

AUGUST 1995

CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS



Pastor Appreciation
Issue

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Why Pastors Resign

.....
A Layman Looks at the Minister

.....
The Perfect Pastor

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How Much is that Preacher in the Window?

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Pastoral Purity

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Ministerial M I A's

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AUGUST 1995

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Pastoral Purity

Pastors face unique pressures in today's society. Time demands and diverse ministries which clamor for attention produce a sense of frustration. There will never be enough time to fulfill all the tasks they face. Something is always left undone.

Twenty-four hours a day, pastors are immersed in their work. Sooner or later, such hectic schedules produce devastating effects on a pastor's physical and psychological well-being. Family and church suffer when the pastor loses focus.

Relationship With Creator

When the pastor maintains a right relationship with the Lord, he gives adequate time to reading and reflecting on the Word of God. The Bible provides sustenance to renew the inward man. It helps the pastor develop discernment, discipline and direction in his ministry.

Time must also be given to waiting on the Lord. Patient prayer develops an intimate relationship with the Lord and a proper focus for ministry. Pastors must carefully guard their relationship with the Lord. Those who fail to guard their personal time invariably flounder—sometimes morally, sometimes spiritually.

The task which God mandates for the pastor is not more than can be done. Pastors who lose their focus get bogged down in "things" and end up doing nothing well.

Relationship With Companion

The pastor's second priority is his relationship with his companion. Marriage was given in order that men and women could live pure and chaste lives. Developing intimacy with his wife provides the basic safeguard against sexual sins for the pastor.

Ministerial causalities can be traced to a lack of intimacy in their marriages. Intimacy between the pastor and his wife should be a lifetime goal. Genesis 2 details the ideal marriage. God's provision for Adam's loneliness was Eve.

The greatest gift the pastor can give his church family is to love his wife. The pastor and his wife serve as role models to men and women in their congregations. Maintaining the proper relationship with his wife enables the pastor to pray, preach and pastor effectively. It will also spare him the disaster of moral misconduct.

Relationship With Children

Parents have a solemn responsibility to their children. The pastor is no exception. One requirement of a bishop is that he rule his own house well and have his children in subjection. This demands discernment, dedication and discipline.

Pastors' children need not grow up hating the ministry. Perceptive pastors give attention to the needs of their children. Churches expect pastors to spend time with their children. Children who grow up in pastoral families and love the ministry had a father who, as a pastor and preacher, made time for them.

Relationship To Church

Duties do not conflict. Pastors have enough time to do their pastoral work without neglecting their families or shirking other responsibilities. Pastors



Melvin Worthington

must learn to deal with time pressures and demands. Discipline requires saying yes and no. It is not a sin to say no when necessary.

God gifts and calls others to serve in the church. Let them! It is the Lord's church, and He will build it. Pastors are required to be faithful, remembering that God worked in the church before they came and will continue to work after they leave.

Relationship To Community

The pastor's testimony in the community impacts his effectiveness as a person, preacher and pastor. Recognizing the influence that a holy, honest and humble life has on the unsaved community will help the pastor avoid behavior that would destroy his public testimony.

Some sins disqualify pastors from serving in the pastoral office. One preacher who had an adulterous affair said that the worst day of the week for him was Sunday. He said with deep sadness in his eyes, his voice flat and dead, "Every Sunday I am reminded that I cannot do the one thing I was born to do—preach."

Pastors can maintain personal purity in the midst of a promiscuous and perverted society. God's grace is sufficient. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

July 31-August 6 Evergreen FWB Church
Iola, Texas

August 8-9 Arkansas State Association



Pastor, Why Did You Resign?

By Randy Cox

The question asked in this title is not often easy to answer. This is especially true when asked by a recent convert or somebody not too enlightened on the inner workings of the church. However, that pastor always knows.

Sometimes it is indeed God's will for a pastor to resign a church. His work at that fellowship has been completed and God is directing him elsewhere. However, years ago an older pastor said to me, "More leave too soon than stay too long. . . ." I believe that he was right.

Too often today, pastors resign their pastorates and never return to ministry of any sort. The attrition rate among pastors increases every year. Sometimes personal moral problems disqualify a man from pastoring. Some leave the ministry because of money problems. Their income is not sufficient to adequately sustain their family. However, neither of these is the major reason most leave the ministry.

Could it be that in many cases the reasons pastors change churches often and others quit the ministry are the same? After 37 years of pastoring, I believe I can shed some light on this

subject. You see, sometimes quitting and changing are not too far apart in a person's mind.

Unsure of Calling

Some preachers are not positively convinced that they are called of God to preach. They are not thoroughly persuaded that this is God's purpose for their life and that they can not be fulfilled doing anything else.

I still believe in a divine call. God calls preachers. God called Moses, Jeremiah, Amos, John the Baptist, Paul and Timothy. God still calls men to preach today. Preaching is the only thing that satisfies the "desire" of the called one (1 Tim. 3:1).

The firm assurance of the call of God is the only thing that will sustain the preacher when confronting the problems of the pastorate. Be sure you are preaching because God has ordained that you do so.

Lack of Commitment

The absence of genuine commitment is a grave problem in today's society. Needless to say, it has spilled over into the ministry. It is exhibited

in the church because it has spilled out of the home, and both of these are the major influences on prospective preachers.

Over 50 percent of marriages end in divorce—no commitment. If you look wrong at some church members, they quit—no real commitment. Often the prospective preacher has seen no real commitment to Bible principle in the home or in church.

Paul said, "The things which happened unto me" will not prevent Christ from being magnified in me, "whether it be by life or by death" (Phil. 1:12,20). He was committed to God and His calling even if it killed him. That is commitment that strikes *quit* from the dictionary.

The preacher must also be committed to personal holiness, fervent authoritative Bible preaching, as well as personal and church-wide soul-winning practice. The methodology that removes the pulpit, demotes the preacher and keeps a parade of Bible versions before a congregation will neither stimulate nor sustain commitment in the preacher's life, much less prompt it in others.

Be committed and you will be "al-

ways abounding in the work of the Lord. . . " (1 Cor. 15:58). Commitment is essential because the great commission is "work."

Overwhelming Frustration

Sometimes a pastor will resign a church and/or the ministry out of overwhelming frustration. Let me give you a familiar scenario. A church seeks a pastor. It specifies that it wants a man with experience. A man is interviewed. Either the committee does not make clear the kind of church it wants or the prospective pastor does not know the questions to ask to find out.

The pastor accepts the pastorate thinking he will be able to use his experience as to what will or will not work. Then he finds that the church has so many restrictions on him that he can make no substantive adjustments utilizing his experience to prevent the same failure he saw in his previous pastorate.

Frequently, a local church constitution will tie an incoming pastor's hands so that he cannot make necessary changes. Can you imagine knowing how to correct a losing, stagnate

situation and being prevented from using what you know, yet all the while knowing that when things go down, you will be blamed? That is frustrating!

The Solution

Laymen are the key to eliminating much of the frustration discussed in the previous paragraph. The pastor is usually the one blamed when the local church situation goes sour. That being the case, lay people should give the pastor authority to prevent the situation from souring, using what experience he has to effect change.

If after interviewing a man, you do not trust (this is the right word) him that much, don't call him. He must trust you, should he come, far more than I am talking about your trusting him. You want him to trust you enough to move his wife and family to where he is on, at best, a 90-day termination notice. Your household is not uprooted at all.

Give some authority to the man who, in most cases, will be blamed if things go wrong to at least use what his experience has shown him will make the ministry grow well. Few

preachers are power hungry. I have seen far more power hungry laymen in my 37 years pastoring than power-hungry preachers. Remember, if you are not called to preach, you are not called to pastor either.

Follow your pastor. Don't call anybody you are not willing to let lead. Loose your pastor's hands. Don't bind him by your reaction to previous pastor(s) errors. Pray for your pastor. Take good care of him and his family.

A man sure of his call, committed to that call of God with a congregation of followers will not always be looking for another pastorate. Nor will he be thinking about quitting. ■

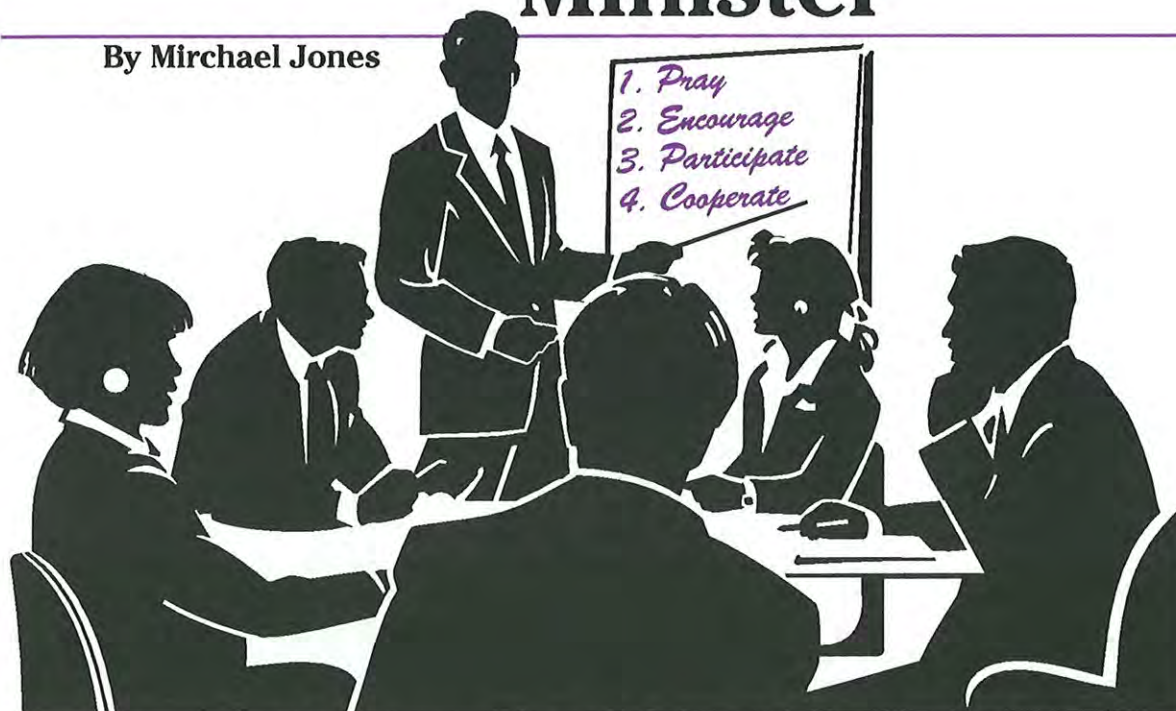


ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. H. Randolph Cox pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina.

**PASTOR APPRECIATION
SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 10, 1995**

How to *Minister* to Your Minister

By Mirchael Jones



The silence sounded like thunder that lay heavy in the air of a stilled prayer meeting. Finally, a lady said, "I think we should pray for them." I acknowledged that, waited a few more minutes of awkward silence, and then went on with the service.

I had just informed the people that I'd been asked to write an article about ways the church could minister to the pastor's family, and was seeking input from them to help me see their perspective. I learned that the average church member does not spend a great deal of time thinking about this subject.

They see the church and, by extension, the pastor, as someone to minister to them, not someone they minister to. They aren't trying to be harsh. They just think of the pastor as an employee who is supposed to fulfill his function, which means meeting their needs instead of them meeting his.

The night before that prayer meeting I had counseled with a young married couple. For nearly three hours, I listened to them snap at each other and watched a marriage dissolve before my eyes. During the entire time,

they failed to express love for each other or say anything positive. I knew that unless that changed soon this couple's marriage would not survive.

Then, on Wednesday morning, a young preacher came by to talk. His church was doing well, and he should have been excited about his prospects. Instead, he sat and talked with increasing discouragement.

For two years the church had shown significant growth numerically and financially. In spite of this increased prosperity and responsibility, no one at the church had mentioned raise, reward or recognition for the pastor.

Unless things change, it will come as a great shock to the church when the pastor announces his resignation. Everyone will establish his own reason for why he left; troubles (known or unknown), burn out, greener pastures, etc. . . . But no one will ever suspect the real reason, lack of appreciation.

This situation and multitudes more like it could be avoided if people would learn the truth of Jones 3:14 (in the devised version), "Everyone needs a little bit of encouragement every now and then."

Members need encouragement. Marriages need encouragement. Ministers need encouragement. The person who protests the loudest that he doesn't need encouragement is the one who seeks it most!

Many will say that the pastor should get his encouragement from the Lord, so they don't need to get involved in the process. But in this matter, as in most spiritual work, God uses human involvement to accomplish divine purposes.

Now that we see the problem, let's find some answers. Let's look at six ways the members of a local church can minister to their pastor so that he can more effectively minister to them.

Participation

Most Christians seem to think Christianity is a spectator sport. What an encouragement it would be to the pastor if everyone in the church began to function in their place in the Body of Christ. Isn't that the one thing he begs and pleads for each week? And it might even free up the pastor to have a night a week at home with his family.

Praise

No one this side of Heaven knows how much a card, letter or phone call telling the pastor about some blessing received from his ministry means to him. I have seen many tattered and ragged "Thank You" notes passed around at ministers' meetings as if they were treasure maps.

