

JANUARY 1994

CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS

REACHING THE NATIONS



...The Together Way.

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Built to Last

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Financially Reformed

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Anonymous Sinner

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Why Brethren Disagree

.....
Ready for Tomorrow?

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JANUARY 1994

VOLUME 41, NO. 1

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Melvin Worthington

Push the Plan

January 1, 1994, holds special significance for Free Will Baptists. That's the day the Together Way Plan will be implemented. The Together Way Plan recognizes the breadth and balance required for a full-service stewardship program.

We now have in place a stewardship program which reflects the practices that characterize us.

Origin

Delegates to the 1990 national convention instructed the Budget Committee to address the imbalance in funding the Executive Office. The committee recommended that the 1991 Leadership Conference be a "Stewardship Summit."

Stewardship Summit attendees recommended a Stewardship Committee to work with the Budget Committee in formulating an equitable plan for funding denominational agencies. The two groups met twice during 1992 to develop a clear, comprehensive plan.

That's how the Together Way Plan began. This Free Will Baptist plan reflects our commitment to God's plan of support for His work—tithes and offerings. The Together Way Plan from its conception took into account the unique diversity which characterizes Free Will Baptists in the area of giving.

Objective

The plan calls for each church to equitably support all denominational ministries. This support should include local church, district, state and national ministries. While some ministries are more appealing than others, all are important and contribute to the well-being of the denomination.

Some give to national ministries and neglect all others. Some give disproportionately to district ministries and discount their responsibility to state and national ministries. Some give only to missions or education.

Our Church Covenant calls for support of all denominational ministries. We have not fulfilled our covenant promise until we give equitable support to all ministries.

Options

We have always given two kinds of gifts—designated and cooperative. The Together Way Plan incorporates both methods. Many use both methods in providing denominational support. Some use only one. The Together Way Plan does not exalt one method above the other but recognizes that we need the flexibility to choose one or a combination of both.

Opportunities

This plan provides a vehicle to assist us in giving equitably. The plan focuses on the equitable support for all. All deserve financial support.

The Together Way Plan provides opportunity for us to reevaluate. Is our support balanced, broad and blended? Do we give proportionately? Do we need to sharpen our focus? Let's take inventory regarding the

way we respond to denominational stewardship.

Obligations

This plan calls for every church to give 10% of its general income to denominational ministries. The church can choose to give designated or cooperatively. An equitable portion of this 10% should be given to district, state and national ministries.

In addition to 10% of the general offerings, the Together Way Plan calls for designated offerings for denominational agencies four times a year—April, September, November and December.

The plan calls for state associations to work toward the goal of retaining not more than 50% of this general giving for district and state ministries combined, and sending 50% to national ministries.

Observations

The Together Way Plan is a simple, scriptural, systematic plan. It provides the flexibility and focus which we need to move into the next century. This plan also includes a five-year program of stewardship education.

Every Free Will Baptist can try the plan. Churches, districts and states can accept and adopt the plan. The plan calls for individual and institutional response.

Let's talk about the plan. Talk positively. Push it. This is a Free Will Baptist plan designed and developed by Free Will Baptists.

The success of the Together Way Plan is in our hands. Let's accept it, adopt it, articulate it and apply it. We have the plan. We need your prayerful and personal participation. Join me in pushing the plan as we enter a new era of denominational stewardship. ■

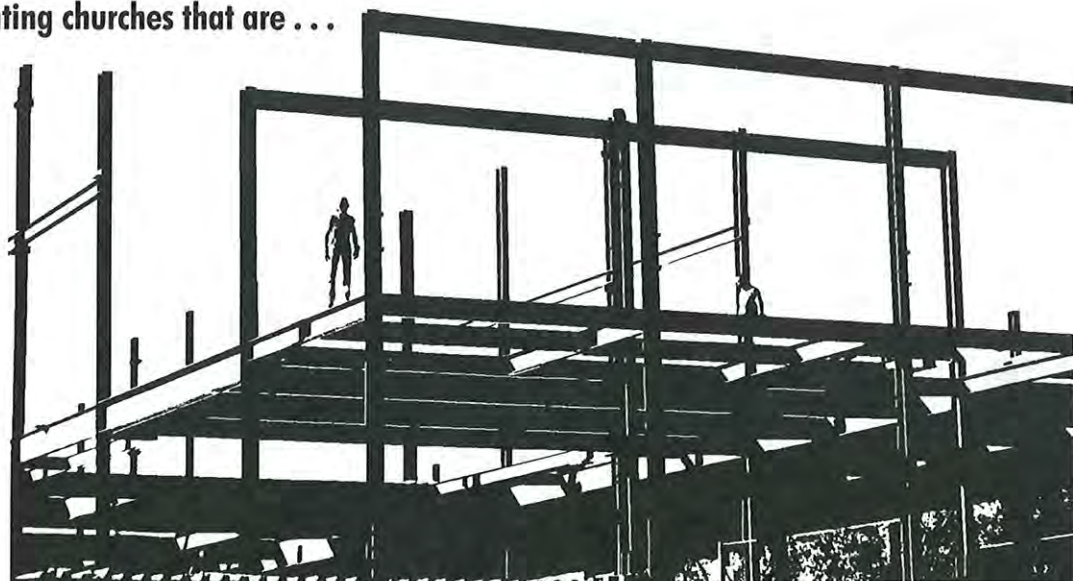
The Secretary's Schedule

- Jan. 11-14 Convention Planning Trip
Little Rock, Ark.
- Jan. 15 First Louisiana District Association
Pineville, La.
- Jan. 16 Victory FWB Church
Pineville, La.
- Jan. 20-22 Ohio Ministers Retreat
Big Prairie, Ohio
- Jan. 25-28 Religious Conference Management Assoc.
Birmingham, Ala.

This article is about planting churches that are . . .

Built to Last!

By Don Guthrie



The best way to win people to Christ and build the kingdom of God is through church planting. We live in a world where the media, parachurch ministries and evangelism education is greater than it has ever been. These are all great tools, but nothing is more effective than the local church in meeting spiritual needs of people. This has been true throughout the history of the Christian church and it is especially true for the time in which we live.

God allowed me to plant two strong churches. It is a blessing for me to know that regardless of how people judge my success in the ministry, good or bad, there are two churches planted that will win souls and build the kingdom long after Don Guthrie is forgotten. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, "I will build my church." Most likely, He was talking about the universal church, but He knew that the universal church would be made up of local churches.

I cannot stress enough the need to plant churches. All believers and all established churches must in some way respond to the call of the gospel and be involved in church planting. The local church is called to move outside the walls of the building and take the gospel to where the people live. In these days when the trend is to customize the gospel of Jesus, choosing parts that fit comfortably and removing parts that pinch or challenge, we need more churches planted that will

present the gospel biblically clear.

The People

Have you asked yourself the question, "What can I give God that He does not have?" Some may say, "I will give Him my money!" God made diamonds, gold, silver and all things that we consider to have value. Others may say, "My talent is singing or preaching." But God has choirs of angels and many great preachers who are right there beside Him. Others may say, "I will give God my time." Yes, again, you guessed it—God is time.

All these things are right to give God, but the thing we can give Him that He desires most is souls. Souls are the only appreciable assets we can take to heaven. In planting a church a heart for souls must be the motive. This is the motive that pleases God.

Beware of the two killers in planting a church—liberalism and legalism. These two false teachings are deadly in church planting. Both distort the view of Jesus, and this defeats the whole purpose of the gospel. Let me explain.

Liberalism is a view of compromise, taking away the truth about Jesus and making Him less than who He is (His Deity) or taking away from His purpose of salvation for the world. I am amazed at what people do to avoid the truth, not realizing that the freedom they seek only comes in the truth of Jesus. Liberal-

ism presents no picture of Jesus, therefore, people cannot see the truth. Liberalism kills the purpose of church planting.

Legalism, on the other hand, is the opposite of liberalism. Legalism takes the picture of Jesus and adds extra rules, traditions and opinions in place of a clear biblical view of Jesus. If you casually read the Gospels, you will see that Jesus had problems with the legalists of His day.

Legalists put much emphasis on the outside of a person, while Jesus puts emphasis on the inside of a person. It is a sad tale on the preachers and Christians of our day when we worry more about a woman wearing pants to church or if a guy's hair is over his collar. This may be perceived as being spiritual by some, but make no mistake about it, it is plain legalism. Remember: legalism kills the purpose of church planting.

This leads me back to my point. If we have a heart for souls and care about people, and care where they spend eternity, we must present a true, honest and biblical view of Jesus. As we present this view of Christ, we must trust the Holy Spirit to do His work in those who believe and in the life of the church that is planted. Remember, "We build churches by building people."

The Planter

The planter is the person or persons God has called to a specific area to begin a new church. These

next two sections give some of the how-to's in church planting. This section will give some key words that relate and define them.

Colling

The church planter must know for sure, without one doubt, that he is called to begin a church in a specific area to a specific people. This call comes from understanding the Great Commission and knowing for sure that the Holy Spirit is directing you in this area. This must be nailed down first. There will be times that all you have to go on is knowing that God has placed you where you are.

Accountability

There is not a Christian alive who is not accountable. The church planter is accountable to God, but he should also be accountable to a group of mature Christian leaders. This can be a mission board, a church or another organization. Accountability is not a bad word. It provides us not only a safeguard but gives us encouragement.

Action Plan

Every church planter must have an action plan of organization to assimilate those who would come into the kingdom of God.

Mission Statement

The mission statement lets people know your mission and keeps you focused on your mission. Every good mission statement should have three components: our worship of God, our commitment to helping people grow in Christ, and our goal of world evangelism.

Target Group or City

This is important because it does matter where we plant churches. I don't hold the opinion that we should put a Free Will Baptist church in every city or town. That would be nice, but it is not possible financially, nor do we have the organization to support it. I believe that we should concentrate our resources in the metropolitan areas. Why? Because this is where the people are, and where the

people are is where we can do the most good for the kingdom of God.

Location

The church planter should locate his church with these objectives in mind: visibility and accessibility. Believe it or not, accessibility is more important than visibility. There is great benefit in being visible, but if people can't get to you they won't come.

Building

Let me make it clear that the church is not the building. The church is the people. However, the building is a great tool and should be built as a tool for worship, education and an outreach station.

Finance

This is a tough word to define in the context of church planting. There are many ways to raise support for a new church, and the church planter must choose the one that is best for his situation. But a word of caution must be noted here—the church planter must follow biblical guidelines in financing the new church.

The church planter should work hard to get the new church to self-supporting status as soon as possible. This is done through biblical teaching on tithes and offerings, plus every new church should put in its budget a plan to give outside their local church from day one to other ministries. This not only pleases God, this generosity is what God blesses.

The Purpose

Prayer

Prayer is the contact glue that keeps the church planter, the new church and the mission of the new church in the will of God.

Attitude

Attitude is our visible witness to those people on the inside and those people outside our church. A great attitude is vital to all involved.

Commitment

Anything of value requires commitment. Certainly God's church is

worth committing to it.

Leadership

Everything rises and falls on leadership. Leadership is influence.

Integrity

Integrity is not what we do so much as who we are. And who we are, in turn, determines what we do.

Lay Ministry

The biblical goal of every church planter and pastor must be to get believers involved in ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12).

Evangelism

The Bible teaches us that all we do must have the goal to evangelize people with the gospel.

Discipleship

Discipleship is building people in Christ with the Word of God to do the work of God.

Preaching

As we are told in Romans 10 to preach the gospel, we must never take this lightly. God is serious about preachers preaching the Word of God, nothing more, nothing less. There are awesome rewards for the body of Christ if biblical preaching is faithfully done.

Worship

Worship is bringing people to the point of knowing God in a more intimate relationship.

Giving

The measure of a great church is not what it takes in, but what it gives away.

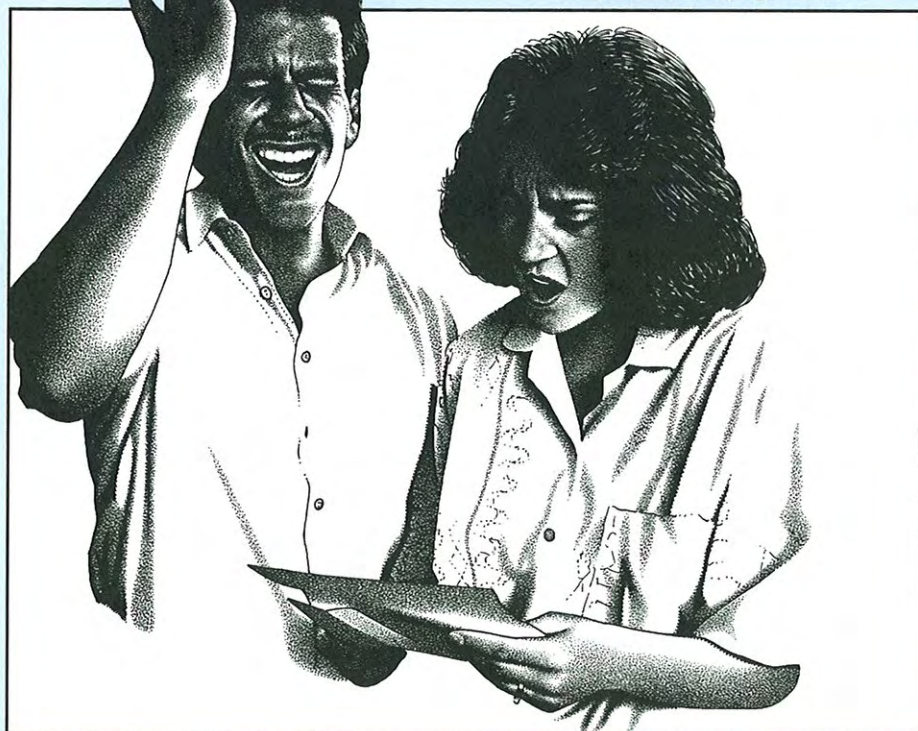
Vision

This should have been first, but I wanted to say it near the last so it would not be forgotten. Vision deals with our potential. Most people can never do anything great for the Lord because they have a small vision. We serve a God who is bigger than

(Continued on page 7)

Financially Reformed and Paid For It!

