaller chamber to a larger as it grew, leaving behind and never entering again the old chamber.

The tales about this sea creature may not be entirely scientific, but I like to think of leaving 1991 and stepping into 1992 as entering a new chamber, a new room in life.

Suppose you could choose to leave some things behind this year. Simply say, "Stay in 1991. I'll have no more to do with you in 1992." What would you leave?

I'd leave behind pettiness—that spirit that causes me to take offense if I feel slighted or put upon by another person. The littleness of my nature.

Prejudice—I'd like to leave behind those preconceived ideas about people or things. Those leftovers from the past that keep me from accepting people, listening to new ideas, taking a different path. I'd like to lose those prejudices, and march into 1992 without them.

Another thing I'd like to leave behind is fascination with things—material things. Do you ever despair of what to do with your collection of things? I'd like to leave them behind and choose the true values, the real things that last through eternity.

Then I'd—well, make your own list. The Bible says that we can keep growing, stretching forward, leaving behind, reaching toward the mark God has set for us.

Finally we will reach that shore where we shed this shell, leave life's unresting sea and

stand free to be all that He has in mind for us. Maybe in 1992?

Eunice Edwards Fund Goes to Spain

The Eunice Edwards Loan Fund for Churches Abroad will help to build the first church building Free Will Baptists have in Spain. God has blessed the work at Villalba where Jeff and Susan Turnbough and Steve and Linda Reeves are working. The congregation has saved some money for land and building, some funds will come from the Advance monies.

The Eunice Edwards Fund will loan \$35,000 for the building. This amount will be repaid and be available to other Free Will Baptist congregations wishing to build in Spain.

Have you given to the Eunice Edwards Fund? The fund was established in 1986 as a national project. Its name honors WNAC's first full-time executive secretary.

Each member was to give \$1 a year for five years so that we could reach our goal of \$50,000.

December 1991 is the deadline for gifts to the fund. At the end of September, the fund totaled \$35,926.96. The total includes interest earned during the five years.

WNAC has 10,000-plus members. Some of us have made no contribution to the fund.

You may still wish to give. All above the \$35,000 will go to some other church building abroad.

Current Opportunities in WNAC

Watch for an announcement of the 1992 National Retreat, Ridgecrest, September 17-19, 1992.

Give a continuing gift to WNAC's endowment fund in the Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Make a contribution to the furniture in the WNAC office suite. The furniture cost \$14,049. WNAC owes \$8,727.08 of that amount.

Contribute to the national office building. Give through the campaign, A Million More by '94. ■

FOREIGN MISSIONS



A Joint Effort

By Charolette Tallent

I felt there was something special about this quiet little Greek-Canadian.

It was the first Bible study of the new 1990-91 academic year.

I uttered a prayer: *"Lord, it's a new year and tonight I'll be meeting several new faces. Each one carries its own special story. Help me to get out of the way and let Jesus shine through me tonight. I'm both excited and nervous, not only because I'll be teaching Your Word but because I don't know who'll be coming across my threshold. Father, bring those who know You and want to grow, as well as those who are searching for You."*

The doorbell sounded. "Hi, Charlene," I greeted. Wow! what a little trooper. She had brought three students. I couldn't believe it. Marielle and Valerie had come to a study! The year before they only came to our pizza and barbecue parties.

"This is Spiroula, Charolette," said Charlene. "She's from Canada also."

That first night's study went well. Our faithful God surprised me as 10 students came. While I presented the study I couldn't help noticing Spiroula. She seemed to drink in every word. After the students left that evening I kept thinking, "There's something different about her." In the quietness of my heart I felt there was something special about this quiet little Greek-Canadian.

The next week it was even more evident that Spiroula's heart was open to God's Word. She was like a sponge soaking up every word. Sandra rushed in the kitchen where I was preparing the refreshments and asked if I had an extra Bible Spiroula could borrow because she wanted one to read. Without hesitation, I loaned her one and suggested she read the Gospel of John.

As the first semester rolled by, Spiroula came faithfully every week. When she had to miss the Tuesday evening study, she would be at the Monday study. During the

Christmas break she and I had a discussion about salvation. The time didn't seem right then to push her to make a decision. Rather, I felt I should allow God to do His work in her heart.