Pay

A tangible reward for a job well done. Frankly, the last thing a good pastor should worry about is money. He doesn't need to live like a king, but he should be able to live on the same level as members of his congregation.

Prayer

The lady was right. The church can pray for the pastor and his family on a regular basis. But don't simply pray for God to make him a better pastor. Pray for God to meet his physical, financial, family and spiritual needs (That will make him a better pastor).

Pressure

The pastor is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Provide the means and the method that allow him time during the year to rest, reflect and renew his vision. Don't just assume that the pastor knows he can take a vacation. Someone has to preach, visit and keep things going while he's gone. Set up a system that will ease the pastor's mind as well as his body.

Partnership

One of the greatest joys I have as pastor is the feeling of being in partnership with God and the church. I feel like we are working together as a team to accomplish God's work in our area.

When my car broke down, the people of the church purchased me a good used car so I would have reliable transportation. When my wife was assaulted, they gave me all the time and encouragement I needed to help her in her healing.

When I wanted to start an audio

ministry, they found a P. A. system. When I wanted to begin a video ministry, they donated a camera and help run it each week. When I wanted to put our services on the radio, they immediately volunteered to pay for each week's broadcast.

I could go on, but you get the picture. They encourage me to grow and develop as a person and a pastor, and by doing so they benefit the church.

The way a church treats its pastoral family is usually a significant indication of its own spiritual health. So keep your pastor healthy—emotionally, physically, financially and spiritually. You will reap the benefits. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Mircheal Jones pastors Grace Free Will Baptist Church in Lake City, Florida.

Open Letter to my Church: Thank You Isn't Enough

Every church needs to receive a letter like this one that Reverend Larry Russell received a few months ago from a believer at First Free Will Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia.

Our dearest church family,
It has taken a while for me to put together my thoughts since we took our daughter to school (we are viewing the children's home as a school).

I'm not sure I can put our gratitude into words, but I'm going to give it my best shot. One year ago I visited this church—First Free Will Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia. From that Sunday morning to now, things have changed in my personal life and my entire family.

If it hadn't been for a dear friend, I would probably never have entered the doors of this church. Thank God for friends who invite friends to their church.

Since then, I have rededicated my life to the Lord. My oldest daughter has been saved and baptized. God has provided our family with a better automobile and moved us from a bad apartment complex to a new home where we can feel safe.

My ex-husband and his wife and I are now getting along very well; before, it was a battlefield. My oldest daughter is also my ex-husband's child. For years, it was pain and tribulations over how to deal with the problems our daughter had. But because of Christ in my life, we have "together" made the decision to send her to school.

The Lord has worked hard on convicting us, and we haven't gotten where we are easily. There have been many hours spent on bent knees.

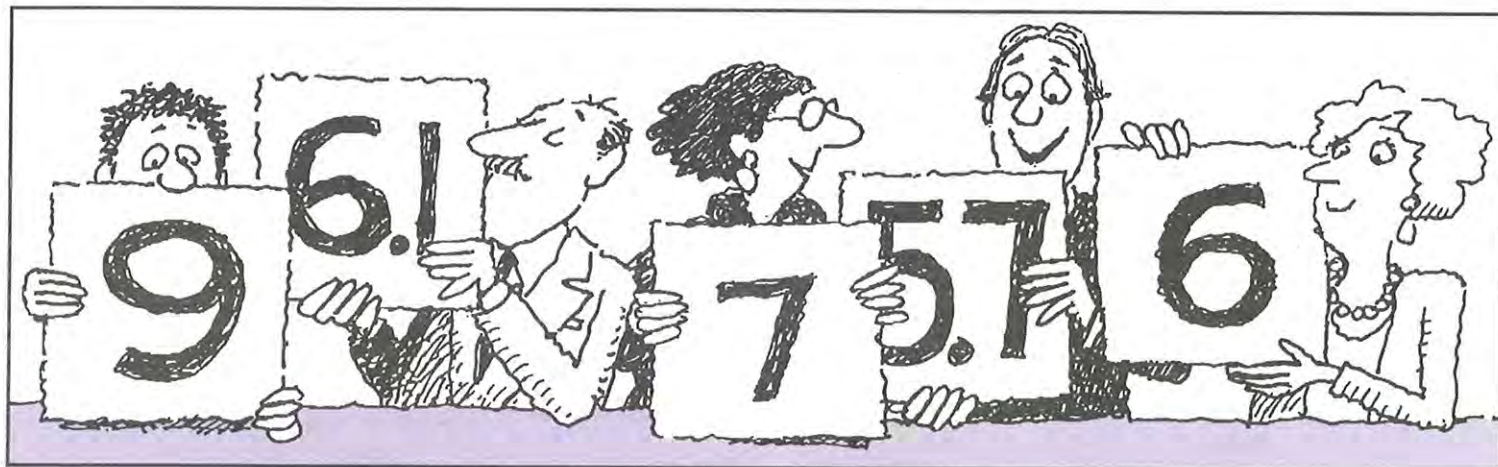
You, our church family, have no idea how supportive you have been. Just the smiles and the hand shakes and hugs have been such encouragement. I doubted my faith when my husband lost his job. Pastor called and reminded me that the adversity would help us grow and that the Lord wouldn't give us more than we could handle. All of you and your prayers helped us get through it. In time of real need, you sent the food basket at Thanksgiving.

Thank you, Pastor, for putting up with 1,000 questions and a zillion phone calls. The foundation of our faith was developed in the Pastor's Class. You taught us to witness to others and to talk about our precious Savior to the lost. You helped me grow every day.

All I can say is, Thank You. Somehow, it doesn't seem like enough.

Terry Wilson

The Perfect Pastor:



Does He Exist?

By Mark Braisher

What a question to answer! Does the perfect pastor exist? Actually, it is very simple to answer—the answer is no. End of story . . . end of article.

No, that's not what we want to hear. We know that none of us is perfect.

Maybe that is where we need to start. Maybe that is the obvious answer—none of us is perfect, none of us does everything well.

For too long, pastors in fundamentalist churches have confused confidence and leadership with arrogance and an authoritative leadership style. We have confused our calling with our ability. God calls us to the ministry. He can equip us, but we often forget that we are still frail and pitiful creatures. Even on our best day, we are very susceptible to inadequacies.

So, what's the perfect pastor like?

Humility

First, he is humble. He stands in terrible awe of the fact that God allows him to serve in this capacity. He realizes the treasure of the souls with

which he has been entrusted. When he speaks to any situation, when he applies God's Word, when he counsels and gives guidance, he realizes that he is human, that he is inadequate for the task, and that he is uninformed as to the whole picture of the situation.

Yes, that's what we need. A pastor who is humble, grateful for the ministry that God has entrusted to him and dependent on Him for the work.

Leadership

I think the second quality of that elusive perfect pastor is leadership. Wait a minute, you just said we need to be humble and meek, and now you want us to be leaders. Maybe more than anything else, God needs us to be leaders.

We go to the doctor to get check ups for our bodies, mechanics for our cars, carpenters for our homes, financial advisors for our money. But where do we go for our souls? Scripture speaks of overseers to help us. Now, the position of overseer is not limited to the pastor, but he should no doubt lead the way. How does the

overseer minister spiritual care?

We preach and teach, but we should also deal one-on-one. The doctor does not diagnose in masses, but on a case-by-case basis. If our bodies deserve such attention, should not our souls deserve at least the same attention? It is often easy to speak from behind a podium or pulpit. Sometimes it is plain cowardice. On the contrary, a leader gets face-to-face, one-on-one and helps saints along.

The spiritual leader does this in full awareness that he does not have the answers, nor does he fully understand the entire situation. But with full reliance on the Holy Spirit, he attempts to prepare the individual so that the Holy Spirit can draw, convince and convict.

The pastor should also be the leader of the church as a whole. That is, he should play a major role in discerning which way God would have the church go. Hopefully, he is the one who has spent years in study and training for the task. He has learned how to read the signs and diagnose the problems. He has spent many hours in prayer seeking God's guidance.

Hopefully, he is the one God has prepared for the task. The world is in need of leaders. One man said that "A leader is someone who finds out which way the people are going and runs around and gets in front." That's not a leader, that's a politician!

Our world needs leaders who will determine the course and lead people to the goal. The world is too full of people in positions who are not leaders. The church needs leaders. The pastorate needs a leader. A leader will gather people around him and take them places they never dreamed they could go. The leader gives direction and encouragement.

Tenacity

Earlier this year, I watched the Nebraska Cornhuskers win the college football national championship. After 22 years of coaching, Dr. Tom Osborne finally captured that elusive goal. He has taken ridicule and criticism for many years for this flaw in

his resume. For years he has won everything except the biggest of prizes, but Dr. Tom never quit. He kept training his players to be strong and persevering.

And finally, Dr. Tom won the prize. Not because he changed with the ridicule or bowed out in defeat. He continuously studied the game, the field and the opponent. He constantly evaluated and fine-tuned the game plan. He is a leader.

Being a leader is not always fun. In fact, it is the leader who takes the risk, who takes the shots, who is criticized and ridiculed. It is the leader, though, who leads the people. The world needs leaders. The church needs leaders. The pastor needs to lead.

So, what is the perfect pastor? Is there such a creature? Probably not.

If there were such a creature, he would be as humble as Mary the mother of Jesus and demonstrate the leadership of Moses. Humbly out in front of God's people. All the time knowing that it would be easier

among the pack; that it is likely he will be unfairly criticized; that he is ill-equipped for the work, but knowing who he is, where he is going and that the most important task for the leader is to stay the course . . . to be faithful. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Mark Braisher pastors Victory Free Will Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri. He is a graduate of Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. He earned the doctor of ministry degree at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

OUR READERS COMMENT

Same Old Stuff

I sorta get tired reading the same old messages with maybe a little different slant. I just glance at the titles and contents and go to something else.

I take the Adventist magazine and really enjoy their messages. Don't agree with everything, but they are really better reading than *Contact*. Not a complaint, just an opinion.

Reverend W.H. Patterson
Daleville, Indiana

New Challenges!

Your January issue was excellent from cover to cover. The young writers challenged and encouraged me.

Reverend J. Mark Vandivort, Pastor
Sunset Free Will Baptist Church
Flagstaff, Arizona

Could Be Better

The magazine has room for improvement.

Nellie Griffith
Ashland, Kentucky

Keep It Coming

Yes! Continue my *Contact*. I enjoy each article every month. My prayers are with you.

Martha Harsar
Lorain, Ohio

South Carolina Pastor Writes

I am writing concerning the article in the March issue, "Mountain Attack." My church family has been blessed by arti-

cles by Brother Murphy, and they have been a help to me as a pastor.

I truly enjoyed reading the near-death experience that helped Thurmon refocus his priorities. God knows that many of us need to get our priorities in order.

I was encouraged by his reference to the *New International Version* of the Bible. Many have trouble reading and understanding the scripture. I have found that some who have a reading or understanding problem have found new life in other versions. I personally enjoy reading the NIV and preaching from it along with the KJV.

I hope that you will continue to bring us good, wholesome and faithful articles that will help us know and love the God we serve.

Reverend John M. Hudson, Pastor
Black River Free Will Baptist Church
Andrews, South Carolina



The new pastor's wife.

Greeting Mrs. Elisha

By Dellilah Scott

On a dike in a Southeast Asian rice paddy in 1969. In and out of cautious sleep, upon a dark leech-infested stench of land with shelling and killing all around, lay my husband—the proud but distant father of our new baby girl.

A still small voice stirred the foreign night. It was the God of peace calling Ronnie Scott to preach.

Since then, in 26 years and with the addition of two more children, my husband has pastored five churches from California to North Carolina.

As I turn memory's pages back through beautiful scenes of those precious years, it pleases me to remember that even before the title "pastor" was placed on Ronnie . . . God's people were caring for us.

There was the youth group at our home church in McCorkle, West Virginia, who gave us luggage for our trip. And the Clovis Free Will Baptist Church with Pastor Meryl Erickson who welcomed us to California

Christian College as we arrived with our two children and only what we had managed to pack into that green Buick 2,900 miles earlier. Two weeks later, when we found a place to live, those kindly folks brought us a bed, a sofa, table and chairs . . . and more!

Meanwhile, Janis Williams had fed and bed our family. She truly opened her heart and home to us, and she made the best tuna and apple salad on homemade rye bread ever eaten. May God bless that woman and her husband who literally blazed the trail west for us as we launched out for the Lord.

Such caring concern and outpourings of loving welcomes continued with each pastorate and never fails to amaze me. The years spin a tale of cleaned and remodeled houses, and parsonages with full refrigerators and open arms upon our arrival. Followed by Sunday dinners, directions on where to go, who to see, what to expect and ask, where to shop and where not to, where to park and

when, how to best reach whom for the Lord and when to visit.

Life With Mrs. Elisha

If the double-spirited prophet Elisha had a wife with him when he pulled his chariot into Shunem, then no doubt Mrs. Elisha was amazed at the loving welcomes from the women and appreciated the grapes, olive oil and meal they brought, and the trips they made with her to the market or to carry water or gather wood.

I'm sure in the weeks and months to come she gratefully accepted all the kindnesses shown her by the Free Will Baptist Shunammite sisters. She and Elisha probably quietly talked each evening in their tiny prophet's suite of Jehovah-Jireh's abundant provisions upon them while pastoring the Shunammmites.