By Dan Steigman



There was a time in my life when I believed that any and all obstacles could be overcome if you threw enough money at them or at least enough credit cards. After all, if you need a new washing machine, you need it. So, like many modern day Americans, I put it on plastic and waited for another day to pay the small monthly bill that would be coming my way.

Time went on, family grew, expenses got higher, cars got too small, houses got too small, last washing machine broke, furniture was trashed, cars broke down, teenagers got in wrecks, etc., etc., etc.

Now that small monthly payment was more like a huge billowing thunder cloud that easily could destroy me in one miscalculation. I came to the real knowledge of my situation

when my bank statements reached almost an inch thick from the enclosed canceled checks.

What Went Wrong?

You might say, "Why this horrible confession?" It's really quite simple. During the years all this was occurring, I was working in a ministry outside the pastorate. Today, however, I am back where I belong and trying hard to do the Lord's work. However, this burden of the past is affecting the here and now.

I believe that although we are well reformed, the lesson will need to be learned by other Christian families. Pastors, especially, need to beware of the credit pinch for one very important reason. You serve only one master well. When you must divide your time between the self-imposed

burden of debt and the Lord's work, you can not do God's work as well as you should.

The Bible says in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." It's really quite simple. You serve credit or you serve God when your credit spending gets out of control.

In personal defense, our debt came from mostly non-foolish spending. Illnesses where insurance did not cover enough of the bill were a major problem. Also, we ran a home for drug-exposed infants and started and remained undercapitalized for the entire life of the home. It took everything we could muster to do the work but the hoped for income never appeared. How you get into debt matters little once you're there. What matters is the cure.

Credit Card Rules

Biblically, there are many verses that speak about debt. Proverbs 15:16 says "Better [is] little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." It would be better to live within your means than to live with the trouble that too much credit can give you.

I knew a man some years ago who got into deep debt. Troubles hit, jobs failed, and financial ruin was on the brink. He was making it, barely, until those that he owed money began calling his employer. Within a short time, he had no job, no money, no credit and no self-respect. Trouble comes when Christians get their debt outside their ability to repay.

What are some good rules? Don't

use credit cards unless you can repay the debt with the next bill that you receive. Some new credit cards out now give credit toward a new car when they are used. If you use these and pay the bill each month, your car will cost you less and you will not be hurt by credit.

Don't let credit card's small individual monthly payments fool you. On a credit card with a \$4,000 limit, if you pay that at the minimum payment each month of roughly \$79, you will be paying \$56 in interest and actually decreasing your principal by only \$20 per month. You will never repay the card!

Many little individual credit cards add up to a huge amount of debt. I know one man who, when he takes all his credit cards and adds up the monthly payments, has to work one full-time second job just to pay the payments on those individual little cards. Credit is deceiving and can destroy your peace.

Credit Card Cure

I believe that the cure for credit card Christians comes when they realize that their financial condition is ruining their witness. When you try to get a consolidation loan and the banker laughs and asks how you can make it each month, or when you try to move to a new community and your credit report shows late payments and problems, you are bringing shame on the Lord.

God didn't give us spiritual freedom so that we might once again enslave ourselves to the tools of the enemy.

Do we really need credit? Face it, most of us can't go out and buy a house or a car without some credit. Most of us can't reach the place where we have 25% of one year's income in savings. Credit becomes necessary in these instances.

It is possible, though, to purchase items with terms such as 90 days same as cash that allow some benefits of credit without the interest. You can also wait until you save the money, but that is not the usual American way.

You can sell reusable items in your garage, but that takes time and effort. You can buy one item on credit, pay it off, and then buy another. This

is only recommended if you can absolutely control your spending.

Higher Call

In reality, true credit addicts must free themselves of the addiction just as an alcoholic or drug user would. They have to give it up. This may mean reaching such a point of financial ruin that you can no longer exist and are forced to give it up because there is no more room on all your cards. Or it may be because you simply decide that enough is enough and the day of reckoning has come.

It may be that you receive a higher calling, and your want-to is changed by God. This is how I was freed from the credit crunch.

In general, credit is not bad. What is bad is irresponsible use and abuse of it. Credit is just as addicting as gambling, just as hard to quit as drinking or drugs and just as respon-

sible for the destruction of the American home as any other addiction.

If we, as modern day Christians, are to survive the credit world, we must settle within ourselves how much is too much and by the grace of God, refuse to pass that point. Then we will be reformed and on our way back to financial security and self-respect. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Dan Steigman pastors Liberty Free Will Baptist Church in Anderson, California.

(Built to Last... from page 5)

life itself, and He sees the big picture. Because we serve a big God, we are free to have big vision. We won't go far without it.

Change

I believe that we need to change, because God never changes. If I stay in step with God, change is necessary. Left to myself, I change the wrong way almost without notice. Therefore, the change I speak of is changing to be in step with God. Our message never changes, but our methods must change to reach our potential.

Closing

My purpose in this article is to share my conviction that the best way to win people to Christ and to build the kingdom of God is to plant churches that are built to last. I know that I don't know all there is to know about this subject, but from the heart I have shared what I have learned and how God has led me. If and when God leads you to be involved in planting a church, please say

"yes" to His call. While church people think about how to get people into the church, kingdom people think about how to get the church into a world that desperately needs a biblically clear look at Jesus! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Don Guthrie pastors Collin Creek Free Will Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, which he started in the fall of 1989 and led to self-supporting status in August 1993. He also planted the Harrah Free Will Baptist Church in Harrah, Oklahoma. The Harrah church went self-supporting in June 1987. Guthrie earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College and the Master of Ministry degree from Southern Nazarene University. He is a member of the Texas Executive Board, the Hillsdale Board of Trustees, and was elected to the national Home Missions Board in 1993.

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Why Brethren Disagree

By Jeff Crabtree

Good people disagree in many areas, including biblical matters. It is possible for two equally dedicated believers to be totally opposite in understanding. Let's examine eight Bible reasons why we misunderstand and disagree with each other.

Presence of Unbelief

Much disturbance has been caused in the church by unsaved individuals. When unbelievers try to comprehend God's Word and control God's work, chaos follows because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

Understanding the Word and work of God comes only from the indwelt Holy Spirit, an indwelling that only believers enjoy (Rom. 8:9-11). Common understanding comes easiest when disputing parties are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Individual Spiritual Maturity

Though hard to measure, individual spiritual maturity is an important factor to consider in any disagreement. This was evident in the Corinthian church where disagreement was a symptom of spiritual immaturity (I Cor. 3:1-2). Spiritual maturity or a lack thereof, usually determines the level of disagreement between fellow-believers.

Personal Backsliding

This is close in meaning to the previous paragraph. However, the difference is important. Here the believer has stopped growing and lost some understanding that he previously possessed. In the previous paragraph, the believer has never grown. In this section, personal backsliding hinders the believer who begins growing and then stops.



Proof that backsliding affects believers' abilities to understand spiritual truth surfaces in He-

brews 5:12 where the writer scolds his readers for needing to be taught the same material again. Because of a deliberate decision, they were unable to continue at the same level of maturity.

The Holy Spirit showed the writer that his readers would not readily accept his hard teachings of the superiority of Jesus over angels, Moses and the Aaronic priesthood because they wanted to return to Judaism. That they had the potential to understand is seen in 6:1, 3 where the writer states that as the Lord allows he is going to give them solid food—even though they prefer milk. And in chapter 7, he resumes the discussion of the Melchizedek material.

It appears, then, that these believers could have understood if they had wanted to. But, since they no longer wanted to (see 5:11-12 where

they "had become such"), they now could no longer understand. Their decision to resist mature Christian truth caused them to backslide, resulting in a limited ability to understand.

This demonstrates that backsliding can cause a believer to be limited in understanding.

Sin in the Believer's Life

Immaturity is not the only topic in I Corinthians 1-3.

The sinfulness of divisions is also presented (I Cor. 3:3). Individuals participating in the strife and envy of the Corinthian church were following carnal instincts, not the leading of the Holy Spirit.

As seen above, the Holy Spirit is the one who gives true understanding of God's Word and work. Therefore, personal sin will also block "the words . . . which the Holy Spirit teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13, 3:1).

Personal Prejudice

Personal prejudice can hinder understanding and blind against spiritual truth. Biases grounded in background, upbringing, education, ignorance and the society in which we live contribute to our partial blindness. Peter is a good example of this.

According to Galatians 2:11-14, even after seeing the vision of Acts 10, Peter refused to accept the equality of Jew and Gentile. Peter's biases got in the way of his ability to understand and caused him to receive a personal rebuke by Paul.

Peter illustrates that spiritual maturity and spirituality, i.e. being led by or filled with the Spirit, are two different things. No one would challenge Peter's spirituality. But, Paul challenged his maturity.

Peter's prejudice hindered the Spirit's speaking to him about this sin. This illustrates that just because someone preaches under the anointing of the Holy Spirit does not mean he has perfect understanding in every area of spiritual truth.

When disagreement is present, each party should ask these questions. "Why do I believe this? Is there objective support for my position or do I just assume I am right? Have influences from the past so colored my understanding that I am blinded to the truth?" Remember, Peter was blind to his blindness too.

It is possible that we believe something to be sin when in reality it is not—like Jews and Gentiles associating with each other and eating meat which had been offered to idols (I Cor. 8). Our argument may not be about an item of sin at all, but rather about an issue offensive to our personal biases or prejudices.

It is amazing that Bible students who understand the hermeneutical principle of historical context in biblical interpretation fail to understand that their own situations in life color their views of the present world. What appears to be real may be only a distortion of true reality.

Personal hindrances of this nature can be overcome with the help of someone who will be honest with us and who has the ability to change us. For the believer one answer is the Holy Spirit. He is the one who changes us from our earthly image into that of the heavenly (II Cor. 3:18).

Trusted friends can also help us see our blinded perspective if given the opportunity. Sometimes it takes a Paul who will withstand us "to the face."

Lack of Certain Spiritual Gifts

One of the clearest New Testament teachings is that all believers are not given the same spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:8). God does not intend that all believers have equal understanding or He would give equal gifts to all. Those with teaching gifts should have greater understanding.

Someone might argue that all believers have an anointing which renders individual teaching unnecessary (I John 2:27). The problem with such an argument is obvious. Was John teaching these anointed believers that they needed no teaching? Hardly!

Lack of Desire and Effort to Learn

The discussion so far appears one-sided, that proper understanding of scriptural truth is totally a spiri-

tual matter. Some might be tempted to believe that prayer is all that is necessary.

While one's spiritual sensitivity is important and while God does grant understanding (I Cor. 2:10-15), scripture and personal experience teach that asking is not always enough. Sometimes wrestling in prayer and with the scriptures are both necessary.

Jesus taught that lack of desire and effort to learn hinders understanding (Mark 4:21-25). He wanted His teachings to be understood, but only by those who wanted to understand them and who were willing to put forth the effort necessary for that understanding (v. 24). It seems that few comprehended Jesus' teachings the first time they heard them. Even fewer were willing to wrestle with them for full understanding.

The same is true today. Casual or sporadic reading of scripture does little for mature understanding. Personal study habits, education, knowledge of original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and of the translation language, world history, etc., all affect understanding.

It is somewhat presumptuous to expect people to entrust their spiritual health to those who do little to prepare for such a great responsibility. It is also presumptuous to believe that such preparation makes one less able to understand spiritual truth.

In fact, in some disagreements, one party may need to bow to the other party simply because one knows more about the area of disagreement than the other one does. Instead of forcefully arguing from a platform of ignorance, perhaps a better use of energies would be to concentrate on learning as much as possible about the subject being argued.

Natural Ability

Natural ability does affect understanding. For the sake of completeness, let's also admit that natural *inabilities* can adversely affect understanding.

An example might be an individual who cannot learn to read. There will be a limited understanding of God's truth because all of God's special revelation for us today is recorded in written form.