When the second semester began, we started meeting for Bible studies in Spiroula's dorm room. After our second study, I definitely felt compelled by the Holy Spirit to ask her again about salvation. Her smile was the only response I needed. She confirmed that several weeks

earlier, she had prayed in her room asking Christ to become her Savior. I could hardly contain my emotions.

Earlier that week, Steve Riggs had led Soutaine, a pharmacy student, to the Lord. When the university studies began in October, she and her sister-in-law

had joined the Monday night group. Soutaine and her husband, Fleury, had attended the church off and on for a year and since her husband was a Christian, we had *assumed* she was as well.

The following Sunday Spiroula, Soutaine, and Florence, a teenager from the church, stepped forward to testify that they had asked Christ to be their personal Savior. The best reactions were from the students of the Koinonia group. For months they had been praying for Spiroula. It had been difficult for me to keep Spiroula's little secret.

So, who gets the credit for Spiroula coming to know Jesus as Savior? Does Charlene for bringing her to the first study or Sandra for hearing her say she'd like to have a Bible? Does the Koinonia group get credit due to their ministry of prayer? And what about those who pray for the ministry from afar and who financially support this ministry?

Yes, all have played an important role. Spiroula and I are thankful for each participant. It has definitely been a joint effort! ■



The picture shows Sandra (left), Charlene (center), and Spiroula.

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

The New Business Program At FWBBC

by Lowell Sturgill, Chairman, Business Department

"Thy faithfulness is unto all generations..."
(Psa. 119:90)

Attention, all graduating seniors: this report may be of vital importance to you as you seek God's will right now regarding which college to attend and which career you would like to pursue.

This is FWBBC's Jubilee year and we have already begun to celebrate its 50 years of faithful service to the denomination and to thousands of students.

Prospective student, you can be a part of getting FWBBC's next 50 years off to a good start. Coming here could very well be the best way for you to start the rest of your life!

There is real joy in my heart over the enthusiasm and excitement among FWBBC business students about our new four year program. We thank you for your prayers. God has answered, but we ask you to keep praying for his continuing blessings on our program

and, most of all, on our students. I constantly remind myself that the college and I are here for our students.

We are praising God that overall enrollment at FWBBC increased this year by more than 11 percent. In the Business Department, 35 students were enrolled last fall and we have 50 this fall, an increase of 43 percent. Praise God for His faithfulness! Most of our business students have registered as candidates for the four year degree in Business Administration. Some are pursuing the two year Associate's Degree in accounting or secretarial services.

We are convinced that students who graduate from our business program will have excellent prospects for employment, both in church related work and in secular positions. Managers in and out of Christian service fields are looking for college graduates who live by Christian ethics—honesty, trustworthiness, dependability—and who are free from crippling addictions such as drugs and alcohol.

I rejoice that God uses Christians in business to witness and win souls, as well as to support the work of Christ. I always sought God's will for my life and peace about serving Him as a Christian businessman. My prayer for our students is that they will yield completely to God's will, whether as a missionary, minister or whatever His will may be for their lives. If we lose business majors who are called to be ministers or missionaries, I will greatly rejoice!

I continue to be personally blessed, even awe-struck, by the sweet spiritual atmosphere on campus. Having taught on a secular campus, the contrast is not difficult for me to describe. Everything here happens to the glory of God. There is a deep, sensitive concern for the spiritual welfare of students, without neglecting their training. Jesus comes first in everything and the Bible is taught as inerrant and authoritative.

Prospective business students, if you come to FWBBC, you will have to work hard. But it will be in an environment of praise, prayer, and fellowship. The preaching is outstanding and the music some of the best you will ever hear.

I still cannot believe I am part of it all. My wife, Patty, and I are happy that we have the opportunity to minister to the greatest group of youth in America. We are aware that we are the winners more than they!

The transition has not been easy. The teaching load is hard and time consuming. But the joy of serving Christ and our students is the greatest of my life. I am grateful our new program is off to such a good start. No matter what happens, my testimony is exemplified by one of my favorite hymns:

*All the way my Savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate'er befalls me,
Jesus doeth all things well. ■*





THE FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Special Christmas Gifts

With Christmas a few weeks away, most of us find ourselves without just the right gift for someone special—that person who seems to have everything he or she needs—that person who wants no more knickknacks, jewelry or the latest novelty item—that grandchild who really needs no more toys to disappear among a hundred others.