This new pastor's wife (P.W.), Mrs. Elisha, wanted to hear all their plans for worshiping Jehovah and caring for the poor. She delighted to hear their

affectionate descriptions of their first journey with their children to the Temple, of their joyous Passover feasts and quiet holy Sabbaths.

The last thing she wanted to hear about were the weaknesses of the former pastor, Elijah. She probably cringed after hearing one of the women's thoughtless remarks about Mrs. Elijah's poor housekeeping habits or how she had often failed to properly care for Elijah's mantle.

Your New P. W.

Mrs. Elisha's eyes were on the future as will be the eyes of your new pastor's wife. She will be there to help her husband help you serve God. She will be grateful for your kindness and in return will give you a caring, prayerful heart and a listening ear.

No act of kindness on your part will be measured by her in size or dollars. It is seen as your gift of God . . . just given through her, and each smile and thoughtful word is to her as good as gold.

Almost immediately your pain becomes hers, your prayers become hers and your joy hers. When your children sing, smile, cry or surrender their hearts to the Savior . . . she shares it all.

And what she wants more than anything on earth is that God will bless the ministry of her husband through the good people of the church he has been called to pastor.

A New P. W. on the Way

Try to enlist everyone into the excitement and preparation for the arrival of the new P.W. At the Auxiliary meeting prior to the new pastor-family's arrival, decisions should be made as to which women will be available to help when the moving van arrives.

Ask women to assist in the days to follow. Each woman will be able to offer a different kindness; i.e. taking the new P.W. to the schools their children will attend, to the library to get her new card, the utility offices for deposits, the post office and grocery store.

One may wish to drive her around town pointing out doctor and dentist offices, showing her where everything is located from the park to the craft store to the county clerk's office.

Appoint a volunteer to be a "watch-

woman" who lives near the home and can drive by each day for a quick stop to see if there's anything the family may need that they would never mention. Someone who wouldn't hesitate to say, "I noticed you don't have blinds for that window . . . mind if I measure?"

Schedule several women to take by meals for a week or so while others get the new family and furniture settled.

The ladies may want to recruit a handyman from the church to repair the leaky washer hose or a damaged table leg. The men may want to keep a watch for problems that may have developed enroute. Maybe the car has a new knock or rattle.

When the New P. W. is Settled

Avoid too much or too little attention. Some P.W.s crave company and constant companions; others prefer precious peaceful moments alone or with family at home. Avoid stereotypes of a P.W.'s function.

Some will be blessed with a gift for leading women, and the Auxiliary may be her cup of tea. Another may take to the Sunday School . . . or the music department may be her heart-beat. Or, God may have simply and beautifully blessed her with the quiet gifts of prayer and encouragement.

Remember she has left her family, her roots and everything familiar to take you, as Ruth did Naomi, to live among you, to raise her children among yours, to serve her God with you and maybe even to die among your people.

Remember, her husband will spend hours away from her . . . in study, in prayer and planning, in visitation. At times he will be away night after night after long night in hospital waiting rooms . . . many sad times to return home only to begin preparing words of comfort and hope for a grieving family.

He may be away days, even weeks, in a revival. But always . . . always, she will welcome him home and whisper a prayer of thankfulness that God chose to use him.

Remember that she is unique. Maybe she is quiet and demure . . . or maybe she's a riot! She may rejoice with victory hallelujahs . . . or worship in

quiet confidence. She may need your encouragement before she turns a hand . . . or you may need to catch your breath when she moves into action.

Whatever her knack or know-how, remember . . . who knows but God may have brought you this pastor's wife (exactly as she is) "for such a time as this!"

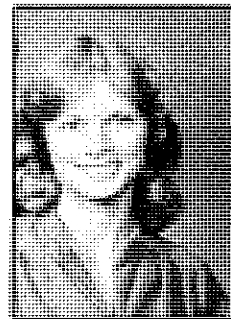
As for This P. W.

My years as a pastor's wife have not been without threads of sorrow, misunderstanding and failure. But those dark threads have been blended by a Master weaver into a beautiful fabric which, when viewed now, brings only joy and reveals how meticulously and graciously Jesus' hand has led us all the way.

Warm welcomes, followed by the day after day watchful concern and kind deeds of God's people have left this P.W. with the feeling that if Peter's wife had been with him at his new pastorate when the news came of her mother's illness, the church would have brought her a USAir ticket to spare her the long arduous camel/donkey ride home.

And if John the Baptist had left a wife behind when he entered the wilderness to learn how to "prepare a way" and to work on his "Repent!" cry, then his tender farewell kiss on her cheek probably had not cooled before the Auxiliary women were helping her collect choice camel hair for her to UPS to her beloved John.

So, you have a new pastor's wife moving in? Prepare for her as you would for your daughter or mother. Accept her as she is . . . and love her forever. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Delilah Scott is a member of Laurel Free Will Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, where her husband, Ron, pastors.

A tribute to Helen Sanders

Fifty Years A Pastor's Wife!

By Luther Sanders

My wife, Helen Sanders, went to be with the Lord on April 18, 1995, after a brief illness. Helen had been a faithful Free Will Baptist pastor's wife for 50 years. In fact, we celebrated our 50th anniversary on April 8 in her hospital room. I slipped a 14-carat bracelet on her arm and tried to tell her how much I loved her and appreciated the 50 years she had shared with me. Ah, the past 50 years!

It all started on April 8, 1945, when Helen, a 17-year-old girl agreed to marry me, a 22-year-old sailor home on leave from the South Pacific war zone. This young girl who had spent only one night away from home, left father, mother, brother and sister to travel with me in a train day coach to California where we spent the last 15 months of my navy enlistment.

Our only means of transportation was bus or train, and these were priorities for movement of military personnel. We didn't even have a telephone for her to call home.

After my navy discharge, we both enrolled in Free Will Baptist Bible College and then Bob Jones University. Needless to say, those years were lean, luxuries nonexistent. Through all the trying times, Helen was my greatest encourager, and she never complained.

After graduating from B.J.U., we were called to organize a church in Florence, South Carolina, with a salary of \$35 per week. By this time we had a baby (Brenda) and, of course, we needed extra things. But Helen decided, without any pressure from me, to stay home and be a mother and a full-time pastor's wife.

This attitude prevailed through the years and, as a result, we never did have a lot of extra things. But we had enough. Helen knew how to sew, and she bought clothes from the Salvation Army thrift stores. I have never known her to buy clothing that was not on sale. She saw to it that ours were the best-dressed children in school. They

never got a free lunch at school; Helen either packed their lunch or gave them money to pay for it.

She followed this same pattern when we pastored in Cordova, Alabama; Monett, Missouri; Garner, North Carolina and Hawaii. No one can imagine how she worked and sacrificed in establishing the church in Hawaii.

When there appeared to be those who were ungrateful and took advantage of her, she would console both me and herself by saying, "I did not do this for them but for the Lord. He is keeping the records."

For the past few years, we have been enjoying a limited ministry in North Zulch, Texas. When we began this ministry, the building was in very bad condition, after being closed for five or six years. But with her ideas and leadership, today it is the most beautiful church in town, both inside and out.

Helen was active in women's work wherever she lived. She was always a leader in the district and state woman's auxiliaries. She was president of the state Woman's Auxiliary in North Carolina. At the time of her death, she was president of the Woman's Auxiliary in Texas. Helen was also involved with national level work, serving on the WNAC Executive Committee and as national youth director of the Auxiliary work many years ago.

Helen was noted for her ladies Bible classes, especially in Hawaii and North Carolina, where today about 60 ladies meet once a week as "The Helen Sanders Bible Class." During the past few years, even to the time of her death, she gathered a few ladies together for Bible study.

Helen liked beautiful things, not expensive things. She could take nothing and make something beautiful out of it, and she has succeeded in doing this with every project except one—me. She was still working on me.

I was privileged to be married to the most unselfish lady that I ever knew. She was committed to me



Luther and Helen Sanders

and my ministry and dedicated to the cause of Christ. The following is one of many poems I wrote to her through the years. This one was for a special occasion in 1975.

My Wife Helen

Words are inadequate, adjectives too few
To express my respect and love for you.
To me you've been not only a wife
But someone to love and share my life.

To our children there is no other
To compare to you as a loving mother.
You've been unselfish, kind and good
In precept and example—as a mother should.

If I were able to make a speech,
Sing a song, or even preach,
I'd tell all children, women and men
What a wonderful wife and mother you've been.

When I get to Heaven someday,
I'll walk up to Jesus in person and say,
"Thank you, Lord, first for eternal life
and next for Helen, my wonderful wife."

Since Helen's death, many of her friends have asked what they could do. The family asks that an offering be sent to the Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department or the Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee. We would like to begin a scholarship in her honor. ■

.....
ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Luther Sanders pastors North Zulch Free Will Baptist Church in North Zulch, Texas.

Why retire when you have a good church, a nice salary and everything is going well? No one wants you to leave, but somehow you feel it is time to retire. Is it foolish for a preacher who is 63 and in good health to consider retiring? In my case, I feel the time has come.

I grew up in a small country church, was saved at 16 and called to preach. Opportunities to preach came soon, since there was a shortage of preachers in Oklahoma in those days.

I began preaching at the Hawkins Church and the Healdon Church, pastored the Wolf, Pleasant Hill and Allen FWB Churches. I served as pastor of the Odessa (TX) Church and attended college two years in Texas. I pastored the Poteau Church, then went to Northside in Phoenix, and back to the Poteau Church. I served as dean of students as well as public relations director at Hillsdale College.

I pastored the East Tulsa (Woodcrest) Church from 1980 to 1995. I was moderator of the Oklahoma, Arizona and Texas State Associations. I served on the Hillsdale College Board of Trustees and also on the State Executive Board. I have preached over 400 revivals. With that in mind, I consider this subject of why retire or why not.

I am of the opinion that I am past what we call "prime time." How long is prime time for a minister? I do not know. I wonder, however, how many people would go see a football game played by 63-year-old men. You may say that's not a fair comparison, and perhaps it isn't.

I am amazed at how many of us older people think we can do everything we used to do. We confess that we are as healthy as ever; the eye sight is fine and our reflexes are as good as they've ever been. Who are we kidding?

Facing reality is a difficult thing to do. However, we must face the truth about ourselves. I cannot set a time for you to retire. Be honest with yourself, because you owe it to the people.

Have you ever heard this statement, "I do not believe preachers ought to retire." I have heard it all my life. It sounds spiritual, but I am not convinced that it is. It is not a sin to retire, as some have led us to believe. Every minister ought to start early making plans to retire.

Start saving now for retirement.

Social Security is far from adequate. Find a program, and set aside something each month for that eventual day of retirement. It will probably come quicker than you anticipate.

"Preacher, do you have a hobby?" I have been asked. Yes, I have several, but my most enjoyed one is trying to figure out why people do what they do. Having listened to some of our older ministers preach, I wondered why they haven't retired. I have sometimes wondered that about some younger preachers.

I am most thankful for congregations that put up with us as we pass prime time and come into those golden years. I have heard my people making excuses for me. How nice.

One of my concerns about retirement is contentment. Can I be content with past accomplishments? Will I be content when I am no longer in charge? Can I be content to sit on the sidelines and cheer for my younger fellow ministers?

Yes, I will be content to relinquish my position to the younger men, really believing they will do a good job. I will be content to watch and pray. The Bible says that contentment with godliness is great gain. So, go for it young men! We support you.

Reverend Gregory, a Methodist

minister, retired in the town where he pastored. While I was pastor there, I watched him carefully. He did a splendid job tending to his own affairs, leaving the church to his successor. He has

always been my shining example of a man who retired gracefully. I want to follow his example.

I believe it is time to turn it over to the next

generation. I will put my trust in the young men who continue

to lead. If they go in a wrong direction, our people will let them know. The young men do not need our opposition. They need our prayers, support and encouragement.