This does not mean that understanding can never be achieved, for ability can be increased. God evidently increased the natural abilities of Daniel and his friends enabling them to accomplish God's purpose for their lives (Daniel 1:17, 20).

Conclusion

Why then are there disagreements? We have considered eight potential reasons. We should not use these to try to analyze the one with whom we are having the disagreement, but rather we should consider these as a check list for ourselves.

Does the Holy Spirit live within me? Will more mature thought change my opinion? Are my ears closed to certain ideas because, like the Hebrews who wanted to return to Judaism, I am devoted to my own agenda?

Do I have unconfessed sin in my life? Is it possible that I have a bias or a prejudice of which I am unaware that is coloring ideas and distorting the true picture? Do I possess the spiritual gifts which provide enablement for understanding in the area of disagreement? If not, am I praying for these gifts (I Cor. 12:31)?

Do I put forth every effort to learn the truth or am I arguing forcefully about something of which I know very little? Do I pray, study, do research and seek training from others to improve my ability to understand all sides of the questions? Have I asked God to increase my natural ability to learn?

The answers we give to each of these questions can help show why we are unable to agree with our brother. Perhaps this time it is not the brother's fault. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jeff Crabtree pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Roanoke, Virginia. He also serves as Virginia's promotional director and General Board member.

Angels seen visiting church building.



Angels Unaware

By Kim Phelps

Unexplained good deeds are happening often at First Free Will Baptist Church of Owasso, Oklahoma. The church family believes these deeds are coming from "angels of the small and wingless variety."

It began several years ago when children's church directors Judy Horst and Jeannie Harper were leading their 2nd - 4th graders through a series entitled "Your Church Officers and Workers." Each week the children would sit intently and listen to a deacon, a Sunday School superintendent, the treasurer or trustees tell of their obligations, duties and services to the church.

As a trustee shared with the children the responsibilities of the Trustee Board, their angelic faces were absorbed and their mouths open in awe. At the conclusion of the talk, a little hand raised and the question was solemnly asked, "Do you ever have any helpers?"

All the children seemed anxious for the answer. It came as a surprise to most that the answer was "No."

Directors Judy and Jeannie could see the concern coming from the children and decided to form a club that would allow the children to help with a variety of deeds to be done for the church. It was also decided that these deeds would be done in anonymity. Therefore, the group "Angels Unaware" was formed.

Since then, senior citizens have received gifts, choir lofts cleaned, flowers planted at the church, trash picked up, Thank You notes to Sunday School teachers given, cookies given to the deacons and many other good deeds done.

In addition to teaching these children respect for our church, these anonymous deeds teach our children that it is much better to give and receive the full blessings from God rather than give and receive recognition from man. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Kim Phelps is secretary of the First Free Will Baptist Church of Owasso, Oklahoma, where she is also a member. Kim attended Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1981 and now serves as Sunday School Superintendent and church pianist.

Capital Stewardship Campaign October 1993 Update

State	Goal	Gifts
Alabama	\$97,290.00	\$1,000.00
Arizona	1,565.00	1,800.00
Arkansas	97,880.00	27,025.71
Atlantic Canada	2,000.00	.00
California	21,925.00	5.00
Colorado	1,005.00	1,005.00
Florida	26,365.00	2,516.36
Georgia	48,620.00	16,253.03
Hawaii	235.00	500.00
Idaho	450.00	.00
Illinois	20,600.00	790.00
Indiana	10,020.00	1,000.00
Iowa	340.00	.00
Kansas	1,640.00	.00
Kentucky	45,150.00	2,343.29
Louisiana	120.00	1,020.00
Maryland	8,675.00	150.00
Michigan	19,250.00	1,680.00
Mississippi	19,815.00	865.00
Missouri	77,025.00	18,854.75
Montana	35.00	50.00
Nebraska	130.00	.00
New Mexico	760.00	.00
North Carolina	75,285.00	1,250.00
Northeast Assoc.	1,125.00	.00
Northwest Assoc.	1,385.00	.00
Ohio	52,115.00	4,682.97
Oklahoma	117,505.00	1,916.50
South Carolina	23,350.00	100.00
Tennessee	100,040.00	21,626.29
Texas	14,705.00	4,700.00
Virginia	30,975.00	405.00
West Virginia	58,840.00	320.00
Other	23,780.00	2,868.85
Totals	\$1,000,000.00	\$114,727.75



B.S. in Business Administration...

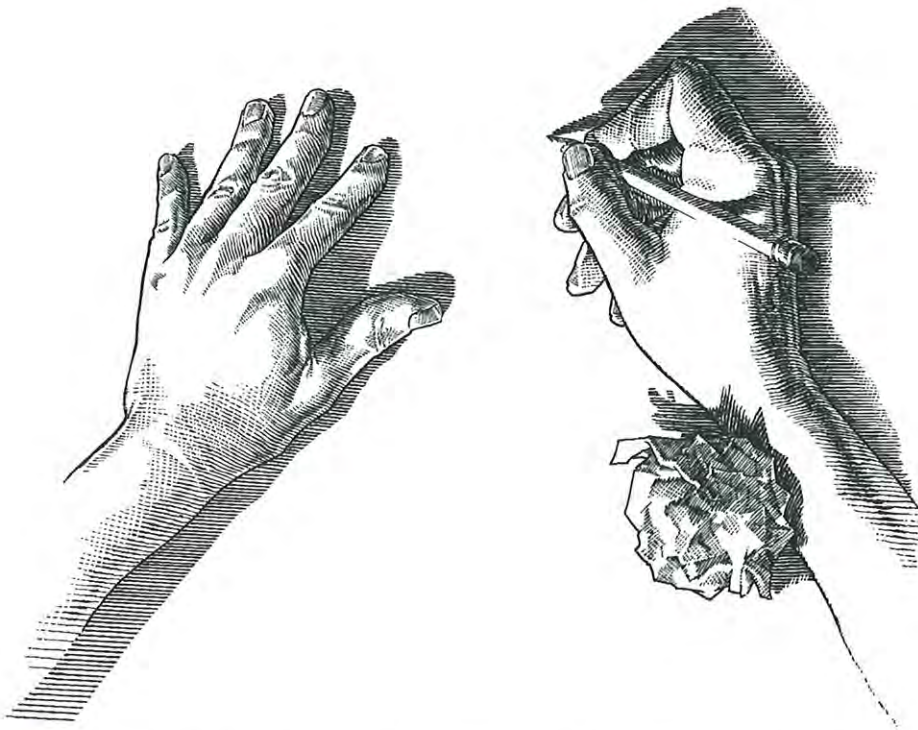
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Anonymous Sinner Decides to Confess

By Eddie Fitzgerald
Daily Times Staff Writer



Pastor Nathan Eason of Oak Grove Free Will Baptist Church in Elm City, North Carolina, received unusual tidings last year when he opened a letter from a former member of the church.

Tidings of repentance.

The envelope that Eason opened March 24, 1993, had no return address, but it did have five \$20 bills—and a letter of confession.

Talk about your unsolved mysteries. The anonymous writer confessed to a theft a quarter century or more ago at the church.

The letter-writer wrote that he and another Elm City teenager had been riding around town “with nothing to do” when they drove by the Oak Grove Church and noticed an additional structure being constructed there.

The writer explained how he and the other teen—both “about 16 years old”—stopped and went inside, apparently to look around. Once inside, he said, they stole 15 to 20 pieces of plywood.

As the confessor grew older his conscience began bothering him, he wrote. He turned to the Lord a year ago, the letter said, and decided to pay for his sin.

His own 25-year-old estimates weren’t good enough. The confessor said he got professional estimates for his stolen booty and sent \$100 to the pastor.

“I am truly sorry for what I did to one of God’s houses of worship, and ask you all as Christians to truly forgive me,” the confessor wrote.

Though Eason has been at Oak Grove for only two years, he said he’s

been a preacher for years. Never has he received a letter like last year’s confession, he said.

“You don’t often get a letter from someone who did something that far back and wants to make amends,” the pastor said. “Some people don’t make amends. A lot of people think that after all those years they should just let it lay.”

Several weeks after the letter arrived, Eason got a call from the letter-writer. He still refused to give his name, but said everyone in Elm City knew him, Eason said.

“He wanted to see if I got the money,” Eason said. “He said he got saved and was going to a church in Wilson. Inside, he said he felt like he had to write the letter and send the money. It was something he said he had to do.”

Eason said he read the letter of confession to his congregation the Sunday after receiving it. Most there thought the confessor’s actions unusual, but commendable.

The pastor couldn’t find anyone who even remembered exactly what kind of construction was going on at the time the theft was said to occur.

“This guy had been taught something in life,” said Eason, who placed the \$100 in the church’s general treasury.

“He’s bound to have strong morals or was taught something as a lad. Even before a man is saved, if he’s got a conscience given to him from his parents, it would bother him.”

Eason said he believes the person who sent the letter was disturbed by the experience because of the conservative upbringing many people experienced a generation ago.

“I never knew the man,” Eason said. “I think he must have been sincere about wanting forgiveness. When he called, I told him he could rest assured I’d forgive him. The congregation forgave him also.”

“Maybe one day,” the confessor wrote, “I will be able to tell you who I am.”

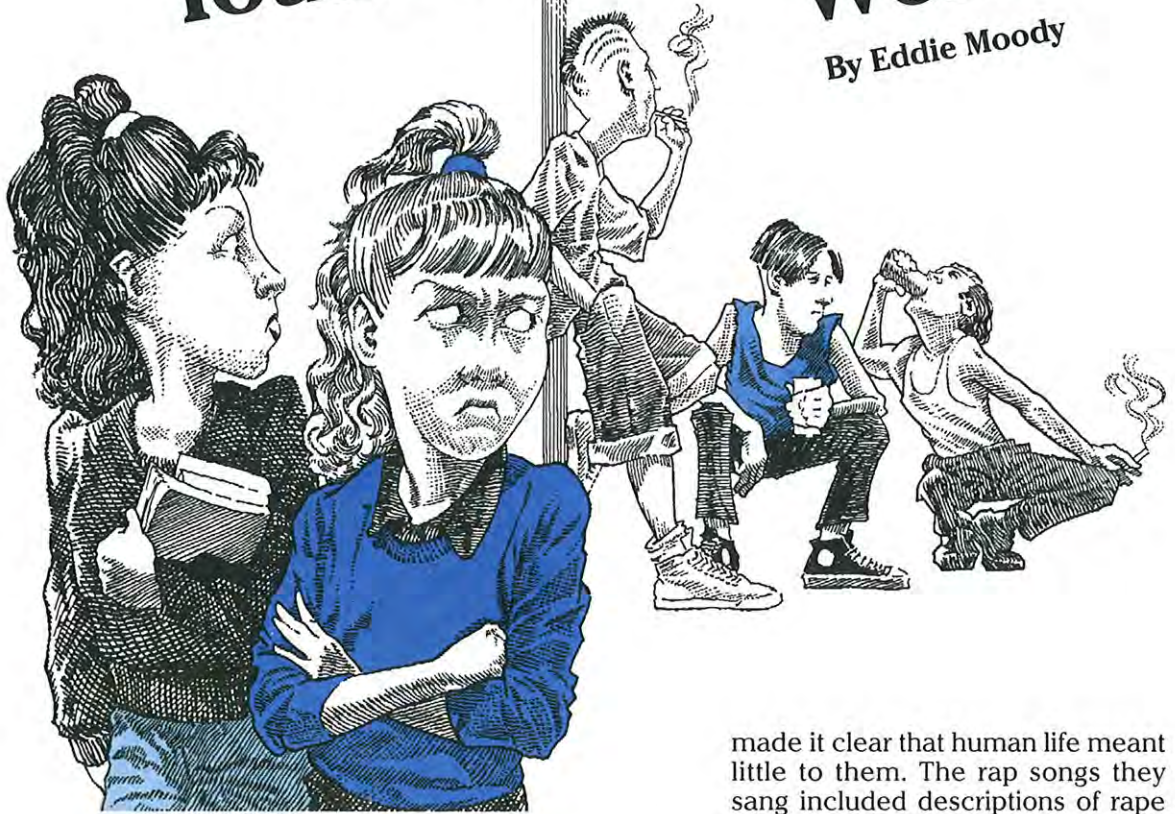
“Until then,” he wrote, “the Lord knows who we are.” ■

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Youth in a Dangerous World

By Eddie Moody



It was a day I had looked forward to for some time, the last day of school. Our school was unusual, it was housed within a mental health center. It was designed to provide education and counseling to students who could not be educated by the Nashville, Tennessee, school system.

During an awards ceremony the assistant principal asked for a moment of silence in memory of a student murdered six weeks earlier. Some students groaned and sighed as if they had been asked to take a test.

No Regard for Life

On my first day at the center I sat in a group session where one of the students described observing a murder. His friend, a former student, shot

a 21-year-old man three times in the head. The 15-year-old told the story with a smile, as if he were describing a party he had attended.