Endowment Gift

If you find yourself short of gift ideas, why not select something different, even unusual. For that person with everything, consider an endowment gift to the Lord's work in his or her honor. Such a gift keeps giving until the Lord comes. Imagine how honored that person will feel knowing the gift forever supports a missions ministry, college, children's home, state or national outreach, or his or her own church. Contact our office for a list of established endowment funds.

Annuity Gift

Surprise an aging parent, a relative or friend, a handicapped or disabled person, or a needy family with an annuity gift to provide a life-time monthly income. Their many thanksgivings will "redound to the glory of God."

Trust

Why not set up a college savings trust for your grandchildren? A trust to provide a life-time income for your spouse? A trust for your children to provide funds at some future date?

Or consider a trust to help meet health insurance and medical costs or living expenses for an aging parent or a pastor, church employee or missionary nearing retirement.

Don't forget your church and its outreach ministries. Make this the greatest Christmas ever for them. Give a special holiday gift toward a missions ministry or toward one of our colleges, camps, day schools, Bible institutes, your church, your state or national ministries.

Establish or add to an existing student scholarship endowment fund—ministerial, journalism, music, teacher training, missions,

or for the young people from your church or state.

Appreciated Property

Check out your tax liability for the year. You might want to make an outright gift of appreciated property or other asset and diminish your tax liability.

Incidentally, all of the suggested gifts for church-related ministries have tax advantages. Saving tax dollars through charitable giving in no way takes away from the thought behind the gift. It makes good stewardship sense to use what our government allows to benefit the Lord's work or loved ones. And, just think, your Christmas gift brings glory to God and it makes Christmas shopping enjoyable and fulfilling for you.

If you feel some of the above gift suggestions are beyond your present financial means, invite several families to join you in funding the gift.

Call your Free Will Baptist Foundation with your gift ideas. We can help you "wrap up" that very different and special gift for those special ones you love. Have a merry giving Christmas. ■



RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

It's Up to You In '92

By Billy Brown

Charles F. Kettering said, "We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there." God gives us three phases of life: the past from which we learn and draw inspiration; the present which tests our knowledge, stamina, persistence and faith; and the future which gives us hope. Many people never come to terms with the past. Some live in it, while others only dimly recall it.

Now is the time to wrap up 1991 and step into the adventure of 1992. I'm not a fatalist who sees the future predetermined. God gives us the privilege to be actively involved in our own destiny. Leonardo da Vinci wrote, "O Lord, thou givest us everything, at the price of an effort."

In some ways 1991 has been troubling, but as we stand on the threshold of a new year we glimpse the wonderful possibilities God has laid before us. We can choose to be preoccupied with past troubles, deficits, declining sales or criticism. Or we can see beyond these. We have chosen to look into the future and explore what's before us. Join us in the journey.

It will take people of dedication and commitment to seize the opportunities of 1992. One of our founding fathers, Benjamin Randall, was such a man. While traveling to Strafford, Vermont, to establish a Free Will Baptist church, the horse he rode broke its shoulder. Lesser men would have seen this as a sign to end the journey and turn back. But not Randall. He walked the rest of the way (110 miles), completed his journey and established the church. Because of that one trip, numerous churches were established in five states and Canada with thousands of people saved.

All progress begins with a decision of commitment. Seeing the possibilities, setting the goals and striving relentlessly until the possibilities are a reality. Remember, every attempt brings progress.

'Tis better to have tried in vain,
Sincerely striving for a goal,
Than to have lived upon the plain
An idle and timid soul.

'Tis better to have fought and spent
Your courage, missing all applause,
Than to have lived in smug content
And never ventured for a cause.

For he who tries and fails may be
The founder of a better day;
Though never his the victory,
From him shall others learn the way.
-Edgar A. Guest

What lies before us in 1992? Will it be good or bad? Will the hand of God rest on our ventures? Will we grasp the opportunities and succeed? Only God knows. God does not call us to know the future, only believe.

Francis Bacon wrote, "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds."

A Missouri church adopted this motto: "We believe that the power behind us is greater than the task ahead."

The prophet Isaiah said, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint: and to them that have no might he increaseth strength" (Isaiah 40:28-29).

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is to you."

The year 1992 marks the 30th year of Randall House Publications ministry. By God's grace we will continue ministering to Free Will Baptist Christian education needs until Jesus returns. We thank the churches who have given us the opportunity to minister to their needs for the past 29 years. We dedicate ourselves to meeting your future needs. ■



HOME MISSIONS

Is America Really a Mission Field?

