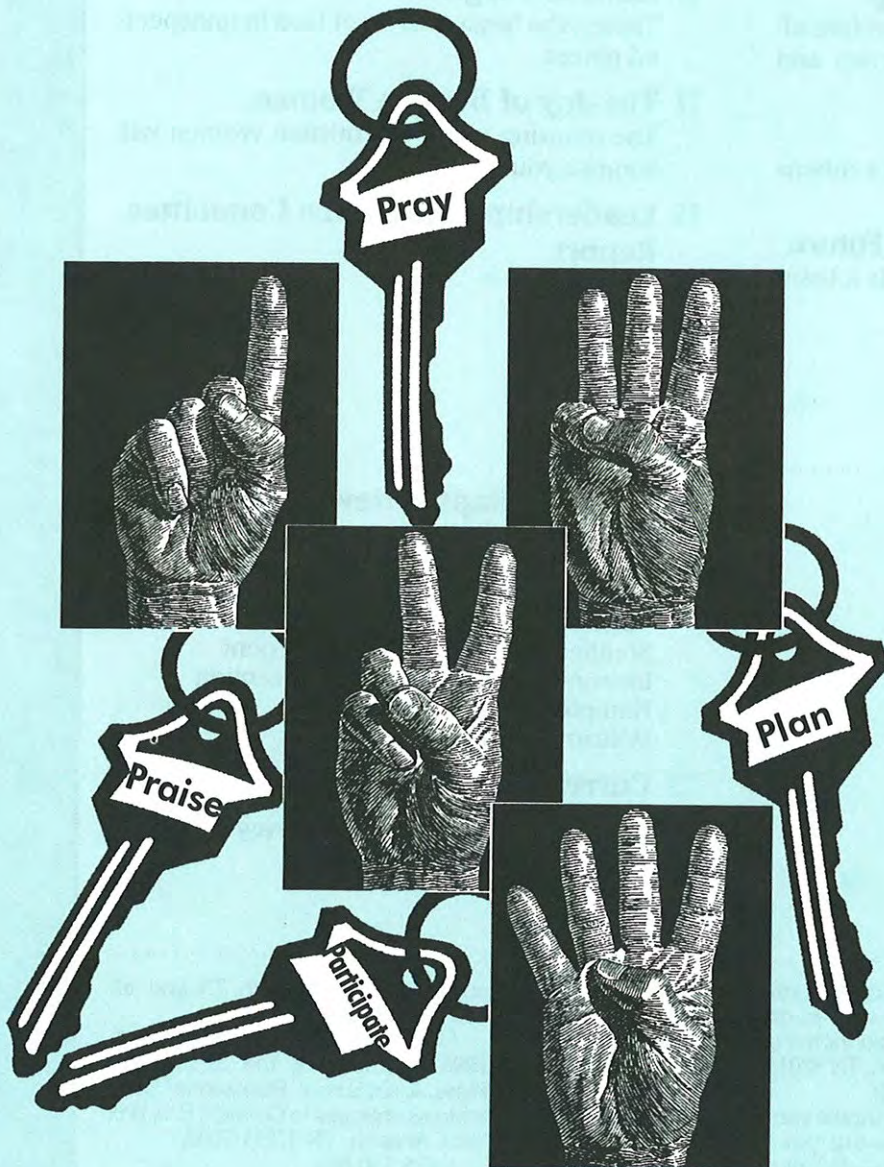


MARCH 1996

CONTACT

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS



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Where Are We Going?

A variety of opinions exist regarding the future of denominations in the next century. Some use research data to declare that denominational loyalty is waning and the day of denominations is over.

Others point to historical data and suggest that all denominations eventually fall into the snare of modernism and liberalism. Still others assert that denominations become bureaucracies which protect and perpetuate themselves while ignoring the needs of people.

Still others declare that denominational tags hinder church growth, raise barriers and are not relevant in today's society. They proclaim that denominational distinctives and doctrines hinder evangelism. Some even predict that denominations will cease to exist and be replaced by other more inclusive organizations.

Denominations have a long, distinguished history. This is certainly true of Free Will Baptists who, for over 250 years, have made a significant contribution to the Lord's work. I believe the future of the National Association of Free Will Baptists is bright. With the organization of the International Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Churches, we set in place a world-wide organization.