Throughout the school year the 15-year-old caused problems, claiming to be carrying a weapon, bringing fake guns and threatening teachers. His role model taught him well.

The morning after the Rodney King verdict I watched the news and saw the violence in Los Angeles. I sensed there would be trouble at school.

As I arrived that morning I was informed that a student had been badly beaten. I went into the classrooms and learned that the television images I had watched in horror, they discussed with glee and were energized by them.

What disturbed me the most about some of the students was their lack of regard for human life. You could see the hate in their eyes. They

made it clear that human life meant little to them. The rap songs they sang included descriptions of rape and murder. They talked of killing teachers and leaving their bodies in ditches.

School ended and we began our summer programs. I watched one afternoon as a colleague approached, pale and shocked. He had just caught a seven year old in a sex act with another child. The sex offenders are getting disturbingly younger.

Normal Kids

But these incidents occurred with "at risk" kids. Are normal kids like this? My wife and I recently moved to Raleigh, North Carolina. Last week at least 100 students gathered at a park near a local high-school to watch a fight. As the fight progressed someone pulled a gun and began firing.

A bullet struck an observing teen in the chest, killing him. Bystanders were bused to the police station to describe what they had seen. Later

as they returned home the cameras rolled. Some of the students cheered and waved, and seemed undaunted by the murder they had witnessed just hours earlier.

A few months ago I developed a violence prevention curriculum for a local agency to use in area schools. The need for such a curriculum is proof that these problems are not confined to abnormal kids.

We gave the students a pre-test and found that 42% said they had had an experience where they felt they were in danger. Fifty-four percent said they knew someone who had been raped or molested and 11% said they themselves had been raped or molested.

Youth Who Honor God

This is a dark and dangerous generation in which today's youth are growing up. One must wonder if there is any hope for the future. Our hope is in our youth. We can look to the heroes of the past for guidance.

The principles by which Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego lived provide a good foundation. Though they lived long ago, they faced similar problems that young men and women face today.

They had faith in God.

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had faith that God would sustain them. Much of what Christians believe is challenged daily in classrooms across America.

It takes faith to adhere to your beliefs when challenged by those who know more than you. Though we may not have all the answers, today's youth need faith that the Bible is correct.

They would not defile their bodies.

A desire for purity, honesty and holiness is needed. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to eat the king's meat and drink his wine; they were willing to give up their lives in order to avoid defiling their bodies.

Such youth are definitely out of place in today's world, which makes them a beacon to those who are looking for something different.

They were willing to stand alone.

We were conducting research on the prevention of alcohol abuse among college students when my professor asked a student if he knew anyone who did not drink alcohol. The student responded, "Why would someone do that?" He could not imagine anyone not wanting to consume alcohol.

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to eat the king's meat and wine when everyone else did. Later, Daniel was placed in the lion's den and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. Youth who live by biblical principles will often stand all alone.

They chose friends carefully.

When a decree went out that all the wise men should be killed, Daniel ran to his friends' house where they prayed together. One of the most important decisions a teen makes is in deciding with whom he or she spends their time.

This doesn't mean teens shouldn't have unsaved friends. The teen should ask himself, "Who is influencing whom? Am I influencing this person toward Christ or are they influencing me away from Christ?"

They were role models.

The testimonies of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego provided excellent role models and allowed them to reach out to others. We need youth who reach out to those trapped in darkness.

There was another group of youth at the mental health center. You could see the pain in their eyes. They were "needy," always craving attention. They were the misfits, the ones the other kids preyed on.

In the study I described earlier we also asked normal kids, "Who can you talk to?" Fourteen percent indicated that they had no one they could talk to.

We need youth who are more concerned with helping others than maintaining their image. Youth who are willing to befriend the unpopular. Youth who will be a role model and lead people to Christ.

They pursued excellence.

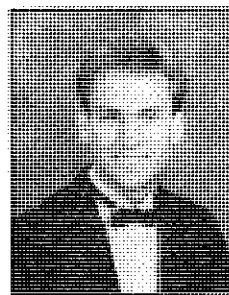
Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were given the opportunity to serve in the king's court because they pursued excellence. They were described as possessing wisdom and understanding that was 10 times that of the magicians and enchanters of their day. We need youth willing to give up pleasure in order to pursue excellence. Youth whose actions disprove the image many have that Bible-believing Christians are ignorant.

The Future

We need youth who dream of the future and commit to a life of service. Youth who dream of becoming preachers, loving and studying the Word and the people they serve. Missionaries who sacrifice to go to far away lands, leaving behind their family and the luxuries of America.

We need professionals of all types to meet the needs of a world gone mad. We need educators to go into schools, youth who will grow up working in blue collar positions living the life of Christ before co-workers. However they choose to serve they should provide a shining light in this dark world.

As I sat in that room on the last day of school, it would have been easy to become discouraged about this new generation. But in my heart I knew somewhere there were a few Daniels, Shadrachs, Meshachs and Abednegos preparing for the future. Look around—you may find them in your church or in your home. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Eddie Moody, an active lay counselor, is a graduate student at North Carolina State University. He is a member of Immanuel Free Will Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, and a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Can Free Will Baptists survive in the next century?

Combat Readiness

By Brad Utley

From the time of the Vietnam war until the Persian Gulf War, Americans had one major question concerning our military: Is it combat ready? Due to problems in Vietnam, Americans wondered about our military readiness. Had we given our troops what they needed to be victorious on the battlefield? Had we adequately trained them? Had we given them the weaponry and technology they needed?

These questions have now been properly answered with the victory in the Persian Gulf. Americans are reasonably assured that our military is among the best in the world.

The Free Will Baptist denomination today should be asking these same questions. Are we as a denomination "combat ready"? Have we properly trained and/or equipped our people? Have we given our people what they need to win in the battles they face? Have we been effective in "perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry"?

This is not a question concerning any one group of Free Will Baptists, such as our college graduates or pastors, but all Free Will Baptists. The honest answer to these questions is that we are not! We have not fully engaged in the battle and work of Christ. This is not to say that some of our people are not involved, because many are. We have people who work hard and do more than their share. However, this group of workers, denominationally speaking, is a minority group.

If we Free Will Baptists continue to allow the minority of our people (mostly pastors) to do the work of the majority and/or the whole, we will not survive the next century. It is critical that we begin now to prepare the lay people of our churches. The Free Will Baptist denomination was not set up to be run and worked by this minority group, but by the people with Christ as the head.



The Problem

The problem involves both this minority and its over-involvement, and the majority and its lack of involvement. For too long now the too-

few have been trying to do the work of too-many. The result has been burnout, withdrawal and even desertion, mostly by our young adults.

The reason for lack of involve-

ment by the majority has little to do with desire. We Free Will Baptists do have a burden for lost souls. We do care whether or not we are serving and being effective for the Lord. The problem is that we are not properly equipped.

This is no reflection on our colleges or even upon our churches. I suppose if we were to assess fault, it lies with us as pastors. We, as Free Will Baptist pastors, have been so focused on building churches that we have not accomplished our task. We have tried to do too much ourselves. It has been easier for us to just do, rather than equip or work on "perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry."

The result of this has been that the lay people in our churches have learned to look to their pastors as the experts, the ones who are equipped for the work of the ministry. Our general membership has become complacent with a few doing the work of many.

It is not a sign of spirituality to accomplish the work of 10 others. The sign of spirituality or maturity is to be obedient to Christ and join hands as a church and work together.

The major obstacle has been our pride. We are held in bondage by our pride mainly due to this game of numbers. This church is better than that church because it gives more money. This pastor is better than that pastor because more people attend his church. We have even taken the number of salvations, baptisms and attendance as saying something about our spirituality.

Is this not what the Corinthians did with the gift of tongues? The numbers game must not be a barometer of our spirituality or combat readiness.

The Perspective

When the word *change* is used among Free Will Baptists, some see it as a negative. However, Christ commands us to change. The whole idea behind becoming more Christ-like is change. If we are to be more effective for Christ, whether as individuals or as a church we must be changing.

The Free Will Baptist denomina-

tion is a great denomination. However, if the Lord is to use us in the future, we must change. We must become more combat ready. This does not mean a change in the message of the gospel. It is this message that makes us a great denomination. The message must remain the same.

It is the means of communicating this message that must change. This change involves a change of focus. We must change our focus from one of building churches and numbers to one of building people. Building churches is not wrong, nor should it slow down. However, we should focus on people rather than programs.

Jesus said that He would build His Church. He commissioned us to make disciples. As pastors we are responsible for equipping, training and "perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry." The success of our denomination does not depend on the ability of our pastors so much as it does the obedience and involvement of all Free Will Baptists.

In order to accomplish this, lay members of our churches must be equipped. This begins with a changed focus or vision, especially on the part of pastors. We must set the example by allowing the people in our churches to be equipped and then do the work of ministry. It's like teaching a child to write. If the parent continues to do the writing, it does not matter how much is taught, they will not learn to write.

This responsibility to effectively communicate the message of Christ is an overwhelming task. We must work together to make use of the most effective means to accomplish this task. Perhaps the fear of change that has hindered our readiness is understandable in light of effects on other denominations. Some denominations in the name of changing to a better means have lost contact with the message.

Nonetheless, we can not let this fear stop us from becoming even more effective for Christ. The eternal destination of many souls hangs in the balance.

The Proposal

If and when we come to the place where we change our focus or vi-

sion, it will not be enough. For then comes the problem of how. How can we equip or perfect the saints for the work of the ministry? How can we come to the place where the majority is involved in the work of the ministry?

When we observe how others are accomplishing this task, we usually see large churches offering resources that most local Free Will Baptist churches do not have. This should not discourage us. This should not cause us to view bigger churches, their pastors and people thereof, as being better.

The Free Will Baptist denomination should stop working against its strengths. The strength that we have available to us is the small local church. It is not negative to have smaller churches. Smaller churches have resources to offer that the larger churches do not. The smaller church can offer an environment of security. The smaller church is an extended family that offers a closeness that larger churches can not.

The fact still remains, that although there are many pluses to small churches, we are still losing many young adults because of the lack of resources in our local churches. The question then is, "How can we maintain the pluses of our smaller churches and yet offer the same resources as larger churches?"

The answer will determine our future as Free Will Baptists. This is not an overstatement in order to capture attention. We must to find and implement the answer.

The answer is one of Christian education. We must instruct our people. There are colleges available for this purpose that are successful. There yet remains the education of the majority of our people. Many of our churches and district associations have Christian education boards with this purpose in mind. The answer then lies with moving from being competitive with one another to being cooperative.

The answer is in developing and strengthening our district association including their C.E. boards. The key to our combat readiness and survival as Free Will Baptists is in our ability to strengthen and use our district



(Combat Ready... from page 15)

associations. For too long now our local churches and pastors have been isolated with little support. An effective army is successful in that it cooperates and coordinates its tasks.

If we harness district associations and pool our resources, we can take advantage of having smaller churches, yet have the resources of the larger churches. Why should our local churches duplicate the ministry of other churches? The local churches together can accomplish more within district associations than they ever can alone.

It reminds me of the American farmers of a few years ago. They came together in cooperation and accomplished more than they could alone. They worked together as a community and as neighbors. If the secular community can accomplish this, surely we can.

Practically speaking, what would this entail? It would involve district associations expanding Christian education boards to include more than youth activities and services. It would mean churches getting together and networking by discussing strengths and weaknesses. It would mean churches meshing together so that the strengths of one church could offset the weakness of another.

We must then as churches, open up and share our needs. Needs will vary with each church and each district association. The particular min-

istries are only limited by our own creativity and cooperation.

Some of the ministries that can be offered to the local church through the district association might include the following: district revival; picnics and fellowships; libraries, including the use of videos; district seminars and retreats; the use of church properties including vans, buildings and even workers; consultations between pastors, Sunday Schools, children's ministries, youth pastors, teachers, others; finances; people talented in special areas like evangelism, taxes, education, plumbing, mechanics; district dramas and concerts.

This problem can and should be addressed on a state level. The state Christian education boards should change their focus from emphasis on planning and doing training and activities to supporting the district associations of that state. This is not to say what is currently being done should stop, but that the focus should shift.

The state Christian education board's primary responsibility should be supporting the district associations. The districts then in turn support local churches. The churches then can equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the unity of the body of Christ.

I believe this must be the future course by Free Will Baptists. The key again is that our future combat readiness lies with our ability to strength-

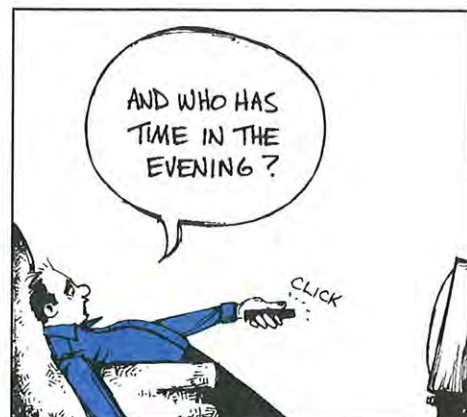
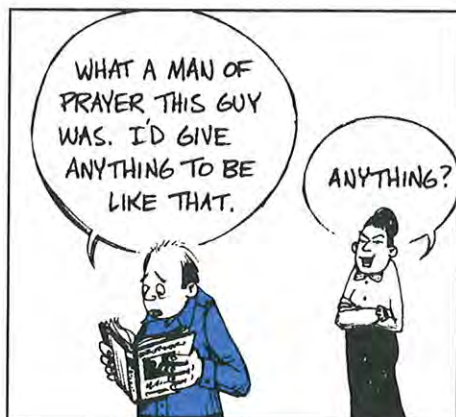
en and use our district associations. I do not see this as an option, but a necessity, if we are to survive the next century as a denomination.