By Roy Thomas

It is difficult for many Free Will Baptists to see America as a mission field. How could our nation be a mission field when it is the country which was founded on Christ, its laws and government were built on the Bible, the gospel has been preached here for 250 years, and it is a land which possesses over 300,000 churches? However, the United States is one of the most needy mission fields in the world and is becoming more so every day. A look at the sobering facts might help:

America is one of the largest unevangelized nations.

Of the 240 million people in America, 96 million have no religious affiliation, and 73 million are in non-gospel preaching churches. That totals 169 million unevangelized people, which is a greater number than the population of every country in the world except five—China, India, USSR, Indonesia and Brazil.

In the year 1900 there were 27 churches for every 10,000 people in the United States. However, in 1990 there were 12 churches for every 10,000 people. Considering the churches that die and the rapid growth rate of the country, it will take 100,000 newly planted churches in the next 10 years to maintain this ration.

America needs more churches because 80% of its churches do not preach the gospel.

Four out of five, or 80% of American churches are Catholics, cults and modernists. This means that in the ratio of 12 churches ministering to every 10,000 souls, only two of those churches preach enough gospel to tell people how to find salvation through Jesus Christ. Gospel preaching churches must be started to reach the vast unevangelized population.

Most of America's Bible preaching churches are not located where the people live.

The majority of America's gospel-preaching churches are located in the Bible Belt in the

southeastern states. Most Free Will Baptist churches are also located there in rural areas and small towns. Yet, 80% of the nation's population live in 50 large cities outside the Bible Belt. Free Will Baptists have less than 100 churches in these 50 cities. If Free Will Baptists are to be effective in preaching the gospel to America, we must start churches in the mushrooming cities of our country.

America has become a foreign mission field at our doorsteps.

With the rapid acceleration of ethnic emigrants and refugees to the United States, millions of unevangelized people who speak different languages and have diverse cultures make up great segments of American society and the majority population of some cities. Millions of these have never heard the plan of salvation, and most American churches are not equipped to give them the gospel. A new crop of church planters and pastors—many with a knowledge of ethnic languages and cultures—will be needed in order to reach these millions with the gospel.

Free Will Baptists have a history saturated with dedicated church planters—men with pioneer spirits and a love for souls who have given us most of our existing churches. However, in the 1990's we need a new crop of men with the same pioneer spirit and dedication to take the gospel to America.

The Free Will Baptist denomination has set a goal to "Double in a Decade." However, unless we have a host of new churches started by dedicated church planters who are trained and prepared to minister to a diverse and complex society, we may deteriorate and shrivel in the 1990's decade. We must pray for dedicated and qualified laborers to start at least 250 churches in this decade. Yes, America is truly a needy mission field. Let's take the gospel to it. ■



Robert E. Picirilli

Crossing the Jordan

Joshua 3, 4

The conquest of Canaan begins. The land of promise will become Israel's. But there is an apparently insurmountable obstacle. More than a million people have to get across the overflowing Jordan, probably 12 feet deep at this spring harvest time in April (3:15; 4:19). Add to this an emotional need: the people aren't fully unified with confidence in Joshua. How can he possibly measure up to Moses?

A miracle is needed. A miracle is provided.

The account is introduced by a description of preparations (3:1-6), including the instructions given the people. "You have not passed this way before" (v. 4) probably refers more to the miraculous means of their passage than to the physical direction. Most who had crossed the Red Sea were dead, and these have only heard what God did then.

They must therefore consecrate themselves for the mighty work Jehovah will perform in their sight (v. 5). Seeing God at work is like seeing Him in person, and we dare not risk that in our everyday carelessness. Indeed, He doesn't work when people are indifferent.

Keil and Delitzsch suggest that the account itself can be divided into three parts: (1) the commencement of the crossing (3:7-17); (2) its further progress (4:1-14); (3) its completion (4: 15-24).

In each of these sections God's command is reiterated, Joshua relates the command to the people, and the command is carried out. This emphasizes both that God was the one at work, and that obedience

is the only part Joshua and the people played. It is always so in doing God's work.