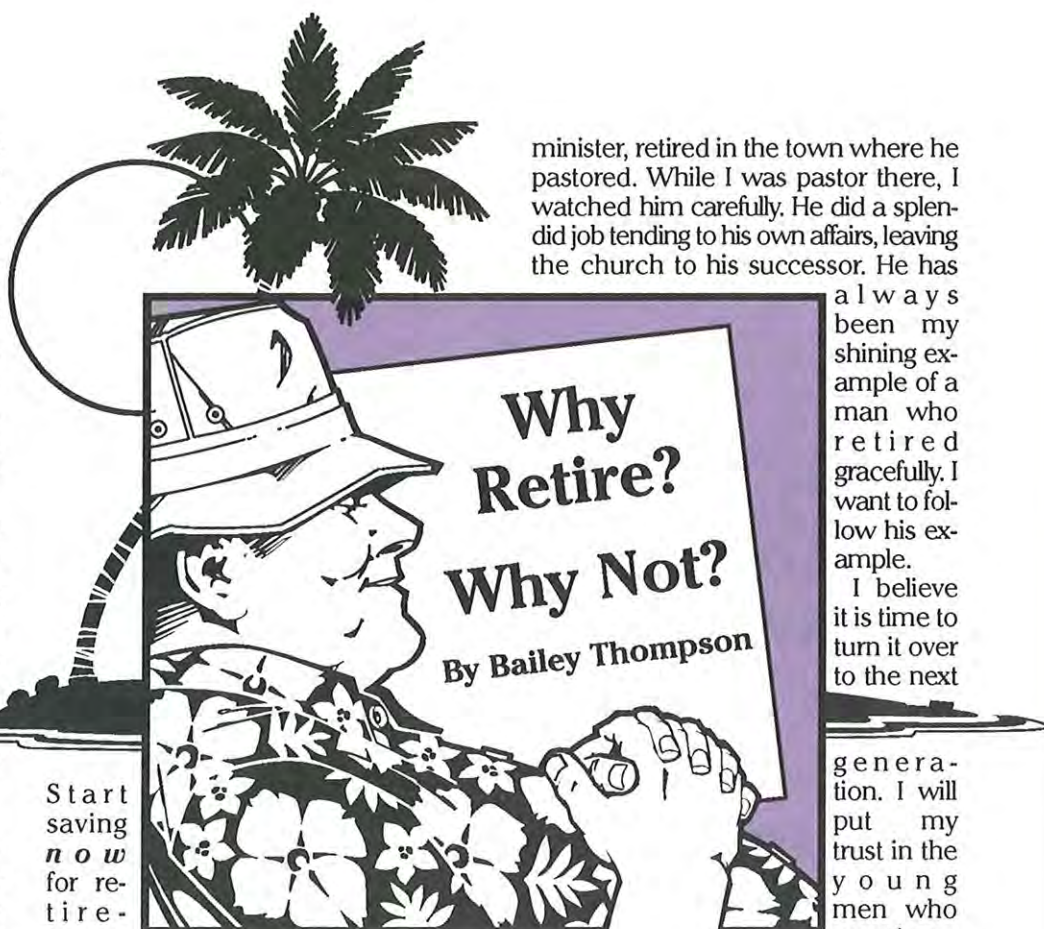
Who knows what the future holds? I am willing to trust God with the future, because He has done a good job in the past. However God wants to use me, I will follow. I will be content and continue to thank and praise Him for calling me to be a minister.

God has provided many opportunities that have exceeded my dreams. I leave with the satisfaction that I have done what He called me to do. My wife and I love Free Will Baptists for the opportunity they gave us to serve.

Why retire? Instead, perhaps you should say, "Why Not?" ■

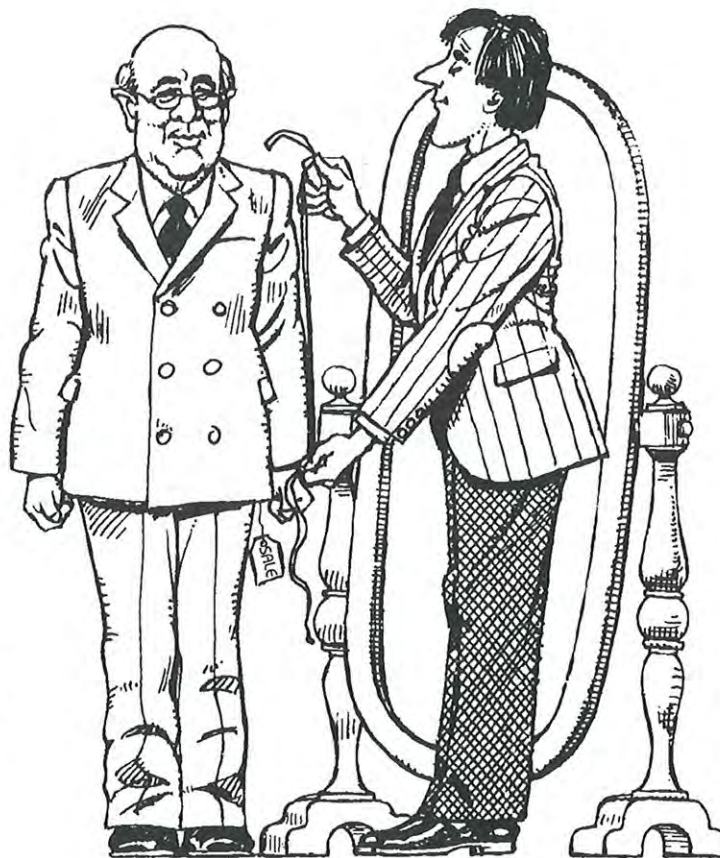


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bailey Thompson has been a retired Free Will Baptist minister since May 1995 and says that he has not experienced one twinge of guilt. He has been preaching 47 years.



How Much is That Preacher in the Window?

By Jean Shaw



Good morning, madam.

May I help you?

Yes, please, I'd like to buy a minister.

For yourself or your church?

Oh, for my church, of course.

Did you have a particular model in mind?

I've got a description from the Candidate Committee right here. We want a man about 30, well educated, with some



experience. Good preacher and teacher. Balanced personality. Serious, but with a sense of humor. Efficient but not rigid. Good health. Able to identify with all age groups. And, if possible, sings tenor.

Sings tenor?

We're short of tenors in the choir.

I see. Well, that's quite a list. How much money did you want to spend?

The committee says \$15,000-\$15,500 tops.

Hmm. Well, perhaps we'd better start in the bargain basement.



Tell me, how much is that model in the window?

You mean the one in the Pendleton plaid suit and the grey suede dune boots?

Yes, that one. He's a *real* dream.

That's our Dallas #467. Has a Ph.D and AKC papers.

AKC?

American Koinonia Council. He sells for \$36,000 plus house.

Wow! That's too rich for our blood. What about that model over there?

Ah, yes. An exceptional buy. Faith #502. He's a little older than 30, but has excellent experience. Aggressive. Good heart. Has a backing of sermons, two of which have been printed in *Christianity Today*.



He's not too bad. Can you do something about his bald head? Mrs. Fulton especially insists that our minister have some hair.

Madam, all our ministers come in a variety of hair styles.

I'll keep him in mind.

Now let me show you Olympia #222. Four years of varsity sports at Southern Cal. Plays football, basketball, volleyball and ping-pong. Comes complete with sports equipment.

What a physique! He must weigh 200 pounds!

Yes, indeed. You get a lot for your money with this one. And think what he can do for your young people.

Great! But how is he at preaching?

I must admit he's not St. Peter. But you can't expect good sermons and a church-wide athletic program too!

I suppose not. Still . . .

Let me show you our Westminster #801. Now here's a preacher. All his sermons are superb—well researched, copious anecdotes, and they always have three points. And—he comes with a full set of Calvin's Commentaries at no extra charge! You get the whole package for \$18,300.

He's wearing awfully thick glasses.

For \$220 more we put in contact lenses.

I don't know. He might study too much. We don't want a man who's in his office all the time.

Of course. How about this minister over there? Comes from a management background. Trained in business operations. Adept with committees. Gets his work done by 11:30 every morning.

His tag says he's an IBM 486SX.

Madam, you have a discerning eye. Innovative Biblical Methods. This man will positively revitalize your church.

I'm not sure our church wants to be revitalized. Haven't you got something less revolutionary?

Well, would you like someone of the social worker type? We have this Ghetto #130.

The man with the beard. Good gracious, no. Mrs. Fulton would never go for that.

How about our Empathy #41C? His forte is counseling. Very sympathetic. Patient. Good with people who have problems.

Everyone in our church has problems. But he might not get out and visit new people. We really need a man who does a lot of visitation. You see, all our people are very busy and . . .

Yes, Yes. I understand. You want a minister who can do everything well.

That's it! Haven't you got somebody like that?

I'm thinking. In our back room we have a minister who was traded in last week. Excellent man, but he



broke down after three years. If you don't mind a used model, we can sell him at a reduced price.



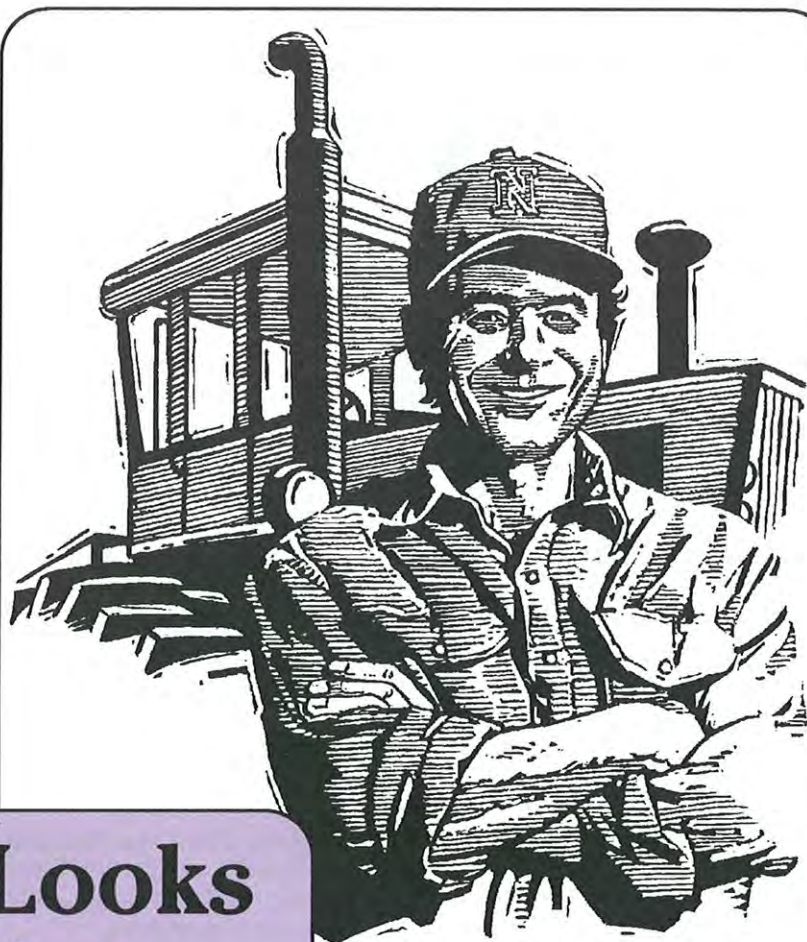
Well, we had hoped for someone brand-new. We just redecorated the sanctuary, and we wanted a new minister to go with it.

Of course. But with a little exterior work, and a fresh suit, this man will look like he just came out of the box. No one will ever know. Let me bring him out and you can look him over.

All right. Honestly, this minister shopping is exhausting. It's so hard to get your money's worth. Tell me, do you accept coupons, and do you double them? What about rebates?

Uh, no. But if there's any dissatisfaction after six months, we send a new congregation for the balance of the year. That usually takes care of most problems. ■

From the book, *Please Don't Stand Up in My Canoe*, by Jean Shaw. Used by permission.



A Layman Looks at the Minister

By John Deaton

Sooner or later, I suppose every man in the pulpit has asked himself, "What does the average layman expect in a minister?" Perhaps a few laymen may have asked themselves the same question. I have, and I can only say, "I don't know." In fact, I don't even know if there is an "average layman."

But if there is, I think he must be about the same kind of ordinary, stumbling Christian I am, full of weakness and very conscious of it, sometimes doubtful and often failing, and a man who usually thinks of his pastor when he considers the clergy.

Oh, he doesn't discount evangelists, of course. He recognizes their

importance, that they stir up whirlwinds of religious fervor when they visit his community, that they call backsliders back to straight paths, guide sinners to repentance and revive the church.

But they are soon gone, leaving the seeds of their labors to the local pastor who must cultivate and water and raise to ultimate harvest. So I think it is the local pastor we usually think of when we attempt to judge the ministry.

And when I stop and think that there must be at least a few persons more or less like me in every pastor's flock, I can but say, "Poor preacher! He must possess the patience of a

Job, the strength of a Samson and the wisdom of a Solomon, not to mention Paul's zeal, Mary's gentleness and the Lord's love, itself, to put up with us!"

A Christian

Now let us consider the minister. First off, of course, he must be a Christian. Sounds silly, doesn't it? Nevertheless, I think it is an important point to make, for tragically, there are men in American pulpits who give every indication that they are not.

I have read their writings. I have heard their broadcasts. I have seen them on TV, even talked with a few

of them, and they declare—by implication, at least—that Jesus Christ was only a great and good man with a grand philosophy and an Utopian dream. Said one recently, “The man Jesus was driven to a cross He did not expect and against His will to spawn a church he neither foresaw or desired.”

I don't like that.

I cannot accept it.

And any man who does has no place in my pulpit or yours, for above all the man who ministers to my soul must be a believer. No, he must be more than a believer; he must be a knower. He must know that Jesus is the Son of God. He must know that Christ is his Lord and Master. And he must have consecrated himself to that Lord, without reservation, or I want no part of him.

Furthermore, my pastor must be a dedicated man. He must have dedicated himself to serve his God. And he must have dedicated himself to serve his fellowman, for it is only through his willingness to serve the congregational brethren and also the vilest sinner in my neighborhood that I can see his dedication to the service of his God.

A Called One

Still further, my pastor must be a called man. It matters not to me if he heard a still, small voice as Elijah did, if he caught a heavenly vision of a Great White Throne and felt a cleansing coal burn his lips as did Isaiah, or if he tarried in a wilderness to spring forth shouting, “Repent,” like John the Baptist.