I know that the power of our church and the building thereof lie with Christ and Him alone. However, we can not expect the Lord to bless us as a denomination if we can not overcome our pride and begin to cooperate, rather than compete. We must act and we must act now if we expect victory in the battles that surround us. We will win the war, but we are losing too many battles.

We must change our focus to building or equipping people. It is in "the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," that our combat readiness rests. Can Free Will Baptists survive in the next century? The answer lies in our ability to change our means, while keeping the message of Christ the same. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Brad Utley pastors Capitol Hill Free Will Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

BEYOND BELIEF



Does your church need a visitor welcome center?

Come on in and Stay Awhile!

By Sherry Anderson

Have you noticed how difficult it is to get new people to church? And when they do come, many find the experience less than fulfilling. They often feel that no one really cares that they've come. Some leave the church without having anyone say a single word to them.

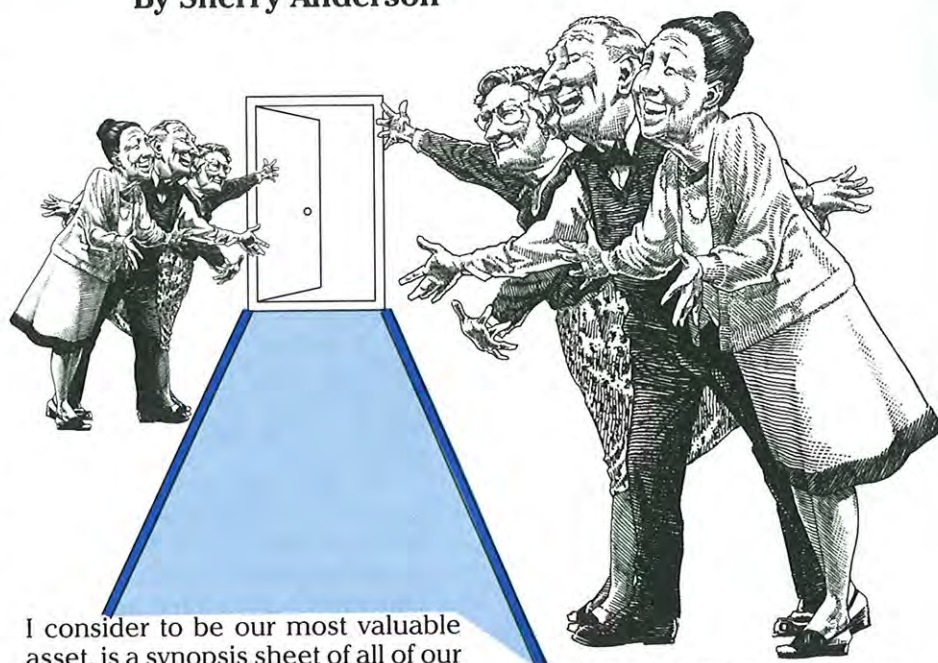
Then there's the problem of not knowing where to go once they arrive at the church facility. Where do the children go for Sunday School? Is there more than one adult class and if so, what is the general makeup and course of study of each? Is there a children's church? How many worship services? Is there more than one nursery and how many workers in each?

That's why our church established a Visitor's Information Center. From here we can answer any questions our visitors may have, give them a packet of information about our church and the various services we offer and even escort them to their destination.

The Center also gives us the opportunity to warmly welcome our guests and establish an immediate bond with them. We're able to say, "Glad you came to worship with us" and "How can we be of help to you?" in a relaxed, non-threatening atmosphere.

Our long-term goal is to have a room dedicated to welcoming our guests, but for starters we set up a small table in the foyer, complete with a "Visitor Information" sign suspended overhead. We put together a packet of information which includes a brochure about our youth program, a children's ministries brochure, a brochure outlining the various ministries of the church, the latest copy of our monthly church newsletter, a small devotional booklet, a short cassette message which our pastor recorded especially for visitors, and an info sheet for them to fill out, which we use for our follow up.

Something else we include, which



I consider to be our most valuable asset, is a synopsis sheet of all of our adult Sunday School classes. This paper lists each class by name, gives the location (which we are then able to point out on a diagram of the church before taking them there), gives the teacher's name and includes a short description of the class—the general age range, purpose of the class and any other unique features.

By providing this to our guests, they are then better able to decide which class they would like to visit rather than having to blindly choose one. We plan to include a coloring book about our children's ministries as a special gift to the youngsters.

We staff our Center with volunteers who serve once a month for 15 minutes before and after the service they sign up for. It's not a hard job at all, requiring only a friendly smile, a willing spirit and very little time. It's a perfect ministry opportunity for people who might think they don't have the talent for some of the other ministries in the church, one which affords them the potential of impacting someone for eternity.

Our church utilizes greeters at each of the facility entrances who direct incoming guests to the Cen-

ter. Although greeters aren't necessary to a successful center, alert, smiling faces are!

Could your church do this? Yes! Getting started requires just a small table and volunteers to man it. From there you can branch out to include brochures, diagrams of your facilities, "thank you for coming" gifts...the list of possibilities is endless. You'll be so glad that you initiated this ministry as you meet new friends and see the warmth of your welcome reflected in their faces.

When I visit your church, will you be looking for me? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Sherry Anderson serves as Welcome Center Director at Donelson Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. She is also the receptionist at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Loveless to Direct Publishing House



NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. Alton Loveless, 56, has been named general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department. He succeeds Dr. Roger Reeds who retired on December 31, 1993.

Dr. Loveless brings with him a broad range of experience in publishing, public speaking, journalism and teaching. He served as executive secretary for the Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists from 1974 to 1993.

He also served 12 years on the Sunday School Board, chairing the Curriculum Committee for 11 years. He served 10 years on the Historical Commission, a term on the Foreign Missions Board, and is past president of the Free Will Baptist Bookstore Association.

He pastored four Free Will Baptist churches in Arkansas and Missouri 1955 to 1970. He served as field representative, Christian education consultant and national/regional marketing director in the southern United States and Caribbean for Scripture Press Publications, 1970-1974.

Dr. Loveless has published more than 400 articles and conducted 700 seminars in 32 foreign countries and 47 states. He has been widely-used as a Christian education consultant by 68 denominations. His skill in teacher training workshops and tutorials in interpersonal relationships have created speaking op-

portunities around the world.

Alton Loveless, a native of Conway, Arkansas, began preaching in 1955 at age 17. He was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister in 1956. He attended seven colleges and graduate schools. He is a graduate of Hillsdale FWB College and earned his Ph.D. in business administration from Columbia Pacific University.

In his just-completed role as Ohio's executive secretary, Dr. Loveless directed the Ambassador Bible Bookstore, the largest bookstore in the denomination. He also edited the state's newspaper, *The Ambassador*, directed the Ohio Bible Institute, served as state treasurer and coordinated both the annual state association and the Minister/Layman Retreat.

Alton and Delois Loveless have two sons, Randall and Steve.

150 Attend Mississippi Meeting

WAYNESBORO, MS—More than 150 people gathered at Corinth FWB Church in Waynesboro for the 29th annual Mississippi State Association, according to Clerk Benny McKinney. The November 5-6, 1993, session included 33 ministers and eight deacons among its registrants.

Delegates elected Moderator J. L. Gore to a second term. They also adopted a resolution instructing the Executive Committee to prepare a state budget for the 1994 session.

Fulton FWB Church pastor Bill Van Winkle received a plaque recognizing his 10 years of service on the state Home Missions Board.

Five ministers preached sermons developing the association theme, "Perseverance." Three Mississippi pastors preached during the Friday Bible Conference—Pastors Glenn Jones (Mt. Pisgah FWB Church, Booneville), Dale Ford (Christian FWB Church, Amory) and Gary Walters (Lee's Chapel FWB Church, Waynes-

boro). Special speakers concluded the conference: FWBBC staffer Bob Shockey and former missionary to Mexico Fred Jones.

The Mississippi Woman's Auxiliary met November 5 using the theme, "Women and the Little Things." Melissa Riddle, editor of *Co-Laborer* magazine, spoke twice during the meeting.

The 1994 state association will meet November 4-5 at Christian FWB Church in Amory.

Ohio Native Named Executive Secretary



COLUMBUS, OH—Reverend Edwin Hayes, 42-year-old pastor of Columbus First FWB Church, has been named executive secretary of the Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists by the state Board of Directors. He succeeds Alton Loveless who resigned the position after 19 years. Rev. Hayes began his new duties

December 1, 1993.

Brother Hayes said, "This was one of the toughest decisions I've ever made in my life. I do believe that the Lord has placed me here at this time for this task. I'm committed to the job for the long run."

Hayes said he plans to attend Ohio quarterly meetings and promote a denomination-wide support emphasis, especially the Together Way Plan. In addition to his duties as promotional officer, he will direct the Ohio Bible Institute, edit the state paper (*The Ambassador*) and oversee the state bookstore.

Rev. Hayes has lived his entire life in Ohio. He also holds the distinction of serving in one church. He was converted in 1964 and joined Columbus First FWB Church. Ordained to preach in

1976, he was called as pastor of the church in 1980, and ministered there the past 13 years.

He was elected to his eighth term as moderator of the Ohio State Association last June. He previously served as assistant moderator; state General Board member; and as moderator, Mission Board and Executive Board member of the Franklin Conference. Since 1986, Brother Hayes has served on the national Sunday School and Church Training Board.

He is a graduate of Franklin University and has earned a number of credit hours at Cedarville College.

Edwin and Linda Hayes have two daughters, Julia (16) and Holly (13).

Reeds to Promote Sunday School Revivals

NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. Roger Reeds, who retired in December after 32 years as director of Sunday School and Church Training Department, says he plans to conduct Sunday School Revivals among Free Will Baptist churches. Over the years, Dr. Reeds has conducted more than 300 Sunday School Revivals.

The meetings usually operate on a three-day format—Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Dr. Reeds said, "I preach messages on the Sunday School and Sunday School growth on Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning. During the day on Saturday I conduct workshops on the process of teaching, teaching methods and Sunday School growth."

He said there is a need for such meetings because, "Sunday School attendance has been declining for the past 25 years. The Sunday School is one of the best methods man has ever devised for evangelism and edifi-



cation. My prayer is that we will have a revival of Sunday School interest that could lead to a revival in our churches. I do not mean to imply that a Sunday School Revival will solve all our problems, but it could be a start in the right direction."

While Dr. Reeds plans to give time to Sunday School Revival outreach, he also has other responsibilities. He is on call as a consultant for the Sunday School and Church Training Depart-

ment. He plans to pastor Trinity FWB Church in Nashville and move the congregation toward a full-time ministry.

Another of his skills is in the area of journalism. Dr. Reeds plans to do extensive writing in the months ahead. He said he plans two major book projects.

Anyone interested in having a Sunday School Revival at their church can contact Dr. Reeds at:

Randall House Publications
114 Bush Road/P. O. Box 17306
Nashville, TN 37217
615/361-1221
or 1-800/877-7030

Ohio Honors Alton and Delois Loveless

COLUMBUS, OH—An estimated 400 people from across the state of Ohio met October 10, 1993 at Heritage Temple FWB Church to pay tribute to Alton and Delois Loveless for their 19 years of service to Ohio Free Will Baptists. Testimonies from each Board of

what you have meant to the state of Ohio. You have been my friend, a friend to our ministers and churches. We thank you."

Rev. Loveless concluded his remarks of thanks, "Leaving Ohio was never in my desires. I know of no reason why we must. We



Ohio Free Will Baptists pay tribute to Alton and Delois Loveless.

Directors member and the state moderator, cards and letters, a book of memories, plaques and financial gifts were presented to the Lovelesses.

Rev. Forrest Chamberlin, chairman of the State Board of Directors, said, "You will never know

would love to have retired here because more of our adult life has been spent here than anywhere else. Our closest friends are here. Only God knows why."

When Dr. and Mrs. Loveless went to Ohio in June 1974 from Scripture Press Publications in

Atlanta to assume the newly formed role of promotional secretary, the state had given only \$59,000 the previous year to both state and national causes. Since that beginning, the state has raised millions of dollars for these causes and built one of the largest Christian bookstores among Free Will Baptists. This year's budget exceeds \$1.1 million. In 1986 the State Association bought 1.5 acres on the main route through Columbus and built a 7,300-square-foot complex for the bookstore and state office. The 185' x 300' property has area available for additional buildings.