The events can be briefly summarized. The Levitical priests (3:3), bearing the ark, moved out a thousand yards (3:4) in front of the people into the water (3:8, 15). (Does God always ask us to take a step or two in the water before He rolls it back?)

After the waters stopped, they took their place in the river bed, where they stayed, with the ark, until the crossing was completed (3:17).

Joshua selected 12 men, one to represent each of the tribal families of Israel (3:12; 4:2). They took from the river bed, where the priests stood with the ark, 12 large stones (4:3) to take to the place of their first night's camp at Gilgal (4:8, 20). With these Joshua made a pile that would serve as a memorial of what God did (4:6-8, 20-24). He made a similar pile in the bed of the river (4:9).

The crossing was completed, consuming probably the better part of a day (if we assume a column, say, a half-mile wide). The day was the 10th of the first month of the Jewish year, the very same as the day they had made ready to leave Egypt a generation earlier (Exodus 12:3). (Passover would, ever after, take on added meaning.)

When all were across, the priests bore the ark out last. The Jordan returned to its swollen rush to the Dead Sea, only the stones left in the river bed bearing witness to the mighty miracle that had taken place (4:18).

There are many lessons here:

(1) What does it take for God to work? Willingness for Him to get the credit: the ark, and nothing else, was clearly the means of dividing the Jordan. People who obey. A leader who will give God's word. Holiness of heart. Faith.

(2) God accredited His chosen leader. If the people doubted before, they could not now question that Joshua had truly replaced Moses (3:7). From that point on, they had reverence and respect—not to mention fear—for Joshua (4:14).

(3) Memorials are important. The whole history of Israel tells us that. The Lord gave them all sorts of things to serve such a purpose. In Jewish homes today at Passover time, for example, the children are prepared to ask what the elements mean, and to answer with the story.

The memorial pile of stones in Gilgal would for the future serve to prompt such a question: "What do these stones mean?"

And others would answer, "That God divided the Jordan for the ark of the covenant and our fathers to pass through when they took possession of the land He swore to give to Abraham's seed."

We mustn't take lightly such memorials. We need reminding of God's redemptive acts, and so of our history. For us there is baptism, the Lord's supper, the washing of saints' feet. When we observe those, we too ought to ask, "What do these things mean?" ■



Thomas Marberry

God in the Pits

Mark A. Ritchie

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990, 266 pp., paperback, \$9.95)

This book is more than just the testimony of a Christian who makes his living dealing in commodities which are traded on the Chicago Board of Trade. It is an insightful analysis of what it means to be a Christian in a complex world.

Mark Ritchie grew up in a Christian home; his parents demonstrated a degree of commitment to Christ which he did not understand or appreciate until he became an adult. His father wanted to be a missionary, but by the time he finished his theological training he was too old.

Instead he took a job as a professor of engineering in Kabul, Afghanistan, so that he could enter a Mus-

lim country which is one of the most resistant to the Christian faith. Mark was privileged to grow up in a world where he saw first-hand the difference that Christ makes in a country and in the lives of its people.

Yet, Mark did not fully embrace the faith that his parents espoused all their lives. In this volume, he outlines something of his own pilgrimage from skepticism to authentic Christian faith. He describes the poverty of his childhood, the difficulties of his young adulthood, and the terrible strains of raising a family and obtaining an education at the same time.

The last portion of the book analyzes his life as a commodities trader

who combines a successful business career with active church involvement and with a growing concern for the poor people of earth. He also looks at the lives of the men and women with whom he works and how they handle the stresses of a job where hundreds of thousands of dollars can be made or lost in minutes.

This is an enjoyable, well-written book; it challenges us to examine our faith. It asks us to examine our beliefs and practices in light of the Bible and in light of overwhelming needs in our world. It shakes us up at times, but sometimes we need to be shaken up. ■

BEYOND BELIEF



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January-December 1991

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Victory FWB Church, East Wenatchee	February, 16

Ministers

Blanchard, Len	March, 16
Collins, William (Bill)	January, 14
Herndon, Richard	August, 19
Mooneyham, W. Stanley	August, 18
Oliver, William Henry	August, 16
Pixley, Rupert E.	July, 16
Rolen, Lonnie	January, 15
Staten, Ralph	May, 18
Stevens, Perry Earl	July, 16