As a matter of fact, I don't even care whether the earth shook beneath him or not, whether the stars fell about his head, or if nothing spectacular happened at all, but somewhere, sometime, somehow, he must have heard God speak distinctly and clearly, summoning him to preach the Word. Otherwise his ministry will be blighted.

I do not think any minister can approach his profession the same way I approached my secular one. If he does, if he is concerned with mechanics and techniques as much as with a passion for the souls of men, I feel sure he can only enlarge the Kingdom by accident.

These, then, are the primary things I look for in my pastor—Christianity, dedication, consecration and calling. But when he comes to my church, I want more of him. It goes without saying that he must live an exemplary life. He must be a good husband, he must be a good father, and he must be strong.

But he must not be so strong he can't understand weakness. When I stumble—maybe even fall—I want him to help me steady myself on my feet again. When I sin, I want him to pray for me, not condemn me. I want him to despise my sin without hating me.

And if he and I don't see eye to eye, I want him to give me credit for average intelligence and sincerity equal that I credit to him; not blast me out of my pew the following Sunday while he hides behind his rostrum.

A Leader

Admittedly these are selfish things I want, as are these also: I want my pastor to persuade, not dictate. I want him to lead, not drive. I want him to praise once in a while, as well as condemn. I want him to love me in spite of all my faults, and regardless of how many degrees he has, I want him to speak my language. John Hall did . . .

John Hall lived and preached and wrote something like a hundred years ago. In many respects, he was a remarkable man. Well educated for his day, he could hold his own with the foremost theologians of his time, yet he remained a simple person, an earthy man, speaking an earthy language.

I think I would have liked him. He had a zeal for souls. He reached great heights, yet he remained essentially an humble man, and once he told a group of ministerial novices,

The minister is to be a real man. He is to be alive, he is to be true, and he is to be simple, but at the same time, he is to be great—great in love, great in life, great in work and simplicity, and greater than great in gentleness.

So there you have it. My pastor—the man I consider when I judge the clergy of my time—must be a consecrated, dedicated Christian, called by

God to preach the gospel. He must be a good man. He must be strong but slow to despise the weak and quick to help the fallen. He must have a courage to enable him to wrestle with Satan and the gentleness to lift an angel with a broken wing and a soiled halo. He must be zealous, faithful, untiring. He must—I suppose—like Paul, be all things to all men, that he may further Christ's Kingdom.

And because I—a simple layman—am also one of God's chosen men, he has every right to expect the same things of me. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. John Deaton, a layman in Forest Grove Free Will Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee, is now in a nursing home.

This timely article was first published in the March 1963 issue of *Contact*.

Directory Update

ALABAMA

Mark Maddox to First Church, Guin from Liberty Church, Durham, NC, as assistant pastor

GEORGIA

Ledgel Ferguson to Pleasant Hill Church, Cordele from Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa as missionary

Jimmy Coursey to Swainsboro Church, Swainsboro

OTHER PERSONNEL

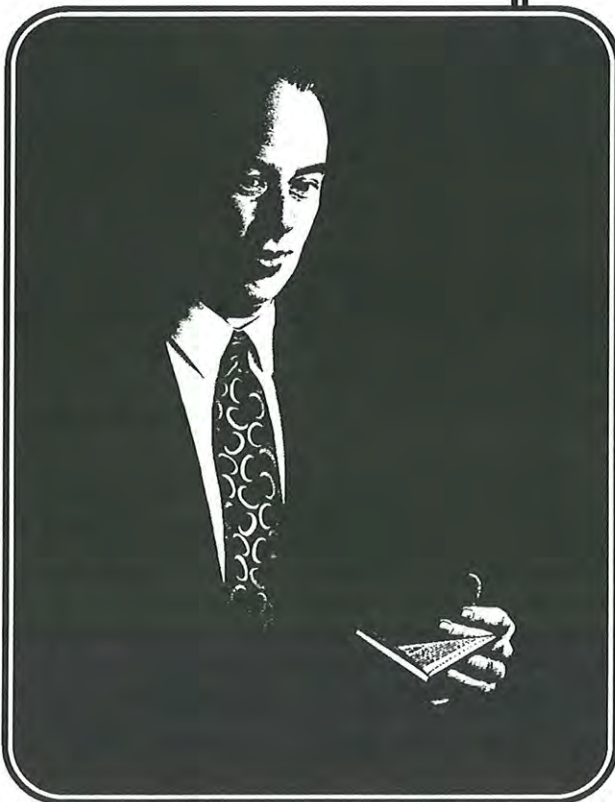
Allen Bowen to Trinity Church, Greenville, NC as youth director

Jason Hurt to Camp Caleb, Prestonsburg, KY, as promotional director

A Minister Looks at His Calling.

The Call to Preach

By Lonnie Skiles



The very necessity for an article such as this speaks of a "falling away"

from the truth of scripture in this evil day. As the ministry moves more and more toward professionalism, the need for and belief in a divine call seems less and less relevant to the average "minister" or church member. Nevertheless, the Bible does teach that God does call, by divine selection, ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of God.

Old Testament Model

In dealing with this subject, two illustrations of the divine call—one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament—will be utilized. In Jeremiah 1:5, God declares: "... before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." No doubt, the knowledge of this divine calling is what motivated Jeremiah to proclaim the

work of the Lord without compromise in the face of such vio-

lent and unfair opposition.

On the verge of quitting because of the persecution, Jeremiah cries out in 20:9, "But his word was in mine heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." It seems logical that today's awful departure from the proclamation of the truth stems from too many hirelings in the pulpits, and not enough God-called preachers.

New Testament Model

The second illustration of a divine call comes from the New Testament. The Apostle Paul was saved and called by God on the Damascus road. In I Corinthians 9:16-17, Paul declares that his call to preach was totally God's choosing, and had nothing to do with his own choice or desire. Furthermore, he states in I Timothy 1:12 that he is extremely

thankful to the Lord for "putting me into the ministry." He further indicates in II Timothy 1:6 that Timothy's ability as a minister is a "gift of God."

With these illustrations, and the support of the totality of God's word, there can be no doubt that ministers are to be divinely chosen and called by God.

Primary Duty

The purpose for this divine calling of God is succinctly laid out in II Timothy 4:2—"preach the word." This is the primary function of every God-called preacher. It is based on the premise that for anyone to be saved they must hear the gospel (Romans 10:14-17). God has ordained that people be saved through the "foolishness of preaching" (I Corinthians 1:21).

Paul declared to the Corinthians that he was determined "not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). It follows, that if the preaching of Jesus Christ is the only avenue through which salvation is conveyed to a lost world, then the preaching of God's Word (and only God's Word)

must be the paramount duty of every divinely called preacher.

Qualifications to Preach

As to how God calls men to preach, it is simply the same method by which He calls men to salvation. The Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, speaks to men and impresses them with the need to preach.

The scriptures teach (I Corinthians 1:26-29) that God calls unlikely people to fulfill His ministry here on earth. This is simply because God, in His Sovereignty, has chosen to do this, in order that He alone may obtain all the glory for it. That is precisely why "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

The qualifications of a divinely called preacher are also clearly defined in the Bible. Paul wrote to two young pastors (Timothy and Titus), and to both of these he outlined specific qualities God requires in preachers (or pastors).

In I Timothy 3:1-7, he gives no less than 15 qualifications that are binding on anyone who is called to preach. Space does not allow a full explanation of each of these, but certainly they are all important.

Many times, the only qualification insisted on by ordaining councils is that the prospective preacher be the husband of one wife. However, the other fourteen are equally important as the first and should be equally emphasized when considering a candidate for the ministry.

1. Blameless
2. Sober (or sober minded)
3. Of good behavior
4. Given to hospitality
5. Apt to teach
6. Not given to wine
7. No striker (not violent)
8. Not greedy of filthy lucre
9. Patient
10. Not a brawler
11. Not covetous
12. One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity
13. Not a novice
14. Have a good report of them who are without

It is reasonable to conclude that God does not call any individual who does not meet these qualifications. Therefore, it is also reasonable to conclude that there are a lot of "preachers" filling the pulpits of the world who are not called by God.

Preparation to Preach

The God-called minister also has a God-given responsibility to adequately prepare for the ministry. Paul told young Timothy (II Timothy 2:15) to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." He also admonished him to "give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Timothy 4:13).

Inherent in these challenges is the important need to prepare. In fact, as one carefully studies the pastoral epistles, the challenge to prepare for the ministry becomes very evident throughout these letters. This preparation may be obtained through attendance at a Bible college or seminary (this is the recommended method), or it may be obtained through a personal, thorough study of the Bible and related books.

The latter method is much more difficult, and likely not as thorough as the former, but there must be adequate preparation if there is to be an effective ministry.

In conclusion, it is emphasized again that a minister of the gospel should be divinely called to preach. If he does not meet the biblical qualifications, he will not be called. If he is called, he must make a concerted effort to prepare himself for the ministry.

The Christian Database (from page 20)

Personal Responsibility

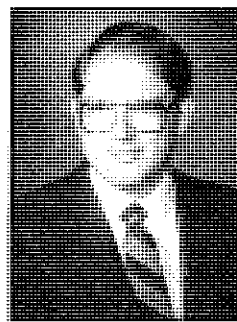
Finally, though, most of my knowledge of computers has not come from professionals, books or even users groups. It has been the result of hours and hours of personal exploration. That is what we must commit ourselves to with the Christian database as well—taking time and making the effort to familiarize ourselves with the intricacies of the Bible.

It has certainly been rewarding to own a computer. I'd hate to think of ministry without one, but this technological wonder has done more for me than produce sharp bulletins and cross-reference information. It taught me about the demands of discipleship.

Once I purchased a data management program that had all the newest bells and whistles. The problem was that I couldn't figure out how to make those bells ding or the whistles toot. I tinkered with the program till well past midnight that first day. I couldn't see allowing something with so much potential to operate at half speed if at all.

The same is true with the Christian database. The Bible has vast potential, but understanding and applying it is not always easy. Help can come from fellow believers, pastors and teachers, even books and periodicals, but in the final analysis it is up to you.

If you apply yourself, you will find what I did—the Bible was written to be understood. You might even say it is user-friendly.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Randy Corn pastors Bethlehem Free Will Baptist Church in Ashland City, Tennessee.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Lonnie Skiles pastors Goodwater Free Will Baptist Church in Newton, Alabama. He is a member of the Commission for Theological Integrity.

THE CHRISTIAN DATABASE

By Randy Corn

A little more than a decade ago, I was in the grips of a terrible illness. My wife had seen it before and, much to her sorrow, would see it again. I had the buying fever! I wanted to buy a computer. There was only one cure. After negotiations on the home front, I ended up with a 128K Macintosh, three programs, an inadequate printer and a ton of questions.

Since that fateful day in 1983, I have upgraded computers three times, purchased dozens of magazines and books on the Mac, and found a thousand and one applications for my computer. I have spent hours talking with sales people in computer stores, attended users group meetings ("Hi, I'm Randy, and I'm addicted to my Macintosh"), and spent more time than I'd like to admit "on hold" waiting for the technical support guy to answer my latest question.

Convert Crisis

Somewhere along my trek, a parallel began to develop in my mind. Climbing the learning curve in the use of my computer was much like the discipleship process of a new convert. Getting to know your Bible is much like getting to know your computer. You might call God's Word the Christian database.

The first folks I talked to about purchasing a computer were other computer owners. You might say they shared their testimonies with me. Church growth experts say that most first-time visitors to any church come because they were invited by a friend or acquaintance.

I was particularly influenced by my sister-in-law. Not that she tried any hard sell on me, it was just that if *she* could figure out DOS, I thought anybody could. As I wandered into the jungle of hardware, software, peripherals and printers, I began to think that sister-in-law of mine must be a genius!

The new convert is no less confused by the world of the Bible. Those of us who have been initiated think of it as simple because it is so familiar to us.

Finding Help

The new convert can find help like I did in the purchase of my computer. After visiting several stores, I found some sales people able to translate computerese into English. The parallel for the new convert is a teacher or preacher who can really communicate the truth of the Bible.

Sad to say, not every church has such help for the new convert, which may necessitate shopping around. The critical thing is finding answers to those nagging questions about the Bible and Christian life. Like an impossible-to-operate computer program, the Bible will end up on a shelf gathering dust if it is not understood.

In my journey toward computer literacy, I have made use of two resources—magazines and books. At various times I've subscribed to *MacWorld*, *MacUser* and *Macazine*, all in an effort to fully understand my computer and get the most out of it. I've also read books with titles like *The Macintosh Bible* and *Mac for Dummies*.

My point here is to illustrate there are many instructional aids for computer users. The same is true of the

Christian database. Only the Lord and perhaps the publishers of *Books in Print* have any idea how many volumes are released each year which help us better understand the Bible. It numbers in the thousands. Let's guide the new convert to the best books.

Another approach is to find an author you like and get everything he or she has written. In the computer world, I did this with Jim Heid. I eagerly looked forward to his column in each issue of *MacWorld*. One happy day in 1991 as I scanned the titles in the computer section of a bookstore, I came across his *Complete Mac Handbook*. I was so overjoyed I didn't even notice the price until the sales clerk was ringing it up.

In Christian literature, you might sample the works of contemporary men like Chuck Swindoll or Warren Wiersbe. Others may find kinship with giants of the past like G. Campbell Morgan, Charles Spurgeon or Alexander Maclaren.