The state office also produces a 16-20 page tabloid, *The Ambassador*, directs Ohio Bible Institute with both resident and correspondence programs, a minister-layman retreat, workshops for teacher training and leadership, promotes all state and national agencies and oversees the work of the state convention.

Rev. Edwin Hayes, pastor of Columbus First FWB Church and state moderator, will succeed Dr. Loveless as promotional director.

Arkansas Youth Target 'Norman Invasion'

CONWAY, AR—In an attempt to stimulate interest in foreign missions and challenge state youth to do more than go to church, the youth of Arkansas have undertaken a project called, "The Norman Invasion." The challenge of the project is to raise \$100,000 before July 1994 when the national convention meets in Little Rock, according to state CTS director, Jackie Brown.

The purpose of the goal is three-fold. First, to build a church for Norman and Bessie Richards in Agnibilekrou, Côte d'Ivoire. The cost of the church is \$25,000.

The second item is to help

complete the church building started by Norman and Laura McFall in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The cost to complete the church is \$40,000.

The third goal is to send some Arkansas youth to the two mission fields this summer. Hence, the term, "Norman Invasion," and the reason for the \$100,000 goal.

The first phase of the project was 25-25-25-25. The idea was to raise 25 pounds of 25-cent pieces for \$25,000 by October 25, 1993. Each church and youth group was challenged to raise their 25 pounds. The results of this phase concluded and the

final step was a statewide youth call-a-thon Sunday afternoon, October 24.

Jackie Brown said, "The final tally is amazing and proves that God is blessing the efforts of our youth. As of 3:00 Monday afternoon, October 25, the Norman Invasion had raised \$34,555.85.

Oklahoma Adopts \$2.3 Million Budget

TULSA, OK—Delegates to Oklahoma's 85th annual state association passed a \$2.3 million budget for 1994-95. The budget includes: Oklahoma Executive Office—\$114,000; Book Store—\$485,000; State Mission Board—\$380,000; C. E. Board—\$71,000; Hillsdale FWB College—\$1.3 million. Delegates also adopted a \$360,000 Cooperative Plan budget.

State clerk Keith Burden said 693 people registered for the October 11-14, 1993, meeting. That number included 151 ministers and 48 deacons. All sessions met at Northside FWB Church in Tulsa.

The five-man Study Committee appointed at the 1992 session to examine the question of greater representation on the

Hillsdale College Board of Trustees brought back its findings. As a result, delegates authorized expanding the Board to 17 members, adding one board member from Texas, one from Arkansas and one from Missouri.

Moderator Bob Thompson was elected to his second term. The Oklahoma Executive Board presented a plaque to Rev. Bailey Thompson as he completed 14 years of service.

Five ministers preached sermons developing the association theme, "Revive Thy Work." Locust Grove pastor Bob Thomas delivered the keynote address. Three other Oklahoma pastors spoke—Keith Burden (Ada), Allen Mabra (Woodward) and Lonnie DaVoult (Midwest City). Free Will Baptist executive secre-

tary Melvin Worthington preached Wednesday morning.

The state Master's Men met Monday evening at Owasso. President Waymon Ray presided. Melvin Worthington preached.

Missionary to Spain, Lynn Midgett, spoke at the Tuesday Woman's Auxiliary. President Mary Alice Bridgman presided.

The state Ministers Conference met October 12 using the theme, "Contending for the Faith." Four ministers—Danny Phillips, Kevin Daniels, Wade Jernigan and Waldo Young—preached.

The 1994 session will meet October 10-14. The state Executive Committee will select the meeting site.

Southeastern Sets Spring Conference



Ange



Thomas



Lilly



Stox



Summerson



Young



Johnson

WENDELL, NC—Southeastern FWB College announced their annual spring Revival and Soul Winning Conference to be held April 18-20. Seven speakers will highlight the conference which will feature keynote speakers Dr. Joseph Ange, Dr. Roy Thomas, and Rev. Tom Lilly.

Dr. Joseph Ange is a Free Will Baptist evangelist and spends his time traveling across the denomination preaching revivals. He is a past pastor and former president

of Southeastern.

Dr. Roy Thomas has been connected with the Home Missions Department for 33 years. He has served as missionary, board member, associate director, and has been the director of the Home Missions Department for 15 years.

Rev. Tom Lilly has served for 12 years as promotional director for North Carolina Free Will Baptists.

Rounding out the program will be four pastors who will preach: Rev. Jim Summerson, pastor of

Mt. Calvary FWB Church, Hookerton, NC; Rev. Jerry Johnson, pastor of Traveller's Rest FWB Church, Altha, FL; Rev. Lorena Stox, pastor of Parker's Chapel FWB Church, Greenville, NC; and Rev. Tim Young, pastor of Faith FWB Church, Rockingham, NC.

President Billy Bevan extends an invitation to pastors, laymen and youth to attend the conference. ■

Happy New Year!

CURRENTLY...

When **LaRue** and **Bea Davis** brought their son **Jeff** to Free Will Baptist Bible College last August, they discovered that he had been placed in the same room in Ennis Hall that his father occupied 42 years earlier. The Davises are members of **Victory FWB Church** in **Goldsboro, NC**.

Pastor **Cecil Williamson** who has served **Temple FWB Church** in **Winter Garden, FL**, 16 years said the group has completed a \$14,000 sanctuary remodeling project. Members worked two months hanging sheet rock, paneling and a new lighting system. They also refurbished the pulpit and baptistery area. If you're going to Florida on vacation, just 15 miles from the front gate of DisneyWorld on 1208 East Story Road, you will find this happy pastor and his people ready to welcome you.

Officials at **Camp Caleb** in **Prestonsburg, KY**, report 318 campers from seven states last summer. They witnessed 38 salvation decisions and one young man announced his call to preach.

Some time ago the **Earlimart FWB Church** in **Earlimart, CA**, closed its doors. Thanks to the support of **Farmersville FWB Church** in California and Spanish minister **Cesar Menez**, that church has reopened its doors to the Hispanic community. The church was born again as **New Hope FWB Church** last September. Thirty people attended the first service.

Members of **Harmony FWB Church** in **West Frankfort, IL**, report 13 conversions during their Vacation Bible School. The school attracted 90 students each evening for the week-long session.

Arnold View FWB Church in **Creal Springs, IL**, did something different with their Vacation Bible School offering this year. They gave almost \$500 to a family that had been hard hit by last summer's flood. Pastor **Burt Hall** said the VBS averaged 85 in attendance.

Guess who is 96 years old. It's **Blue Point FWB Church** in **Cisne, IL**. Pastor **Ernie Lewis** leads the congregation. Illinois promotional director, **David Shores**, brought the 96th anniversary homecoming message.

Pastor **Brad Tabor** reports three conversions and six new members at **Webbs Prairie FWB Church** in **Ewing, IL**.

When members of **Hazel Dell FWB Church** in **Sesser, IL**, gave pastor **Gene Outland** an appreciation day, it also included a "This is Your Life" touch. Pastor Outland celebrated 36 years in the ministry. Long-time friends from a former pastorate in North Carolina sent a 20-minute video of congratulations. The Hazel Dell church gave Pastor Outland a new suit. The camp board presented him with a plaque of appreciation.

Better keep a close eye on **First FWB Church** in **Owasso, OK**. Pastor **Leonard Pirtle** and members paid off the mortgage with 250 people present to share the excitement. Two months later, they sold the church property to another group and relocated. The church began in 1957 with 33 charter members.

Members of **Rocky Pass FWB Church** in **Nebo, NC**, honored Pastor **Milton Hollifield** for 14 years of service. Their "This is Your Life" emphasis included the fact that Hollifield has been a pastor 45 years. He began pastoring in 1948 at Old Fort, NC. He has invested his entire ministry in North Carolina Free Will Baptist churches.

The **Mississippi Pastors' and Workers' Conference** will meet February 17-19 at **First FWB Church** in **Pearl**. Speakers will include Mississippi evangelist **Van Dale Hudson** and Home Missions Department staffer **Richard Adams**.

Bethlehem FWB Church in **Pontotoc, MS**, completed construction of new Sunday School rooms. **Benny McKinney** pastors.

Members of **Lee's Chapel FWB Church** in **Waynesboro, MS**, purchased a church van, started a bus ministry and began a children's church. **Gary Walters** pastors the busy congregation.

Pastor **Gerald Gann** and members of **Eggville FWB Church** in **Tupelo, MS**, began construction on a new sanctuary. Pastor Gann has been with the church 11 years.

Rev. **Moss Craddock**, a **West Virginia** minister for 43 years, died in Sep-

tember 1993. He was pastor of **Faith FWB Temple** in **Stollings**. Brother Craddock was a retired coal plant foreman and had served 42 years as chaplain at Logan General Hospital. He also conducted a radio ministry on station WLOG.

Heritage FWB Church in **Springfield, IL**, logged a record Sunday evening attendance with 54, according to missionary pastor **Ken Doggett**. Fifteen first-time visitors recently attended.

New Hope FWB Church at **Fredericktown, MO**, burned the mortgage on their church, according to Pastor **Ronnie Payne**.

Jones Chapel FWB Church in **Stella, MO**, is 98 years old and has a new church building. Pastor **Bob Hudson** said the old structure burned in August 1992. The group dedicated a 150-seat sanctuary to the glory of God a year later. Some 200 members and friends gathered for the dedication service while Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the sermon.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Norman, OK**, purchased 14 acres at Highway 9 and 24th Avenue S.E., according to Pastor **Joe Grizzle**. The church plans to build on this site in the future. The property had been owned by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and sold for \$185,000.

Members of **Union Grove FWB Church** in **Adkins, AR**, paid off their \$72,000 mortgage in six years. Pastor **David Bishop** led the group in a note-burning celebration.

Here's an **Arkansas** congregation that paid off a \$36,000 mortgage in three years. Members of **Welcome Home FWB Church** in **Hector** paid off that mortgage and another \$10,000 note. **Randell Williams** pastors.

Pastor **Levan Hubbard** reports eight baptisms and two conversions at **Rolling Oaks FWB Church** in **Maumelle, AR**. The new church conducted their first communion and feet-washing service with 19 participants. They reported 40 consecutive weeks with first-time visitors in each service. ■

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Missions Alive, Well On Campus

By Bert Tippet, FWBBC Publications Director



Sean Warren

*Mission
fields are
already
here for
FWBBC
students.*

Free Will Baptist Bible College has enjoyed a growing missions awareness among its students, faculty and staff in recent months.

Evidence of this is seen in many areas. For instance, some 80 students and teachers attended the GO Conference, November 5-6, in Rock Eagle, Georgia. This conference, sponsored by Columbia Bible College, has drawn growing numbers of FWBBC students in recent years. This year's delegation from the College was one of the largest at the conference.

Another indicator is the involvement of many Bible College students with non-English-speaking students in Nashville. This has come about primarily through the ministry of the International English Institute, which promotes contacts between English-speaking Christians and international students who come to the U.S. to study. Through these contacts, doors open enabling Christians to share their faith with those from other countries.

The following account is just one of the stories coming from students who have become involved in missions while studying at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Sean Warren is a junior from Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Here is his story:

In September of this year, I had the opportunity to establish a friendship with two Turkish students studying English here. This opportunity came to me by means of the International English Institute (I.E.I.).

My first encounters were somewhat awkward, but, slowly, our conversations deepened and I began to realize that these two young men were just like me—almost.

By October, I was well on my way to knowing these men, personally. They had shared many things with me—their dreams, family life, friendships, even their food. One thing, in particular, that stood out to me was their faith. My friends were Muslim, and I found myself challenged by this aspect of their lives. I decided that I would not be intimidated by the mystique of Islam, Allah, Mohammad and all of the rituals. Little did I know that God was at work in His own mighty way.

I was sitting in my dorm room one evening,

debating whether to do my homework or take a nap, when I remembered a seminar on witnessing to Muslims that was being given that night on campus. My first thought was that I was too busy to go. It would probably be boring, anyway. Quietly, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me and caused me to consider my friends in the light of Eternity.

Arriving at the seminar, I met the speaker, Douglas Layton, of Servant Group International. He presented a message of hope and redemption for the Islamic world—numbering nearly a billion people! I felt challenged about my relationship to God and to my Muslim friends.

After two nights attending the seminars, I felt that my understanding of Islam had grown, and so had my responsibility to be a witness. Little did I know that God had been working behind the scenes!

The night following the seminar, I had an opportunity to talk to one of my Muslim friends about Christ. This wasn't just a time of religious babble. It was productive. Many questions were raised and I found the opportunity to share my faith. Surprisingly, the Lord gave me an opportunity to witness to my other Muslim friend, as well. Again, it was in-depth. He raised questions about my assurance of salvation and how God could show me His love. I answered his questions with, "For God so loved the world, that he gave..."

I have learned that I don't have to convince people to believe. That is the Holy Spirit's job. But I do have to be ready to present Christ to any person I may meet. I may be the only link between them and Heaven!