Laymen

Bevan, Mischa	May, 19
Bowman, Jim	September, 19

State Ministries

Alabama	March, 15
Arizona	July, 17
Arkansas	November, 17
California	August, 17; November, 18
Canada	September, 19
Florida	February, 14
Georgia	February, 16
Illinois	June, 17
Indiana	September, 18
Kentucky	September, 17
Maryland	September, 17
Michigan	August, 17

Mississippi	February, 16
Missouri	September, 18
New Mexico	July, 17
North Carolina	September, 17
Northwest	September, 20
Ohio	September, 19
Oklahoma	January, 16; April, 21; November, 18
South Carolina	May, 18
Tennessee	February, 15; November, 17
Texas	September, 20
Virginia	October, 22
West Virginia	September, 18

National Ministries

All-Boards Conference Time of Unity	February, 15
Bible College Graduates 28 in Commencement Exercises	August, 20
Bible College Honors Dr. and Mrs. Thigpen	August, 19
Bible College Inaugurates Fourth President	June, 17
Bible College Receives \$435,000 to Repay Debt	June, 18
Bible College to Offer New Business Program	April, 20
Bible College to Offer Student Aid Programs	January, 16
Calling All Singers, Instrumentalists	April, 20; May 19
Capital Stewardship Campaign Gets Underway	November, 16
Convention Air Fares	June, 20
Convention Steering Committee Meets in Indiana	November, 19
Curriculum Writers Attend Training Session	June, 18
Discount Air Fares to National Convention Available	April, 21; May 20
Flames Win FWBBC Tournament	March, 17
Four FWB Colleges to Compete in Basketball Tournament	June, 20
FWB Book Dealers Study Trends for Next Decade	June, 19
FWB Layman Re-Designs Magazine	January, 14
FWBBC Christmas Drive Raises \$197,000	May, 19
FWBBC Enrollment Up 11 Percent	November, 18
FWBBC Sets Bible Conference	February, 15
FWBBC Sets \$150,000 Christmas Goal	December, 15
FWBBC Sets Summer Camp '91	March, 16
Geneva Trotter Retires from National Offices	June, 19

Graduate Course to Feature Preaching on Prophecy	May, 20
Hymn Book to Cost More	December, 15
Leadership Conference to Meet in Nashville	November, 17
Master's Men Set Annual Conference	April, 21
National Offices to Relocate	February, 14
Small Church Computer System Ready	February, 16
13 States Represented at FWBBC's "Welcome Days"	March, 17

Other

Côte d'Ivoire	
Doropo Hospital Burns	August, 17
Mexico	
Mexican Association Meets	October, 21
Missouri	
Every Home Crusade	April, 19
North Carolina	
SEC Enrollment	November, 18
SEC Fall Opening	July, 17
SEC Missionary Conference	October, 22
SEC Spring Conference	January, 17
Youth Conference	April, 20
Oklahoma	
Frontline Launches Missions Study Series	August, 19
Frontline to Debut	January, 17
Tennessee	
Children's Home Opens Emergency Shelter	June, 20
FWB Christian Day Schools	April, 20
60 Churches/Crusade	March, 16

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RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY NEWS

Band Ignores ACLU Threat

DENTON, TX (EP)—Despite threatened legal action from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a Denton, Texas, high school marching band performed a halftime show that featured religious songs.

The ACLU sought an injunction against the show, but because the group decided against seeking an emergency injunction, no court decision was reached by the time of the halftime show, which featured such pieces as "The Doxology" and a dixieland version of "Send the Light."

Paul Thetford, a board member of the Denton ACLU, said, "It seems to the ACLU board members here that what the band director was doing was a clear violation of the separation of church and state." Dallas ACLU Executive Director Joe Cook agreed, saying, "It looks like a very gross violation from all appearances."

But band director Don Hanna said the halftime show is hardly an evangelistic outreach. "I've never been questioned about the music I've played before," he said. "If I played Rimsky-Korsakov, no one ever suggested I was promoting Communism."

And while the school may face a suit over allowing the band to play, it could also have faced legal action if it canceled the show. The Rutherford Institute, a civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious freedom, was prepared to offer free legal representation to students who wanted to sue for their right to play religious music.

"What the ACLU seeks is not compliance with the Constitution, but a violation of it," explained Kelly Shackleford, executive director of the Rutherford Institute of Texas. "The Constitution requires government neutrality toward religion, and that means school officials must treat religious songs just like they would treat any other songs the band might play. To do as the ACLU advises would constitute government hostility to religion and that itself is unconstitutional."