Joining a Group

One of the best ways to learn the computer is to join a users group. My membership was in SMUG, which was a pretty apt description of some of the members, and stood for Savannah Macintosh Users Group. This was a gathering of computer users who shared an enthusiasm for the Mac.

We came together to listen to one another's problems and find solutions. There were discussions and demonstrations of software. The parallel to small group gatherings in a church is nearly exact. There we find fellowship, acceptance, and answers.

(continued on page 19)

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Oklahoma Explosion Kills Two Free Will Baptists

Jerry Parker
Sunday School
Teacher



Steve Curry
Deacon



OKLAHOMA CITY, OK—Two Free Will Baptist laymen who worked in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building were among the 167 dead when a 4,800-pound fertilizer bomb exploded in Oklahoma City on April 19. Jerry Parker (45), a civil engineer with the Federal Highway Administration, and Steve Curry (44), an inspector with the General Services Administration, died in the massive explosion that rocked downtown Oklahoma City.

Both men were leaders in local Free Will Baptist churches. Jerry Parker served on the Board of Trustees, taught a Sunday School class and sang in the choir at Pleasant Hill FWB Church in Norman.

Steve Curry was a deacon at Calvary FWB Church in Norman.

He served as a church greeter, was active in outreach ministry and participated in the church's Easter drama presentation just three days before the bombing.

Jerry Parker and Steve Curry were both married with families. Mr. Parker had three children; Mr. Curry had two children.

Oklahoma executive secretary Jack Richey said that a number of Free Will Baptists were involved in rescue operations at the bombed federal building. "Pastor Ernest Harrison, Jr. (First FWB Church, McAlester) served as a chaplain to families and rescue workers for nine days. Other Free Will Baptist firemen, nurses and policemen gave all they had to help in the tragedy."

Pastor Joe Grizzle (First FWB Church, Norman) preached the

first funeral in the aftermath of the bombing for Mrs. Pamela Cleveland Argo. Mrs. Argo had gone to the Social Security office at the federal building to complete paperwork in connection with her husband's death a few weeks earlier. Her appointment was for 9:00 a.m., minutes before the blast.

Rev. Jack Richey said, "I have never been more proud to be an Oklahoman. Heroic acts were the norm for two weeks. Our city and state showed the world about Christianity, prayer, compassion and love for fellow man."

By mid-June more than \$11,000 had poured in from Free Will Baptists to assist the victims' families. The Oklahoma FWB State Office has set up a relief fund that channels monies to the families.

West Virginia Pastor, Carl Vallance, Retires

HUNTINGTON, WV—Reverend Carl Vallance, 77, retired Sunday, April 23, ending 56 years of pastoring. The Central FWB Church in Huntington honored Vallance, voting to make him pastor emeritus. The church was founded by Vallance and 36 adults, the first Sunday service held on February 29, 1976.

A retirement dinner on April 1 met in the church fellowship hall. About 170 people attended, including relatives, West Virginia State Association officers, 17 preachers and friends from as far away as Tennessee. Most attendees were saved under his ministry.

A book of remembrance was presented, containing letters from denominational leaders, other pastors, church members and friends. Several letters were read to the assembly by James Vallance, son of the pastor.

West Virginia State promotional director J. L. Varney welcomed Vallance to retirement, stating, "He's retiring, but we're not going to let him quit. Brother Carl will be traveling around the state with me helping to promote the work of the denomination. He will be preaching a lot. We'll see to that!"

The church presented the Vallances several gifts. He received a Craftsman 12-inch wood planer and stand, a new suit and a watch. LaVerne received a heart-shaped diamond pendant, and a ring from two of the women. Individuals also presented cards and letters with personal gifts.

Pastor Ferrada White, Jr. reminded Vallance how he (White) was saved 51 years ago during a nine-week revival with Vallance and Melvin Sanford where 83 were saved. Several ministers were converted during that meeting. "I dropped my children off at church and started over the hill to town to see a movie. About half way up the hill, my car spun around in the deep snow and ended up point-



Reverend Carl Vallance

ing back down the hill. I decided. God was trying to tell me to go to church. I went back and got saved." That revival marked the birth of one of four churches Vallance helped establish.

Born in Holden, WV, March 18, 1918, Vallance was the first of five children. Rev. Denny Roberts preached a revival at Monaville, WV, where Carl was saved "the tenth day of May in 1938." He married LaVerne Hall November 12, 1939. The Vallances have two sons, Robert and James. Robert, a civil engineer, designed Central FWB Church and helped oversee construction in 1980. James is general director of the Master's Men Department.

Vallance was ordained to preach in September 1940. He was a Free Will Baptist for six years before the West Virginia State Association began. He attended the first session of the association, at Switzer, WV, and has been an active member in its entire existence. "I was elected to their first Foreign Missions Board and raised the first offerings for that work. The first year we received over \$600."

Carl Vallance has served West

Virginia as General Board member to the National Association longer than any other minister in the denomination. He has missed three national conventions since 1940. He has also served as West Virginia's moderator, executive secretary and state parliamentarian.

His ministry was noted for the volume of his voice. During one revival a man was saved while sitting on his porch "about a quarter mile from the church."

Carl hastened to explain, "In West Virginia there are lots of hills. This fellow's house was straight down the aisle of the church and across the valley on the opposite hillside. I could see him on the porch. He heard me preach, and the Lord saved him!"

On another occasion, a celebration for the Monaville Church on the lawn by the Island Creek Coal Company store, he and Denny Roberts preached to "about 3,000 people there in the coal camp." The outdoor meeting had no loudspeakers or amplification. The women stayed up all night frying chickens in 50 gallon lard cans.

Vallance pastored several churches in his ministry. However, most of his ministry has been at Thomas Memorial FWB Church in Huntington (26 years) and Central FWB Church (19 years). He helped build four FWB churches, helped organize seven others and one quarterly conference. He has preached revivals in West Virginia, eight other states and Canada. He and LaVerne have traveled to Israel 14 times and into nine other foreign countries.

In the Friday night service of the 50th anniversary for the West Virginia State Association, just before he preached, Carl Vallance summed up his ministry this way. "I'm just thankful to be a servant of the Lord. It's all been for Him."

Louisville Honors FWB Deacon



LOUISVILLE, KY—The city of Louisville gave its annual "Golden Rule Award" to a Free Will Baptist deacon, Dewey Hensley, in 1995. The city, along with the Metro United Way, select a volunteer of the year from the thousands who contribute to community outreach.

Mr. Dewey Hensley chairs the deacon board at First FWB Church in Louisville. He also teaches the senior adult Sunday School class and serves as church treasurer.

For 37 years, Hensley has conducted Thursday night worship services at Wayside Christian Mission. Danny Smith, pastor of First FWB Church, said, "None of the homeless people know his name, but all you have to do is mention 'The Coal Miner' and they all know who you mean."

Pastor Smith continued, "Every Wednesday around lunch time, he and his wife deliver hot meals to senior citizens who live alone." The hot meals program is sponsored by South End Ministries in the city.

The J. C. Penney organization sent a check in the name of Dewey Hensley to the Wayside Christian Mission and South End Ministries.

Pastor Smith said, "Dewey Hensley is one retired church member who is a blessing to those around him. Our church is proud of him."

Jernigan Logs 50 Years in Ministry

NOBLE, OK—Evangelist Wade Jernigan celebrated 50 years in the ministry this spring. The 67-year-old North Carolina native preached his first sermon April 8, 1945, at age 17. Some 125 friends and colleagues gathered at Skyridge FWB Church in Noble on May 26 for a roast and toast evening with Jernigan.

Master of Ceremonies Berton Perry presented Jernigan with a ring made for the event inscribed with "50th" and "I Don't Regret a Mile." More than 40 cards and letters from friends throughout the denomination filled a presentation notebook. Six ministers gave testimonials about Jernigan's influence in their lives.

He later remarked, "They hosted me, boasted me, toasted me and roasted me."

The Tulsa Area Association and the Northeast Oklahoma Association also scheduled times with Dr. Jernigan to celebrate his golden anniversary. On April 8, the Oak Grove FWB Church in Bladen County, North Carolina, began the 50-year celebrations. Jernigan preached his first sermon in that church in 1945.

In 50 years, Wade Jernigan has preached 700 revivals, pastored 13 churches, started / built 23 churches and participated in the founding of two colleges—Oklahoma Bible College (Hillsdale FWB

College) and California Christian College. Most of his pastoral ministry has centered in Oklahoma and California.



He has had one of the more varied ministries among Free Will Baptists. In addition to evangelistic and pastoral roles, he moved his family to Idaho where he served as a home missionary. For nine years, he led California Christian College as president, then

served two years as executive secretary for the California State Association.

The Oklahoma State Association elected Jernigan as moderator, to the Hillsdale College Board of Trustees, to the Mission Board and the Christian Education Board.

His influence on the national level placed Jernigan on the General Board, Executive Committee, Home Missions Board and the Commission for Theological Integrity.

A prolific writer, Jernigan has authored five books and 24 songs. He holds B. A., B. S., M. A. and Ph. D. degrees.

James Munsey, coordinator of Free Will Baptist work in Mexico, praised Jernigan for his "genuine interest in people who are underdogs and outcasts."

Jernigan founded "Grass Roots Evangelism" as a publishing and evangelistic outreach.

Mississippi Church Celebrates Centennial

SMITHVILLE, MS—Members of Pearce Chapel FWB Church in Smithville celebrated the church's 100th anniversary on May 21, according to Pastor Tommy Street. The day's festivities included special plaques of appreciation given to long-time church leaders, Mel Home and Trannie Sullivan.

Two guest speakers preached centennial sermons. The church's first full-time pastor, Reverend

Gordon Hart, delivered one sermon. Evangelist Van Dale Hudson preached the second message.

Pearce Chapel FWB Church is a member of the Northeast Mississippi Association. Mississippi promotional director, Billy Tabb, said that the church was actually 105 years old because "it started five years earlier under another name, and then moved to its present location in 1895."

North Carolina Adopts "Concern" Resolution

GREENVILLE, NC—Delegates to the June 5-6 North Carolina State Association passed a seven-point resolution titled "Areas of Concern to Call Us Back to God." The five-page resolution addressed music, Sunday Schools, preaching, separation, missions and New Evangelicalism, as well as National Association speakers, officers, board members and employees.

State Clerk Gerald Fowler was instructed to send the resolution to the National Association. The guidelines were adopted for North Carolina state leadership

and passed along to the National Association to be considered by delegates at the national convention in Charlotte, July 16-20.

The 33rd annual state association met at Parker's Chapel FWB Church in Greenville. Moderator William Calvert presided at business sessions. Approximately 200 people registered.

Four North Carolina pastors preached during the two-day meeting. New Bern pastor Jerry Rackley delivered the opening message, "What's Wrong With the Ten Commandments?" He

was joined on the preaching program by Pastors Talmadge Brown, Lorenza Stox and Dennis Wiggs.

During the Tuesday morning missions service, state Mission Board chairman Dean Dobbs presided. Three North Carolina home missionaries reported: Randy Stone (Fayetteville), Eugene Hales (Matthews) and Bob Edmonson (Asheboro).

Delegates adopted an \$88,875 state budget. The 1996 state association will meet June 3-4 at Meadowbrook FWB Church in Black Mountain.

Florida Elects Tim Owen Moderator

OCALA FL—Delegates to the 51st annual Florida State Association elected Reverend Tim Owen as moderator during the May 24-27 meeting. Rev. Owen pastors Shiloh FWB Church in Bratt. He succeeds Jacksonville pastor, Leroy Cutler, who held the post for eight years.

The four-day gathering convened at the Ocala Hilton Hotel and included state association activities, the Woman's Auxiliary and state youth conference competition. Clerk Randy Bryant said that more than 400 people registered for three concurrent events.

During business sessions, delegates authorized two new financial committees—the Budget Committee and the Auditing Committee. Delegates also adopted a new Youth Board constitution. A \$70,000 cooperative plan budget will be allocated to state ministries (60%) and national ministries (40%).

Three men preached sermons developing the association theme, "Forever Learning . . . Sowing, Growing, Knowing." Dr. Alton Loveless, director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department, preached twice. Two Florida pastors, Jerry Whitworth (Christian Home FWB Church in Blountstown) and Randy Hill (Piney Grove FWB Church in Chipley) also preached.

Dennis Owen, missionary to Uruguay, spoke at the Auxiliary lunch on Thursday.

The 1996 state association will meet May 8-11 at the Ocala Hilton.

Idaho's First State Association Meets

NAMPA, ID—The first annual Idaho State Association met May 13 at Nampa FWB Church, according to Clerk Tom Barton. Some 51 people, including five ministers, gathered for the historic meeting.

The seven Free Will Baptist churches in the state meet in two district associations. The Idaho District includes four churches. The remaining three churches form the Treasure Valley Association.

Moderator Bill Phillips, who pastors First FWB Church in Rupert, led business sessions. Nampa pastor Delmar Hopkins serves as assistant moderator. Delegates voted to form a three-person Youth Camp Board.

Free Will Baptist executive secretary, Melvin Worthington, preached on the association theme, "The Church."