You don't have to become a missionary to witness cross-culturally. My two friends live less than five houses away from my dorm!

Sean's friends have not accepted Christ—yet.

Please pray for them and for a growing missions awareness at the college. Also pray that we will be able to reach those whom God has placed within our reach. ■

For a Catalog, call
1-800-76-FWBBC



THE FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

What is the Free Will Baptist Foundation?

By William Evans

A recent stroll through an antique store brought me face to face with a rather strange item. Although I enjoy woodworking, attended shop classes three years in school and manufactured early American style furniture for several years, I could not remember ever seeing such an object. After picking it up and looking it over from different angles, I began to form an opinion. But it was the clerk who finally identified it—it was a wood plane for making ornamental molding. The clerk proceeded to show me several cuts he had made with the plane.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation is a strange "thing" to a lot of us. It is part of our national organization; it has a legal description and identity, yet many people do not know what it is and what it does. Let me show you.

A widow wants a guaranteed steady monthly income as long as she lives. She invested money in a bank CD a few years ago which provided reasonable return, but when it matured recently she was offered only 3.5 percent. Instead, she made an arrangement with the Foundation called a gift annuity, providing a much higher return and guaranteeing a final benefit to her favorite ministries when she dies. This irrevocable agreement is personalized to achieve her wishes. She has made a gift to her favorite ministries and gets greater income too.

A business man plans to achieve several goals. He has made a significant gift to a number of national ministries and his local church. In return, he will receive regular income and a substantial charitable gift deduction for this year's income tax return. Any of this deduction not used on this year's return may be carried forward for up to five years. He will use a Charitable Remainder Unitrust to achieve these goals.

A retired couple want to increase their income from part of their savings but do not want to give away all the principal. With a Foundation revocable trust they will get a significant increase in their rate of earnings and maintain access to the principal with a short notice and no penalty. If both die before revoking the agreement, 80 percent of their funds will go directly to their surviving family and 20

percent will go to various Free Will Baptist ministries.

A retired widow has another revocable agreement with the Foundation. She does not want income presently, so interest is simply added to the principal. She also wants 100 percent to go to a special ministry of her district association at her death. Until she dies, the money is fully available to her.

Do you have questions about ways the Foundation can help you? Call 615-731-6812. There is no obligation and you might find it interesting.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation! What is it? It is the ministry of matching your wishes with the needs of our denominational work. ■

In Memory Of . . .

By . . .

Allen Carpentier

Frank and Myrna Carpentier
Oklahoma City, OK

Jerry Presley

Randall and Gladys Steelman
Glen Carbon, IL

In Honor Of . . .

By . . .

Lora Shutes

Herbert and Geraldine Waid
Moultrie, GA

Rev. Carl Vallance

Ralph and Maud Dean
Huntington, WV



HOME MISSIONS

Help Wanted!

By Roy Thomas

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few," was spoken by the Lord in Matthew 9:37 nearly 2,000 years ago, and it is still true today. The Home Missions Department needs some new missionaries!

Several missionaries have led their churches to become self-supporting, and two others plan to be self-supporting soon. This is the ultimate goal all missionaries are working toward, but it has reduced the number of workers we have on the field.

Only two men are on deputation at this time, and one of these will soon conclude his itinerate. This is the smallest number of home missionaries we have had on itinerate in a long time. New laborers are definitely needed.

Where are workers needed?

Several state and district mission boards in California, Illinois, South Carolina, Michigan, Indiana and Virginia have expressed concern about cities which need Joint Project workers. The following is a list of cities that either have a group of people wanting a Free Will Baptist church, or a mission board has targeted the city, or some group within the state has asked for a missionary:

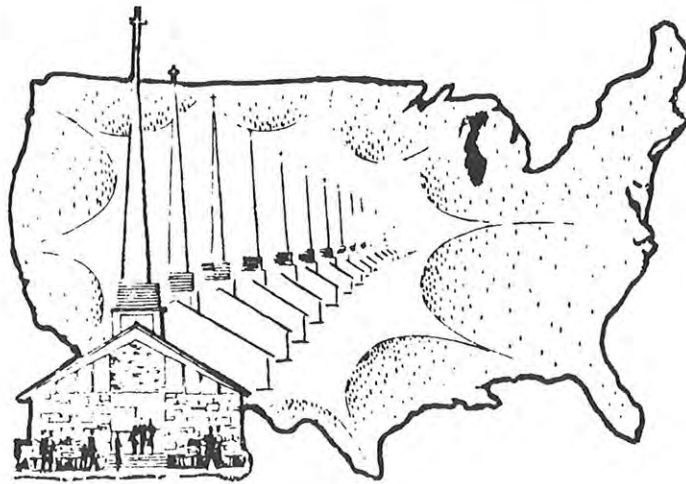
- Santa Clarita, California
- Lincoln, Nebraska
- Bloomington, Illinois
- Columbia, South Carolina
- Fort Wayne, Indiana
- Seattle, Washington
- Boise, Idaho
- Bozeman, Montana
- Laramie, Wyoming
- Minot, North Dakota
- Aurora, Colorado

Letters containing Macedonian calls for help have come to me from Albuquerque and Carlsbad, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; Springfield, Massachusetts; Olympia, Washington; Missoula, Montana and several cities in Florida. Please help the Home Missions Department

pray that dedicated men and women with pioneer spirits will respond to these Macedonian calls to plant Free Will Baptist churches in the many needy cities of our country.

If you are interested in going as a missionary to one of these needy cities, please contact the

Home Missions Department. *"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest"* (Matthew 9:37-38). ■





RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

The First Chapter

By Alton Loveless

Dr. Roger Reeds and I have completed the last chapter of our own roles, he with the Sunday School Department and me in Ohio. These have been long chapters in both our lives and I am sure many may have wished we had written them differently.

This month we begin new chapters. He is ushering in retirement and I become his successor. I wanted to advise our denomination of my hopes for Randall House. My dreams are too many for this page. For months I have been formulating goals and ideas for the growth of the department and the type preparation that not only would teach our people but provide material to help our churches reach a world without Jesus Christ.

We are a diverse denomination with churches of all sizes and in many places across the United States. Needs vary and tools to help them are necessary. I am very conservative when it comes to the scripture, but I believe we must be aggressive in our methods of reaching the vast masses without Christ in America.

I have traveled, preached, served as a consultant and conducted more than 700 seminars among 68 different denominations in 47 states and 32 foreign countries. This opportunity has allowed me to see what others are doing. Some were good and some no better than what we are doing. But it has given me many ideas. Such a touch has not softened my doctrinal position but has given me friends whose expertise in Christian education offered me a wider scope of what is available or used by others to complete the Great Commission. I am a team player and denominational person.

I am convinced that Christian education and the Sunday School must be a vital part of evangelism. The process of teaching and training new converts is necessary for their growth and the continuing education of all people in our churches. Dr. Howard Hendricks gave a definitive character of Christian education with the following statement, "Christian education is not an option, it is an order; it is not a luxury, it is a life. It is not something nice to have; it is something necessary to have. It is not a part of the work of the church; it is the work of the

church. It is not extraneous; it is essential. It is our obligation, not merely an opinion."

As people differ in their gifts, abilities and educational levels, we must produce material to help them reach their areas. I have an appreciation for the past but believe we must adapt for the future.

I have a concern for our image and will attempt to offer innovative ideas to make us as good as competition. Not only in content, presenting our biblical teachings, but in graphics and methodology. This will take time because of the logistics and time it takes to produce Sunday School literature.

I want the department to offer help by building a network of workshop leaders across our denomination to help our struggling Sunday Schools. History reveals our department had its best days when there were those in the field helping train local church workers. It will take time to find people concerned about our churches and their growth. We need those able to help them not to just "keep the faith" but teach how to give it away. This is Christian education at work. It is the Bible in coveralls.

Last chapter! At 56, becoming the general director of the Sunday School Department was not what I had in mind. Yet, nearly all my adult life has been in Christian education, either with a publishing wholesaler or in retail, so the preparation for this role was not foreign to me or the requirements needed for the directorship. I desire the prayers of our people and solicit the patience of our segments in allowing me time to do the tasks before me. The job alone will be chore enough to plan, prepare and then promote the material. Time is our biggest enemy and His return must surely be close. Please join me for the work ahead and let us do battle against the devil. ■



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THE TOGETHER WAY

Totals
October 1993

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	CO-OP	Total	Oct. '92	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 5,512.07	\$.00	\$ 5,512.07	\$ 107.77	\$ 80,523.85
Arizona	.00	10.00	10.00	.00	1,923.62
Arkansas	17,875.77	6,751.22	24,626.99	6,069.41	268,818.50
California	.00	639.49	639.49	1,223.14	7,900.32
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	250.00	250.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	97.95	2,500.09	2,598.04	1,508.93	22,271.39
Georgia	9,045.38	1,309.38	10,354.76	7,836.92	104,953.02
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	500.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	93.62
Illinois	5,449.05	1,596.73	7,045.78	9,023.04	77,247.96
Indiana	664.34	190.48	854.82	1,796.02	6,946.98
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	360.00
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	74.43	221.90
Kentucky	100.00	579.23	679.23	1,550.00	9,584.44
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	40.00
Maryland	.00	300.00	300.00	150.00	900.00
Michigan	3,759.01	1,328.94	5,087.95	8,480.76	138,638.08
Mississippi	265.00	433.59	698.59	330.25	5,914.64
Missouri	8,802.07	.00	8,802.07	10,511.37	101,127.82
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	202.49	8.11	210.60	.00	628.70
North Carolina	507.15	950.00	1,457.15	1,071.52	14,240.20
Ohio	190.00	2,913.92	3,103.92	2,304.74	39,810.30
Oklahoma	50,764.37	.00	50,764.37	49,244.70	427,585.04
South Carolina	17,034.72	113.96	17,148.68	18,844.65	175,976.98
Tennessee	921.50	545.61	1,467.11	9,486.41	78,176.99
Texas	.00	.00	.00	.00	78,971.64
Virginia	880.92	1,542.47	2,423.39	1,222.24	9,694.32
West Virginia	.00	79.25	79.25	4,393.56	36,744.12
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	26.88
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	38.18	93.07
Other	.00	(.08)	(.08)	.00	168.89
Totals	\$122,071.79	\$21,792.39	\$143,864.18	\$135,518.04	\$1,690,333.27

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 9,674.94	\$15,648.16	\$ 25,323.10	\$ 25,323.09	\$ 253,230.88
Foreign Missions	76,518.93	1,413.18	77,932.11	70,877.54	886,029.35
FWBBC	6,483.40	1,413.18	7,896.58	7,033.34	106,273.49
Home Missions	24,647.78	1,105.96	25,753.74	23,731.42	310,576.04
Retirement & Insurance	548.02	860.21	1,408.23	1,656.00	22,604.36
Master's Men	1,299.79	860.21	2,160.00	1,740.82	28,117.02
Commission for Theo. Integrity	74.00	30.71	104.71	155.81	1,505.90
FWB Foundation	937.69	368.65	1,306.34	1,073.31	14,248.52
Historical Commission	71.44	30.71	102.15	155.81	1,396.21
Music Commission	51.24	30.71	81.95	102.78	1,298.02
Radio & TV Commission	56.26	30.71	86.97	121.93	1,387.01
Hillsdale FWB College	464.80	.00	464.80	671.46	17,685.00
Other	1,243.50	.00	1,243.50	2,874.73	45,981.47
Totals	\$122,071.79	\$21,792.39	\$143,864.18	\$135,518.04	\$1,690,333.27

YOUTH UPDATE

Youth Day 1994 February 6, 1994

Imagine preparing worship services and Sunday School lessons, planning activities and meals, and juggling dozens of competition sections, all at the same time for 14,985 children and teens.

Imagine the task of selecting topics and speakers, securing lodging and meals, and providing training for 426 top-notch future Free Will Baptist leaders.

Imagine preparing an evangelistic program, planning a 10-day tour, and conducting a week-long rehearsal session for 65 winners of national competition.

Love made me do it!

These are a few chapters in the history of the Youth Ministries Division over the past 10 years. We have the opportunity to host the annual National Youth Conference, the Truth and Peace Youth Leadership Conference, and the National Youth Evangelistic Team. In addition to these programs, we are aggressively seeking opportunities to train and equip those who work with our young people.

No doubt many of you are familiar with these programs, and some of the young people in your church have participated in these events. Some of you know first-hand and have seen young people whose lives have been transformed by being led to the Savior. Opportunities like these make the

existence of the Youth Ministries Division worthwhile.

We like to dream big and set our sights toward the future because we believe in young people. We believe they are a dominant part of our denomination and have a lot to offer the church. We also want to encourage you to provide opportunities of service and ministry for your young people.

You can do this by participating in the upcoming National Free Will Baptist Youth Day, February 6, 1994. I

hope you will take advantage of this special day and allow your young people to conduct or participate in your worship service. By doing so, you show them that they, too, have a place of service for the Lord.