Shackleford pointed out that one of the songs the ACLU objects to, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," was sung in German beer halls before Martin Luther borrowed the tune in the 16th century for a Christian hymn.

"By the ACLU's logic, it would be illegal for the Dallas symphony to perform Handel's *Messiah* in a public building," Shackleford added. "It's attempted censorship of religious art. If a band can't play religious music, can students study Renaissance art?"

Boy Scouts Won't Allow Gays

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (EP)—The Boy Scouts of America said they won't allow homosexual members or leaders, despite a ruling of the San Francisco Board of Education which bans Scout programs during school hours.

"Homosexuality is inconsistent with the

Scout oath of being morally straight," explained spokesperson Blake Lewis.

The San Francisco school board's ruling came just days after a committee of the Oakland School Board canceled its in-school scout program because of the ban on homosexuals.

In a related development, a California court has ordered the Boy Scouts of America to turn over confidential national records on sexual abuse cases to an attorney for a boy who was allegedly molested by an adult scoutmaster in California.

The boy's lawyer believes the records will show reports of at least 416 molestation cases nationwide; he hopes to use this evidence to show that the Boy Scouts are negligent in failing to protect Scouts from homosexual molestation. An attorney for the Scouts says the organization does what it can to prevent molestation, but lack of funds make it impossible to do in-depth background checks on all volunteers.

Messianic Jews Targets of 'Reverse Anti-Semitism'

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (EP)—Criticism from the Jewish community over a recent national conference for Messianic Jews has Messianics crying foul.

Articles decrying the event and its leaders appeared in issues of the *American Jewish World*, a Jewish newspaper, weeks before it was held in Minneapolis. Of particular concern to many Jewish leaders: a mass mailing by conference leaders inviting thousands of Jews to attend the conference. One rabbi, in a piece printed the first day of the conference in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, accused conference organizers of treading on the rights of Jews to religious freedom.

Quite the contrary, says Ed Rothman, senior pastor of Seed of Abraham, a Messianic congregation in Minneapolis which sponsored the conference. It is Messianic Jews whose religious freedom rights have been violated.

In a rebuttal, Rothman wrote, "One of the inalienable rights guaranteed to us as citizens of this country is to express our beliefs freely to anyone who cares to listen. In today's world of mass mailings to target markets I am surprised that we are portrayed as violating the religious freedom of others by sending them an invitation to investigate what many Jews have found to be 'the spiritual truth.'"

Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, who heads Jews for Judaism, a group meant to counter the evangelistic efforts of Jews for Jesus, contends that Messianic Jews have adopted many of the forms of Judaism. He told *AJW*, "[When they] insert any reference to Jesus as the Lord . . . this is not Judaism. This is a missionary cult."

For decades the Jewish community has

debated the question: "Who is a Jew?" Discussion on this topic has been contentious at times, violent at others.

Israel's Supreme Court recently held that the Jewish "law of return" does not apply to Jews who accept Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah. The Court held that such persons are no longer Jews, but are Christians. The decision was decried by Messianic Jews in Israel and the U.S. It has been pointed out that agnostic Jews, atheistic Jews, and Jews who have taken on other religious beliefs are still honored as Jews under the law of return.

Americans Think Boycotts Effective

GLENDAL, CA (EP)—Boycotts, both real and threatened, have been making the news with increasing frequency in recent years. But do they make a difference?

Most Americans seem to think they can. A survey conducted by the Barna Research Group showed that about two-thirds of American adults feel boycotts can accomplish something. In addition, 14 percent of the 1,060 respondents claimed that in the last month, they had "avoided buying a specific product or brand because it is being boycotted by a group or cause" they support.

Boycotts appear somewhat more likely to draw participation from younger adults and people with a higher level of formal education. Among respondents age 18 to 26, 19 percent claimed to have participated in a boycott recently, compared to 14 percent of the 27- to 64-year-olds, and only nine percent of the respondents over the age of 64. Among people without any college education, 10 percent had participated in a boycott, compared to 18 percent of the respondents who had attended or graduated from college. Blacks were slightly less likely to have participated in a boycott (nine percent) than were whites or hispanics.