The 1996 state association will meet the third weekend in May at a site to be determined.

Michigan Honors Two Leaders

WOODHAVEN, MI—The 39th annual Michigan State Association gathered May 18-19 at Woodhaven FWB Church to conduct business and pay tribute to two men who led the association in recent years. Delegates recognized Charles Cooper for 14 years as promotional director and six years as General Board member. They also honored Gene Norris for six years as moderator of the state association.

Clerk Milton Worthington said that 145 people registered for the meeting, including 30 ministers, 10 deacons and 57 lay delegates. Delegates adopted a \$25,000 Together Way Plan budget.

In other business, delegates elected retired pastor J.B. Varney as moderator and former moderator Gene Norris as promotional director and General Board member.

Two Michigan ministers preached sermons during the association—Rick Locklear (Woodhaven) and Ron Helms (Southgate). Layman Eugene Richards (Garden City) also spoke.

The 1996 state association will meet May 17-18 at a site not yet determined.

CURRENTLY...

Home missionary **George Harvey, Jr.**, reports three conversions, two baptisms and six rededications at **North Valley FWB Mission** in **Phoenix, AZ**. The church also received permission from the city to start construction on their new building.

The Tennessee House of Representatives honored by resolution **Sgt. Wayne Steele** for 30 years of service in the Tennessee Highway Patrol. He retired June 16. Sgt. Steele is a member and deacon at **Cofer's Chapel FWB Church** in **Nashville, TN**.

Members of **Shallowford FWB Church** in **Marietta, GA**, set a goal to have 100 people in service Easter Sunday. Talk about missing the mark... in a good sense. Pastor **Ronald Wallace** said that 187 happy worshippers attended.

In three years, more than 70 new families have attended **Fourth FWB Church** in **St. Louis, MO**, because of their Home Town Day Reunion. Pastor **Bill Adkisson** said that 210 people came for the third annual reunion, including 15 new families.

Full altars every night, three conversions and two rededications highlighted a five-day revival at **First FWB Church** in **Wichita, KS**, says Pastor **Robert Brown**. Arkansas minister, **Loy Counts**, did the preaching.

Members burned two mortgages on May 7 at **First FWB Church** in **Simpsonville, SC**. That paid off an \$18,000 indebtedness in one year, according to Pastor **Robert Travis**. Now the congregation plans to add a new auditorium and educational facility. Good work. Good vision.

A six-week training class ended Easter Sunday at **Verdella FWB Church** in **Liberal, MO**. During morning worship services, 17 people who had attended the class taught by missionary **Stan Bunch** stepped forward for church membership. Later, church members gave a fellowship dinner to honor the Bunch family who left for Panama. **Milan J. Ruble** pastors.

Before new pastor **Ledgel Ferguson** moved into the parsonage at **Pleasant Hill FWB Church** in **Cordele, GA**, members remodeled the house. New paint. New carpet. New curtains and blinds. New kitchen. New pastor.

Twenty-six Georgia ministers attend-

ed the state ministers' retreat in April. Sponsored by the state Board of Christian Education, the three-day retreat featured guest speaker **Larry Montgomery** (Hollywood, FL), as well as Georgia ministers **Ronald Wallace**, **Willie Martin** and **Herbert Waid**.

A two-week revival at **Campbell Chapel FWB Church** in **Ironton, OH**, resulted in 15 conversions. **Howard Kimble** pastors.

Hey! Something's happening in the Buckeye State. Pastor **Roger Tillis, Sr.**, reports 10 conversions and eight baptisms at **Cornerstone FWB Church** in **Ashville, OH**. Sunday School attendance is up. New visitors are everywhere.

More good news from Ohio. Pastor **Billy Sharpston** reports six conversions, six rededications, three baptisms and 19 new members at **Heritage Temple FWB Church** in **Columbus**.

Contact welcomes **The Quail Call News**, publication of **Quail Valley FWB Church** in **Batesville, AR**. Sue Jane Bolt serves as editor. **Jim Richardson** pastors.

Two years ago, **First FWB Church** in **Ozark, MO**, began as a mission work under the Missouri State Home Mission Board. Founding pastor **Gary Mitchener** led the new work to an average of 100 people each Sunday. The congregation dedicated their activities building this spring with 108 in attendance. Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the dedication message.

The **Iron Chapel FWB Church** in **Purcell, OK**, purchased nine acres with plans to build. **Barry Clagg** pastors.

Members scrambled until 4:00 a.m. to finish the new sanctuary at **Center FWB Church** in **Ada, OK**, in time for dedication services. And finish they did. All-day services on April 9 marked the occasion as Pastor **Earl Hood** preached to a full house. The old auditorium was remodeled for a fellowship area and classrooms. Oklahoma executive secretary **Jack Richey** led the dedication prayer.

Every church needs a **Ruby Grace Bilby**. Sister Bilby was a charter member of **Allen FWB Church** in **Sapulpa, OK**, in 1931. She then served 40 years as church pianist and 50 years as Sunday School sec-

retary. She celebrated her 100th birthday this spring. Her pastor is her grandson, **Johnny Bilby**.

Members of **Keystone FWB Church** in **Johnson City, TN**, delivered a truckload of canned goods and household items to the **Free Will Baptist Family Ministries** in **Greeneville, TN**. The group also redecorated the bedrooms and kitchen in one of the girls' homes at The FWB Children's Home. **William Greer** pastors.

Two groups raised funds to assist the **West Knoxville FWB Mission** in **Knoxville, TN**. Youth from **First FWB Church** in **Erwin, TN**, presented a \$1,500 building fund check to home missionary **Gerald Fender**. The Auxiliaries from Tennessee's **Western Quarterly** of the Union Association presented a \$1,400 check.

The **United FWB Church** in **West Plains, MO**, launched a new TV outreach ministry, according to Pastor **Glenn Murray**. The church sponsors a 30-minute program Sundays at 11:00 a.m. on Channel 13 featuring the singing **Curtis Barton** family who are members of the United Church.

Lynches River FWB Church in **Coward, SC**, celebrates its 21st anniversary this fall. The church began in 1974, conducting services in a donated store building. **Gerald Owens** pastors.

Churches helping churches. That's how things are supposed to work. It *does* work that way in **South Carolina**. Pastor **Jimmy Miller** led the flock at **Parkway FWB Church** in **Spartanburg** to raise \$2,000 for the **Chesnee FWB Mission** in **Chesnee**. **James Childers** leads the mission work.

Pastor **Ed Hollis** baptized seven and received six new members at **First FWB Church** in **Decatur, IL**.

Youth camp at the **Northern Illinois Quarterly** ended on a different note. The group met at **Camp Hope** in **Ewing** for a week. Nineteen conversions and 18 rededications resulted. Then three pastors did what every pastor dreams of doing—they turned the camp swimming pool into a baptistry and baptized 15 converts. ■



FOREIGN MISSIONS

Russia's Challenge

By R. Eugene Waddell, general director

In the spring of this year I spent 18 days in the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).

On April 8, I returned to the United States with several strong impressions. First, Russia is big—two and one-half times the size of the United States. It occupies one-ninth of the earth's land surface (6,592,819 square miles). It stretches almost 6,200 miles, through 11 time zones.

Second, the need for evangelism in Russia is very obvious. According to Patrick Johnstone, only 0.56 percent of the population could be considered "born again" Christian (OPERATION WORLD, p. 467). This means more than 149 million people in Russia are without Christ.

Third, I saw wonderful opportunities for us to make a dramatic impact for Christ in these whitened harvest fields. But I remembered what Dr. Grigori Komendant, president of Ukrainian Association of Evangelical Christian Baptists, said at the Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference in Nashville in 1993. He challenged us to help the Russian and Ukrainian brethren give the bread of life to the hungry millions there.

Decision to Cooperate

Our department had to face up to the question, "Shall we cooperate with the Russian and Ukrainian Baptists, or shall we compete with them?" Board member, Bill Jones, who accompanied me to Russia, declared, "I believe we should cooperate with the Russian Baptists in reaching out in Russia and the C.I.S. After all, their Arminian persuasion makes their doctrine very similar to ours."

After weighing all the facts, the board was convinced we should help the Baptist churches in the C.I.S. To be sure the leaders in Russia and Ukraine were completely informed as to our beliefs, we sent them copies of the "Treatise of the Faith and Practices of the Original Free Will Baptists."

The board authorized a \$5,000 grant to help finish the new seminary in Kiev,

Ukraine. They also approved our raising funds to help provide a copy machine for the Autonomous Baptist Bible Institute in Kiev.

Since the seminary students read English, we sent Free Will Baptist commentaries and theological books to their libraries.

The board agreed to allow Sean Warren and Eddie Hobbs, last year's student missionaries to the C.I.S., to raise \$5,000 to help put a roof on the Selso church building.

They decided to seek flannelgraphs and visual aids to fill requests from Ukraine.

A Pastor's Conference

The board agreed to cosponsor a pastor's conference during the spring of 1996. This conference will feature American speakers as well as Russian speakers.

Overseas Secretary Jimmy Aldridge and his wife, Janie, plan to head a witnessing/church-planting team in Novosibirsk, Siberia, during the summer of 1996.

We plan to continue sending student missionaries to the C.I.S.

The board also approved plans to send a TEAM (Teens Equipped and Active in Missions) to the C.I.S.

Baptist leaders in Moscow, Novosibirsk, and Kiev invited us to send visiting professors to lecture on Arminian theology. They agreed to provide the translator.

A Professor

After prayerful consideration, Professor Leroy Forlines of Free Will Baptist Bible College and his wife, Dr. Fay Forlines, volunteered to go to Russia and Ukraine for four months during the first half of 1996.

The board agreed to seek support for a Russian preacher to minister in Novosibirsk, Siberia, where 120,000 dwell with no church of any kind. They also approved sponsoring up to 15 other church planters in Russia and Ukraine.

To meet these challenges, we encourage our brothers and sisters in the U.S. to give generously while the doors remain open. ■



WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST

Woman's Window on the World

By Mary R. Wisehart

From My Window

"It's just a piece of brass." I can imagine Hezekiah saying that as he crushed the brazen serpent that Moses made. Why crush that image? After all, it was made for the good of the people. Fiery serpents were biting them and causing death. God provided a way of salvation for them. One look at the serpent, and anyone who wanted could be healed.

Of course, this healing required an act of faith. They had to be willing to look no matter how foolish it seemed. The symbol pointed toward that One who would one day be raised on a cross for the salvation of all who believed. Jesus used it in John 3:14-15 to explain His mission in the world. Did the people recognize this symbol for what it was?

The serpent on the pole had been carefully preserved as a symbol of God's mercy and grace. Right? Perhaps. It became a snare to the people, however, when they began to offer incense to the serpent. They began to worship the symbol rather than the Giver of all good things.

Only the Lord God of heaven and earth deserves worship. Nothing He has made or given us replaces Him as the object of our devotion. Good though these things may be, they are but symbols, pointing us to the real—Jehovah God.

Of course this couldn't happen to Christians today, could it? Fortunately, Hezekiah destroyed the brass serpent. At least we can't worship that symbol.

Other things, though, may hold us in their grasp without our even being aware of them.

C. S. Lewis suggested that God has left object lessons for us along the road of life. These object lessons point us to Him and to the reality of eternal values. Some of those object lessons may be the shape of a cross, the spire of a church, a tradition, a ritual we observe—just man-made objects and designs.

Although God intends the object lessons for our good, they may become a snare to us if we concentrate on the object, the tradition or ritual for its own sake. We may tend to forget what the object, the tradition or the ritual points us toward.

Check those things you may hold too close. Break up the brazen trifle, grind it to powder and strow it to the winds.

In the words of Matthew Henry, "Good things, when idolized, are better parted with than kept."

WNAC Emphasis

August is emphasis month for WNAC. This year we celebrate 60 years of working together with God. We look back and rejoice in God's faithfulness and blessing through the years.

Free Will Baptist women have made a difference among us. An emphasis on WNAC in the local church should be an opportunity to praise God for His blessings on the women's organization. As we think of the 60 years together, we can rejoice in the victories God has given. We can thank Him for the faithful leaders who have brought us to this point in our service for Him.

The WNAC Emphasis packet contains a history that will pinpoint some victories God has given to the women of WNAC.

The two books, *The Free Will Baptist Woman's Missionary Society*, and *Sparks into Flame: A History of WNAC 1935-1985*, also provide some examples of the women's contributions and victories through the years.

August is also a time for giving special gifts to WNAC for the operation of the national office.

Celebrate 60 Years of Service

What a wonder if all the local women's groups gave at least \$60 in the emphasis offering this year in celebration of the 60 years Free Will Baptist women have served God and the church. The offering would total \$46,080, based on the number of local groups reported in 1994. Some groups consistently give much more than \$60 to the emphasis offering.

Some women may want to celebrate this year by giving a special gift to the WNAC endowment fund—\$6, \$60, \$600, \$6,000. Endowment gifts may be given in honor or in memory of a person. They are recorded in The Book of Remembrance. An acknowledgment is sent to the family or to the person honored. The money goes into the WNAC Endowment Fund in the Free Will Baptist Foundation. The fund is a perpetual interest-bearing account for WNAC. The interest helps with national office expenses. ■



BOARD OF RETIREMENT

Affordable Life Insurance Now Available

By D. Ray Lewis

No one wants to wait for tragedy to strike to find they're unprepared.