This suggests that Free Will Baptists have not deviated from the purpose that brought the denomination into existence, and provided the motivation and marching orders for the movement.

The Proper Concept

In order to establish denominational direction which is biblical, we need the proper concept of what the denomination is and why it exists. The denomination is organized in an ever-widening circle, following the Acts 1:8 pattern. We begin with the individual Christian, broaden to the local church, to the district association, to the state

association, to the National Association and to the International Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Churches.

This framework provides freedom and flexibility to preach and teach the Word. Every circle provides opportunity for fellowship and ministry. Each circle is autonomous with full authority to develop programs which fit its particular needs.

Each circle recognizes that it is a channel through which individual believers can have a world-wide ministry as the denomination seeks to extend Christ's Church to the ends of the earth.

The Perceived Context

Free Will Baptists do not minister in a vacuum. Cultural traits mark various areas of the country and world. We must learn to maintain denominational direction and yet minister in the context of the culture where God places us. We don't have to conform to or compromise with the culture, but we must comprehend the culture.

Farming communities require different schedules than inner cities. Shift workers may need more flexible schedules of church services than farming communities. Inner city churches may need to arrange their schedules to fit the particular neighborhoods where they minister.

Cultures differ; we as a denomination must be aware of these differences. Sameness does not enhance ministry. It is certainly not necessary. Different styles of worship, music, preaching, church organization and operation characterize Free Will Baptists.

Understanding the culture where God places us enables us to have a productive ministry. Denominational

The Secretary's Schedule

March 9 Arizona District Association
March 15-16 Illinois State Association



Melvin Worthington

direction takes into account the context in which the denomination ministers. Adopting biblical methods and articulating the biblical message serve as the focus for denominational direction. Free Will Baptists often use different approaches but they remain true to the unchanging message.

Personal Commitment

Denominational direction can only be maintained by personal commitment. No rules or regulations can insure that direction. I, personally, must be committed to Christ and the group through which I minister. Individual integrity develops and determines denominational integrity.

Denominational direction is determined by personal commitment of the pastors and people who hold membership in it. The National Association reflects individual Christians who make up local churches, district and state associations. Attendees at national conventions, national youth conferences and WNAC come from Free Will Baptist churches representing individual local churches, district or state associations.

When we show concern about the direction of the denomination we are, in reality, showing concern for individuals who hold membership in local churches. Those who lead local churches, district and state associations determine the programs and designate the personnel who administer the national agencies.

Denominational direction for Free Will Baptists has been constant, broadening the denominational circle to encompass the entire world. This direction has been corrected at times by delegates attending the annual convention. And our direction is still consistent with the purpose for which the National Association came into existence. ■

Four Keys to Vibrant Worship

By Doug Little



In our desire for a genuine encounter with God in our church services, we are apt to search first for new methods, tools, styles and formats. If church has become dull, some blame the familiar routines and grate against traditions. Others view any change in the traditional worship service as an assault on what to them is holy ground. Nothing defines the identity of a local church more than its style of worship. Therefore, the issue of keeping worship services vibrant touches one of the most sensitive areas of feelings in any church.

My contention is, however, that vibrant worship in the church is more a matter of heart than art. Styles and formats for worship may vary from place to place, just as methods of preaching and soul-winning do.

But I have observed several essential elements common to churches whose worship services are Bible-based, soul-stirring, Christ-exalting and evangelistic. I call them the keys to vibrant worship. They are true regardless of the style of music, the format of the service or the preferred expressions of worship in any church.

Key #1: Prayer

Years ago I learned that where prayer focuses, power falls. Every instance in scripture of the power of God moving among His people gathered in worship is precipitated by prayer.

When Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple, the fire of God consumed the sacrifice and the glory of God so filled the House that the priests could not enter. When Elijah prayed on Mt. Carmel, God proved Himself to be the true God and revival turned the people around.

When the disciples prayed in response to the threats of the authorities, the house shook with the power of God and they were filled with boldness to win souls. When Peter was imprisoned, the church prayed and God sent an angel to deliver him.

These and other examples from God's Word should convince us that apart from prayer we will not experience the power of God in our churches. Prayerlessness is the strongest evidence of a lack of dependence on God. Churches who crave the moving of the Holy Spirit in their midst will make prayer the top priority in their preparation for worship.