Although Protestant groups have made the news recently with boycott efforts related to morality issues (such as abortion or the content of television programs), Protestants were somewhat less likely than Catholics and people of other religious backgrounds or no religious background to be involved in a boycott, or to believe that boycotts can be effective.

George Barna, president of the Barna Research Group, noted that 25 million Americans were projected as having boycotted something in the month preceding the survey. "With the markets for most consumer goods becoming increasingly fragmented, and market share levels dropping in many product categories, boycotts may have significant effect on the boycotted product or company. With 25 million people involved, losing sales from even a small proportion of this group could have a devastating impact on a company." ■

Taming the Future Tense

Does anybody live in the present? Most of us don't. As a magazine editor, I'm on a year-ahead calendar and usually work months in advance on "current" issues.

For instance, I celebrate Easter on Ground Hog Day, Fourth of July during the Indy 500, Thanksgiving during August dog days and write Christmas editorials before the World Series. Don't laugh, you're just as bad.

If your kids are teenagers, you're already living in the college-tuition mode. Or you're looking seven years down the road to car payment #72. Maybe you're daydreaming about mortgage payment #360 decades from now.

We all do it. We live in the future tense. But we work in the present tense. We punch in on real time at 7:00 a.m. *today*.

Some people refuse to face today and retreat into tomorrow for a slice of that sweet by and by instead of the inconvenient here and now. While we need to plan ahead, total projection of our interests into some future tomorrow steals the vitality from today.

Even businesses get so disturbed over what might happen tomorrow that they make some amusing decisions today. Here's what I mean.

The *Queen Mary*, that famous ocean liner-turned-hotel in Long Beach, California, has taken out a \$1 million insurance policy with Lloyd's of London to cover lawsuits filed against the liner by guests claiming bodily injury inflicted by ghosts or paranormal activity.

When asked to explain such action, a *Queen Mary* spokesman said, "It's always good to take out insurance *before* those things happen." Hmmm.

Queen Mary ghosts notwithstanding, just what are we doing about our attitudes today? If we're total misfits now and aren't trying to get a handle on our weaknesses, arriving at the year

2010 will only make us two decades worse and less willing to change.

If anyone in American history had a forward look, it was that printer-statesman Benjamin Franklin. His writing and wit buoyed the young nation and prodded the 13 colonies into tomorrow.

But Franklin practiced living *today*. He believed in self-examination. He said, "I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined."

For years Mr. Franklin carried a little book he made for himself in which each day he checked off his faults on a red-ruled page. He made a list of 13 virtues that he measured his life by. His formidable list included temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquility, chastity and humility.

He started out with 12 but added humility after his Quaker friend informed him that he was proud, overbearing and insolent. So much for the unexamined life.

While on a diplomatic mission in Paris in 1787 at age 81, Franklin wrote, "... I always carried my little book with me." The life that counts tomorrow must count today also.

There's no need for us to arrive at tomorrow hauling yesterday's bias and baggage. If we don't at least try to change today, we forfeit our right to influence tomorrow. It happened to a take-charge businessman.

Evangelist John Haggai tells about an American industrialist who wouldn't allow a black man to sit in his church pew. A deacon pleaded on the grounds of philanthropy, to no avail. He then argued on the basis of the black man's godliness. Again, no change in attitude. The black man sat on a folding chair in the vestibule.

Later in the week, the industrialist asked to be introduced to the Kenyan



Jack Williams

centi-millionaire who had just moved to town. His composure crumbled when he discovered the man from Nairobi was the very person he had refused a seat in church the previous Sunday.

That was a case when refusing to correct today's wrongs shuts the door on tomorrow's possibilities. After all, tomorrow is nothing more than today a year from now.

While the Bible speaks often of the "Blessed hope" of the second coming and promises that ultimate justice will be meted out at some future time, it speaks most frequently about the present tense.

Jesus said, "Ye *are* the salt of the earth," a present activity. He commanded, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." Again, quite present actions.

Jesus even taught us to pray in the *now*, "Give us *this day* our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, *as we forgive* our debtors. And lead us not into temptation...." All these actions are painfully now.

Paul advised the church at Thessalonica: "... warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." Again, every sentence pointing toward how to live today.

There was a reason why Paul could tell Timothy, "I am now ready to be offered," and "there is laid up for me a crown...." That reason was 30 years of "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Make plans to live another 100 years. But live today as if you would die before sundown. ■

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GOAL: \$150,000

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