But ask yourself this: If something happened to you tomorrow, could your family manage financially without you, even for a short time?

It's not pleasant to think about. But it's reality.

Do you know how much it would take for your family to live decently—not merely squeak by—if you weren't there . . . \$10,000, \$20,000, \$50,000 a year?

The Board of Retirement & Insurance is pleased to make available to you and your dependents, optional Term Life and Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance effective September 1, 1995. The plan is underwritten by MetLife—The leader in the field of Group Life Insurance.

This program features simple eligibility and enrollment procedures. The coverage is offered at low group rates. For example a thirty six year old employee can select \$50,000 coverage on self, \$25,000 on the spouse, and \$2,000 on three children for a total premium of only \$11.47 per month. If the insured dies from an accident, the above coverage is doubled. Another plus is that premiums are waived if an insured becomes disabled.

You will be eligible for this program if you are a full-time employee (gainfully working at least 20 hours per week) of any Free Will Baptist Church or agency.

Since in many households today both the husband and wife work, it's important that both spouses be insured. Even in households where the wife doesn't work outside the home, if she were no longer there, additional child care could be a major added expense. With the low Met Life rates for this insurance, coverage for both spouses is not only good financial planning, it's affordable, too.

Write us, call us, or simply complete and return the form below for more information on this valuable coverage. Don't put it off—you know this is something you've thought about. Protecting your family's lifestyle simply can't wait any longer. ■

Benefit Summary

Employee Life Your choice of benefit amounts ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Dependent Life Spouse: 50% of the Employee Optional Life amount.

Maximum Benefit = \$25,000

Child: 15 days to 6 months = \$200

6 months to 19 years = \$2,000

—Detach & Return—

Please send me more information on the term life insurance now available through the Board of Retirement & Insurance.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Employee's Age: _____ Spouse's Age: _____ # of Children: _____

Type of Coverage: (Please Check 1) ☐ Employee Only ☐ Dependent

Amount of Coverage Desired: (Please Check 1)

☐ \$50,000 ☐ \$40,000 ☐ \$30,000 ☐ \$20,000 ☐ \$10,000

Return this form to: Board of Retirement & Insurance, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002
or call: Ray Lewis (615) 731-6812.

**Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign
May 1995
Update**

State	Goal	Gifts	Balance
Alabama	\$76,397.63	\$4,981.15	\$71,416.48
Arizona	1,228.93	2,883.71	(1,654.78)
Arkansas	76,860.94	41,372.13	35,488.81
Atlantic Canada	1,570.51	897.00	673.51
California	17,216.76	1,444.20	15,772.56
Colorado	789.18	1,165.00	(375.82)
Florida	20,703.30	6,347.42	14,355.88
Georgia	38,179.19	28,313.88	9,865.31
Hawaii	184.54	727.26	(542.72)
Idaho	353.37	25.00	328.37
Illinois	16,176.29	4,949.47	11,226.82
Indiana	7,868.27	1,846.75	6,021.52
Iowa	266.99	0.00	266.99
Kansas	1,287.82	280.00	1,007.82
Kentucky	35,454.34	5,409.29	30,045.05
Louisiana	94.23	1,925.00	(1,830.77)
Maryland	6,812.10	1,539.38	5,272.72
Michigan	15,116.19	16,004.22	(888.03)
Mississippi	15,559.86	3,843.23	11,716.63
Missouri	60,484.40	33,789.91	26,694.49
Montana	27.48	100.00	(72.52)
Nebraska	102.08	119.00	(16.92)
New Mexico	596.80	630.55	(33.75)
North Carolina	59,118.06	7,131.40	51,986.66
Northeast Association	883.41	270.00	613.41
Northwest Association	1,087.58	201.00	886.58
Ohio	40,923.66	19,538.10	21,385.56
Oklahoma	92,271.60	10,259.08	82,012.52
South Carolina	18,335.75	2,102.00	16,233.75
South Dakota	175.00	(175.00)	
Tennessee	78,557.09	55,195.36	23,361.73
Texas	11,547.20	6,898.52	4,648.68
Virginia	24,323.33	2,027.93	22,295.40
Virgin Islands	200.00	(200.00)	
West Virginia	46,204.51	998.00	45,206.51
Wisconsin	61.00	(61.00)	
Other	2,978.85	(2,978.85)	
Totals	\$766,583.39	\$266,629.79	\$499,953.60



May 1995

Receipts:

State	Design.	CO-OP	Total	May '94	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 17,414.01	\$.00	\$ 17,414.01	\$ 11,796.60	\$ 55,358.74
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	134.01	1,596.30
Arkansas	17,144.73	14,139.26	31,283.99	38,167.05	140,297.18
California	.00	794.48	794.48	1,064.27	3,098.32
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	420.00	944.40	1,364.40	516.17	16,898.80
Georgia	17,116.10	3,473.61	20,589.71	12,125.26	75,686.03
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	17,953.45	3,441.34	21,394.79	68.93	61,083.82
Indiana	1,122.19	175.52	1,297.71	.00	4,435.97
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	90.00	.00
Kansas	.00	17.33	17.33	23.10	359.95
Kentucky	560.89	423.75	984.64	1,358.46	3,682.83
Louisiana	.00	10.00	10.00	40.00	60.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	75.00	1,119.93
Michigan	8,642.09	1,616.06	10,258.15	12,298.27	57,713.14
Mississippi	326.00	465.64	791.64	997.64	2,702.29
Missouri	12,134.05	.00	12,134.05	10,327.66	61,421.44
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	492.46	31.24	523.70	117.34	2,002.62
North Carolina	2,163.58	1,100.00	3,263.58	3,245.66	9,954.46
Ohio	9,085.58	4,363.17	13,448.75	20,675.84	46,452.50
Oklahoma	44,560.16	.00	44,560.16	63,088.32	261,683.03
South Carolina	18,750.68	94.01	18,844.69	25,388.58	122,029.25
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	2,156.51	755.13	2,911.64	17,306.70	30,870.23
Texas	16,671.58	1,288.30	17,959.88	16,365.91	53,107.24
Virginia	2,658.48	50.00	2,708.48	3,094.97	7,937.89
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	6,202.12	74.41	6,276.53	3,740.55	27,674.63
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	114.29
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.08	.08	.03	.04
Totals	\$195,574.66	\$33,257.73	\$228,832.39	\$242,106.32	\$1,047,340.92

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 10,211.02	\$19,954.60	\$ 30,165.62	\$ 27,201.71	\$ 139,140.51
Foreign Missions	117,478.31	3,059.69	120,538.00	134,683.02	541,972.92
FWBBC	12,311.88	3,059.69	15,371.57	15,437.23	77,929.46
Home Missions	47,230.48	2,394.58	49,625.06	41,069.46	229,776.41
Retirement & Insurance	898.94	1,862.44	2,761.38	2,033.65	12,547.39
Master's Men	2,022.23	1,862.44	3,884.67	4,077.39	16,689.45
Commission for Theological Integrity	122.52	66.52	189.04	140.15	856.79
FWB Foundation	919.18	798.21	1,717.39	1,462.15	7,406.62
Historical Commission	112.07	66.52	178.59	127.01	799.91
Music Commission	84.36	66.52	150.88	130.13	714.90
Radio & TV Commission	94.81	66.52	161.33	139.14	767.13
Hillsdale FWB College	1,358.07	.00	1,358.07	4,922.74	6,591.38
Other	2,730.79	.00	2,730.79	10,682.54	12,148.05
Totals	\$195,574.66	\$33,257.73	\$228,832.39	\$242,106.32	\$1,047,340.92

Beginning Your New Life in Christ

Michael Green

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 162 pp., paperback, \$8.99).



Thomas Marberry

Michael Green is former professor of evangelism at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia. He also taught at St. John's College, Nottingham and St. Aldate's, Oxford, both in England. He has written more than 20 books on a variety of subjects. This volume revises and updates a book written earlier.

The author begins with the importance of the new birth. He argues that the Christian life is not just the adoption of a new code of ethics or change to a new lifestyle; it is a new life.

He writes, "Lots of books on Christian behavior make the cardinal error of assuming you can lay down a code of conduct to be followed and call it Christian ethics without changing human nature. I tell you it can't be done."

The new life is available through Christ and through Him alone. It is a costly life, costly to the one who accepts it and to the One who died to

provide it. But it is the only life that can give meaning and purpose.

Green devotes a major portion of the book to discussion of changes which Christian conversion can and should produce. It gives one a new sense of pardon, new desire to please God, new attitude toward others, new care for Christians and new power over evil. It is truly a life-changing experience. There will be fears, frustrations and disappointments, but Christ gives the new believer power to deal with these problems.

Christ also gives the new convert a fresh perspective on life, a new attitude. Rather than going along with the crowd, he wants to serve God. According to Green, the area in which the greatest difference is noted is one's behavior.

The new believer has a new desire to please God, a new example to follow and a new Spirit within. The au-

thor notes that change doesn't happen quickly or automatically. A Christian life takes time to grow and develop.

This is a useful book for two kinds of Christians. It helps new converts understand some of the changes happening in their lives. It helps them deal more effectively with the problems they encounter.

This work can also be useful for older Christians. Sometimes those who have been believers for a number of years have forgotten what it is to be a new convert. In particular, they may not understand what it is to be a new convert in today's society.

This book is easy to read. It is filled with practical, down-to-earth information on how to live a Christian life. It makes much use of stories and incidents from the Bible to illustrate the principles which the author wants to teach. ■

BEYOND BELIEF

IT'S NOT THE STUFF HE KNOWS
THAT MAKES HIM SUCH A
GREAT PASTOR...



... IT'S ALL THE STUFF HE'S
WILLING TO DO.



KY-ER JUPP

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Ministerial MIAs

A voice I had not heard in 18 years called my name. Dick had been a student at California Christian College during my days there as academic dean. He'd moved around the country until his job landed him in Baton Rouge. That's where his call originated.

Dick needed two things—help with doctrinal discussions and a church directory so he could track down ex-classmates who were preachers. I mailed material to assist in his doctrinal wranglings and told him how to order a directory.

Two weeks later, Dick called again. This time he got right to the point. "Hey, we've got a lot of MIAs!" He retired from the armed forces and well knew that MIA meant "missing in action."

He couldn't find several former classmates in the pastoral index. He started down a list of preachers. "Where is . . . ?" That's when I had to tell him something I wanted to forget.

The first preacher he asked about had committed adultery, divorced his wife and left the ministry. Dick couldn't believe it.

The next name was a friend who, for some reason, left the denomination and split his church. Two others had seen their ministries shot down in the flames of immorality. Dick said that it made him sick to hear it. It made me sick to tell it.

Who is killing off the preachers? Every preacher is vulnerable to attack, none more so than young preachers.

Wayne Lowen said when two of his preacher friends in one week announced that they were leaving the ministry, "The reality is that some preachers are being killed off by uncaring and critical leadership, some preachers are being killed off

because of marital problems, and some preachers are committing spiritual suicide."

Too many of us demand that pastors walk on water Monday through Friday, preach like Paul on Sunday and turn every worship service into an Upper Room revival. When they don't, we let them take all the blame for not meeting our unrealistic expectations. Give the man some slack!

A kind word goes farther with pastors than it does with most people. Pastors learn to expect harsh criticism and unjust accusations as part of the ministerial mantle. And that's scary.

Keith McCaslin said, "Preachers are leaving the ministry in droves. The ones who do so because of moral lapses make the news to the point many people believe immoral behavior is the major cause of defections. But the great majority of those who leave the ministry do so because of discouragement."

We're not the only group with a ministerial MIA problem. For several months now, I've gathered articles from Christian publications that address the ministerial casualty rate.

One of my favorite is titled, "Are Ministers Human?" The writer takes off on the people at Lystra (Acts 14) who couldn't decide if Paul and Barnabas were gods or con men. At first, they wanted to worship them. Eight verses later, the same people turned against Paul, stoned him and left him for dead.

That had a familiar ring to it. Just ask your pastor.

Another minister wrote, "What Do These People Want of Me?" He found himself caught in the crosshairs of the image gap his consumer-oriented congregation creat-



Jack Williams

ed. Some members insisted that their minister project a slick Wall Street image while others demanded that he be a male Mother Teresa.

Most writers concluded that ministerial dropout could nearly be eliminated if three things were true: Let the pastor lead. Pay the pastor a decent salary. Do your part as a member.

Are we taking care of our pastors? Do we encourage them with words, occasional notes and a cooperative spirit? Do we pay them enough so they don't get irritated and preoccupied with their income and fringe benefits? Do we earnestly, frequently pray for them and ask God to use them?

Kenneth Gipson asked the question, "How can we make the pastor's ministry more effective?" and then answered:

"Build his spiritual power by praying for him. Build his reputation by speaking well of him. Build his morale by encouraging him. Build his wisdom by consulting with him. Build his leadership by cooperating with him. Build his pulpit power by hearing him. The greatest thing we can do for our preacher is to follow the Christ he preaches."


Some MIAs are never found. Some are found and return to service. Some become KIAs (killed in action). We need every preacher that God has called at his post doing his duty. Will the next name on the ministerial MIA list be your pastor? ■

CONTACT

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