In conjunction with Youth Day, many youth groups hold fund raisers in order to benefit their own youth work and also to help support the Youth Ministries Division. Please consider planning such an event before Youth Day and help support your Youth Ministries Division. If you would like more information, please write us at: P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, TN 37217. ■



Husbands and Wives (Part 4)

I Corinthians 7:32-40

In the previous study (on v. 17-24) we noted that Paul has turned his attention to unmarried believers at Corinth. He has told them that it is perfectly acceptable to marry. Indeed, as v. 1-7 pointed out, that will be the divinely-intended way for most. But some are given a gift to remain unmarried, and Paul sees this as a "good" (v. 8) that he highly recommends.

The freedom of the unmarried to serve the Lord (v. 32-35).

The reasons behind Paul's recommendation are several. First, being "without carefulness." This Greek word (*amerimnos*) has the same root as "Be careful (for nothing)" in Philippians 4:6 and "take thought" in Matthew 6.

The basic idea is of being pulled, and so being in a state of tension or anxiety or distraction; the last word fits the context well here. The married person "cares" (v. 33-34; same Greek root) for things that belong to this world-order, in order to please husband or wife. That isn't necessarily bad, but it is necessarily so!

Second, the unmarried person is more free to devote himself (v. 32) or herself (v. 34) to the Lord's service, being "pulled" only in that direction. In v. 34, by the way, "holy both in body and spirit" simply means wholly set apart to the concern of pleasing Christ. It doesn't imply that a married woman is somehow less holy.

Third, Paul is interested in their "profit"—the same word as "expedient" in 6:12. He is not saying this about remaining unmarried in order to "snare" them. This word (Greek *brochos*) may mean a noose or a halter, such as would choke or at least restrict freedom. Their "profit"

is further explained as what is "comely" (becoming, seemingly, attractive) and will enable them to "attend upon" (wait on, be in constant service to) the Lord without any "distraction" (encumbrance, hindrance).

All of this helps us understand even more fully what Paul meant in v. 29-31, living in recognition of the fact that the whole world-order that we know now is in process of passing away.

The responsibility of fathers toward their daughters (v. 36-38).

These verses are difficult. Some interpreters think Paul is referring to a man and virgin engaged to marry him; others think this is a "brother-sister" marriage. But the most likely interpretation is that this is a father who faces the question whether to arrange for his daughter's marriage (as was done in that culture).

That way, "behaving uncomely" would be dishonoring her by not arranging for her marriage even though she has come to be of marriageable age. The "need," therefore probably means that she does not have the special gift of celibacy. Then in such circumstances a father may proceed to make such arrangements knowing he does so without guilt of wrongdoing. The daughter and her suitor may marry.

But if he can keep her unmarried, that too will be good. Two things will be required in that case: he must be able to do so in good conscience (steadfast in his heart); and there must be no "necessity," probably meaning constraint or pressure applied by the daughter, that keeps him from being fully free to follow his own will in the matter.



Robert E. Picirilli

The considerations that a widow faces (v. 39-40).

In the case of a widow, as in the previous matters, there are also two choices. She may remarry with no sense of wrongdoing. Once her former husband is dead she has complete freedom to remarry as long as this is to a Christian and with a sense of God's will ("in the Lord"). Death dissolves the marriage bond whether anything else does (as in v. 15?) or not.

Even so, Paul's judgment, which he regards as given in possession of the mind of the Holy Spirit, is that such a widow will be happier if she does not remarry. By implication, he means that if she has the gift of celibacy she can do as described in v. 34: devote herself in complete consecration to the service of the Lord. ■

Directory Update

Indiana

Vinny Van Hoose to Wabash First Church, Wabash
Barry Reel to First Church, North Judson
Steve Ashby to First Church, Chesterfield

Other Personnel

Jeff Nichols to Donelson Church, Nashville, TN, as minister of children from Calvary Fellowship Church, Fenton, MO
Kenny Myers to Southern Oaks Church, Oklahoma City, OK, as minister of youth
Rick Pope to Southern Oaks Church, Oklahoma City, OK, as minister of music



Thomas Marberry

Your Commonsense Guide to Personal Financial Planning

Charles Ross,

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993, paperback, 214 pp., \$9.99)

Christians should not be obsessed with money, but they should be concerned about it. Accumulating wealth should never be the primary goal of a follower of Jesus Christ, but all believers have a responsibility to God and to themselves to manage wisely the financial resources available to them.

In this concise and interesting volume, Charles Ross provides the kind of information which middle-class Americans need to know in order to budget, save, invest wisely and plan for the future. He stresses the importance of developing a family budget, establishing financial goals, setting priorities which are realistic, and then living within them.

In order for this type arrangement

to work, every member of the family must understand the family financial plan, feel ownership of it and be committed to it. This family financial plan should be written down and reviewed periodically.

In today's economic conditions, families and individuals need to control their expenditures and reduce their debts. Ross gives several helpful ideas on how these goals may be accomplished. He discusses the question of housing. He notes that in some circumstances it is better to rent than to buy.

Wise purchasing is also an important part of a family financial plan. The author outlines how to get the best deals available on insurance, automobiles and other major purchases.

Ross devotes considerable attention to the wise use of credit and to the various investment opportunities which are available today. He emphasizes that in today's uncertain economic climate, all families need a cash reserve to provide some protection in case of emergencies.

This book contains the kind of hard-nosed financial advice we need to hear. We simply must discipline ourselves to save more and spend less. It gives us practical suggestions on how we can protect our own financial future and use the financial resources we have to glorify God. This is a book which not only needs to be read, it needs to be obeyed. ■

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY NEWS

Church Salaries Increase Despite Economy

DIAMOND BAR, CA (EP)—Church and non-profit organization salaries kept pace with prior years despite economic difficulties, according to the annual Christian Ministries Salary Survey conducted by the Christian Management Association. Though some ministries reported reductions in compensation for the first time in four years, most non-profit ministries reported salary increases.

Church salaries averaged a four percent gain over last year's figures. The average increase for pastors and members of the ministerial staff was roughly six percent. Senior pastors and missions/outreach pastors took the smallest increases at 2.9 percent and 1.9 percent respectively.

Though salaries are up, non-profit ministries experienced a decline in the percentage of overall revenue used for payroll. Ministries are using 17.5 percent of revenue towards payroll, a decline of 1.6 percent over last year, a move that may indicate the elimination of positions.

The increase in ministry salaries is smaller

than had been projected. Last year, managers of ministries said they expected to increase salaries by 3.8 percent, but actual increases were only 3.2 percent, indicating budgetary adjustments made during the year. In the most recent survey, respondents projected salaries to increase next year by a more conservative 3.2 percent overall.

Ministries participating in the survey include churches, colleges and universities, camp and conference centers, and other non-profit organizations. Data is reported for each organization in six geographic regions and five budget ranges. An overall average is reported for each position from all combined data.

Falwell May Reactivate Moral Majority

LYNCHBURG, VA (EP)—Is the Moral Majority going to make a comeback? Mass mailings made over the last six months have been asking, "Is it time to reactivate the moral majority?"

The fund-raising appeals from Jerry Falwell, best-known as founder of the Moral

Majority, say, "Some people have told me that I made a mistake in closing Moral Majority a few years ago. At the time, I felt we had reached many of our goals—and I had to devote more time to my ministry and Liberty University. But now—the liberals and New Agers are a much better organized force than we faced in 1979. And they have powerful allies in the White House and Congress."

Falwell's letter suggests that America is "about to become a hedonistic nation of unrestrained homosexuality, abortion, immorality and lawlessness," and lists several examples of political gains made by supporters of gay rights and legal abortion. He urges recipients of the letter to vote on whether or not the Moral Majority should be reactivated.

If the Moral Majority is reactivated, it won't be the same as earlier, said Falwell spokesman Mark DeMoss. "While he hasn't decided specifically how involved he might get politically, he has decided how involved he will not get, and namely he refuses to travel the country like he did in the mid 1980's, and be gone for extended periods of time," DeMoss explained. ■



Jack Williams

Ready for Tomorrow?

My friend, Roger, is ready for 1994. He plans to kick off the new year with a bang—he'll retire on December 31. What a great way to jump into January. Of course, he earned the right to start the year wearing a "mission accomplished" smile because he punched in every morning at the same job for more than 30 years.

How do you plan to get ready for 1994? Can't retire? Oh, well, nice thought. Don't lose heart, though. You may be surprised at the big difference a few small changes can make.

You can do what Jim did after his pastor preached a sermon series on tithing that really irritated him. Jim researched the matter for himself. Sure enough, the preacher was right. The Bible did teach that believers should tithe, even those in debt and in graduate school like Jim.

He and his wife discussed the issue, then decided to experiment by tithing for a year. Did they suddenly get richer? No. But they did suddenly get more careful about how they spent their money.

The 90% that Jim and his wife keep goes further than the 100% did two years ago. Why? They shop smarter and budget closely. Jim no longer feels guilty when someone mentions tithing; he now feels obedient. His church benefits from his tithing. His wife says he's easier to get along with. She's right.

I wish that more people did what Marvin does. Marvin begins at Genesis in January and reads the Bible through at least once every year. She started this practice 20 years ago. How does she do it? (Yes, Marvin is a girl.)

Marvin divides the number of pages in her Bible by the number of days in the year and uses that as a reading schedule. She occasionally gets behind and catches up with a

read-a-thon. Marvin's plan is not perfect, but it works well enough for her that she sometimes reads the entire Bible two or three times a year.

Did I mention that for the past six years Marvin has listened to the Bible on tape once a year? Let's see, that means that in the last 20 years Marvin has read or heard Leviticus about 30 times. (Whew!). It also means she has re-lived Christ's miracles and the Sermon on the Mount 30 times. That makes Marvin a nicer person to be around.

Herman begins each new year the same way. He has a birthday on January 1. He's been doing it since 1926, so he's gotten pretty good at it. He's one of those people who can't hide the fact that every year when the calendar flips over, so does he. In a manner of speaking.

I know a lot of January birthday people. There's Anne, Brad, Jane, Art and others. Without exception, they're unusual people. They get a jump on the rest of us. They have a whole year to adjust to being a year older and to sort things out. Those of us born in June or October only get six or three months, it seems.

Mark has a January habit so obnoxious that every time I think of him I'd like to baptize him in sauerkraut. He cleans out all his files on January 1.

Why can't Mark act normal and watch football games like the rest of us? Why would a grown man trim files on New Year's Day instead of praying for somebody to beat Miami? He knows where all his letters are, where he keeps income-tax receipts, the location of those illustrations he clipped and never used, and can even find his mother-in-law's phone number.

The man's disgusting. Forget that I said anything about Mark. I refuse to feel guilty about watching the Rose Bowl Parade, the Cotton Bowl, the

Sugar Bowl, the Orange Bowl . . .

One friend's goal next year is to read the "S" section in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (unabridged). I was unimpressed until I checked the dictionary. That section covers 329 pages of single-spaced words in six-point type. What you're reading now is 10-point type. Good luck, Charlie!

Fred says he wants to read *The Writings of Arminius* (Vols. 1, 2, 3) before next December. Bruce intended to read all of Chuck Swindoll's books in 1993, but discovered that Swindoll writes 'em faster than he can read 'em.

The best way to begin the new year? That's the way that Ottis and Jerry and Danny and Evelyn will be doing it. They'll all start 1994 in Heaven. You see, they and some other people you know, died last year. They died in faith. They died as Christians. They died after having fought the good fight.

Their decisions to begin 1994 in Heaven were made a long time ago. They asked Jesus to forgive their sins and were born again as children of God. They had no idea when 1993 started that they would leave us permanently.

What are your plans for next year? You might retire, if you've worked 30 years at the same job. You could begin tithing; it's never too late to start. You may decide to read the Bible through in '94.

The new year looks fresh and full of challenge from here. But remember, many of us will have the benediction pronounced on our lives before 1994 ends. If that happens, I made arrangements back in 1958 to go to Heaven. I'm ready for God's final call.

Are you? ■

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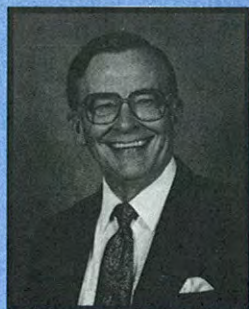
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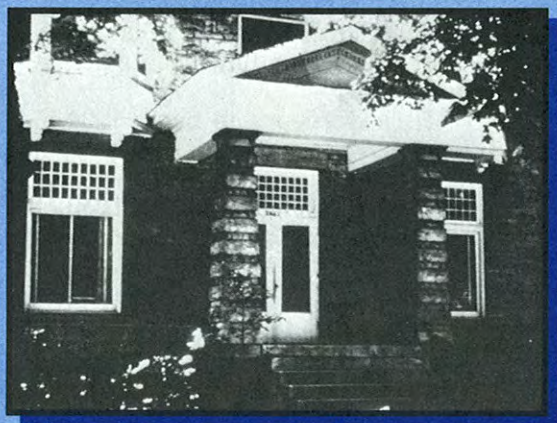
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