Those who lead worship must learn to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit first in their prayer closet if they hope to discern His leading on the platform during a worship service. Pastors must be men of prayer if preaching is to be anointed.

Musicians must bathe their selections and preparation in prayer to such an extent that their music is set ablaze with love for God that will spread from heart to heart during the service.

Can lay people not see the need to intercede for their pastor? Like Aaron and Hur who held up Moses' arms so that Israel would prevail in battle, godly men and women in the pews ought to pray daily for their pastors and their church, lifting up a constant cry to God to pour out His Spirit.

Churches where lay people are committed to that kind of intercession are seeing unusual movings of the Lord. Where prayer focuses, power falls.

Key #2: Praise

By definition, worship is the act of giving honor and glory to someone of worth. Christians gather to worship God, to ascribe to Him the honor and



glory of which He alone is worthy. Except that in many churches the focus of the worship service is man, not God.

The value of many worship services is measured by what those in attendance get out of the service—encouragement, practical help, a “blessing,” fellowship. Biblical worship always focuses on what we give to God, not what we get from Him.

Praise is a key to vibrant worship. I’m not referring to a type of music. I’m speaking of the foundation upon which everything in a worship service is built: giving honor and glory to God. The distinction can be very subtle, for we cannot come before God disconnected from our needs.

When we truly give God the worship He deserves, we will come away with a great degree of fulfillment. But when getting a blessing from God becomes more important than being a blessing to God, our worship will be flesh-inspired rather than Spirit-filled.

Key #3: Participation

Worship services recorded in the Bible present an inescapable mandate that God’s people be participants rather than observers in worship. Our generation struggles with “spectator-itis” in church.

The rise of performance-oriented special music, the decline of the practice of verbal responses such as, “Amen!” from the congregation, the fear of the charismatic influence in expressiveness in worship, and the shift of our culture away from dialogue (due to the television habit) have conditioned people to come to church expecting to sit and watch worship being done on the platform. Nothing could be farther from the biblical models.

Pastors and churches who want worship to be vibrant must teach and train their people to be actively involved in all that transpires during the service. This, too, is a sensitive issue that should be approached with careful consideration of the cultural

needs and heritage. Change in an inappropriate direction, or even an appropriate change pushed too quickly, can cause great harm.

Worship leaders who want their congregations to participate actively in church services consider carefully styles of music, prayer, preaching, giving and expression that have touched hearts consistently in that particular church. The preferences of the congregation reveal the heart of their expressions of worship.

Wise leaders of established churches protect the “heart language” of their church, then supplement the services with new expressions that will enhance, rather than replace, what the church has been accustomed to.

If a radical change is desired, leaders might do well to start a new, separate worship service to incorporate the new format. The traditional service is then maintained without disrupting the sense of security of the established members.

God seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, and the heart that responds to God’s call longs to express its love for Him in heart-felt ways. Vibrant worship touches the heart, prompting an active response from the worshiper.

Churches that promote the active participation of their people in worship and provide means through which members can express their heart-felt love for God will experience consistent outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their services.

Key #4: Planning

In the most explicit instruction given in scripture regarding the conducting of public worship, the Apostle Paul says that all things should be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Planning the flow of a worship service and making selections in ad-

vance need not stifle the freedom of the Holy Spirit to move as He wills during a worship service. Planning enables the service to direct worshipers in a logical sequence of participation that promotes receptivity to the work of the Holy Spirit.

There is, of course, the need to be flexible. The Holy Spirit’s fire must not be quenched in the midst of a service so that the planned order will not be disrupted. But as a rule, there is nothing unspiritual about asking the Lord’s guidance in planning the basics of a worship service in advance.

Planning promotes preparation. Few things dampen a church service quicker than ushers scrambling to get in place or a singer struggling to get through a song that hasn’t been practiced. The manner in which a worship service is conducted should reflect our concern that the message of the Gospel and the moving of the Spirit not be hindered by unnecessary distractions.

Free Will Baptist churches need not lose their moorings in their desire to offer worship services that are relevant to the needs of their local communities and the changes of our culture. Each congregation must be true to the scripture and then true to its own heart. If these four keys to vibrant worship are used as a guide, any church can use whatever style of worship that suits it and still experience the power of God in their services. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend R. Douglas Little pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Russellville, Arkansas. He is also a member of the Music Commission.

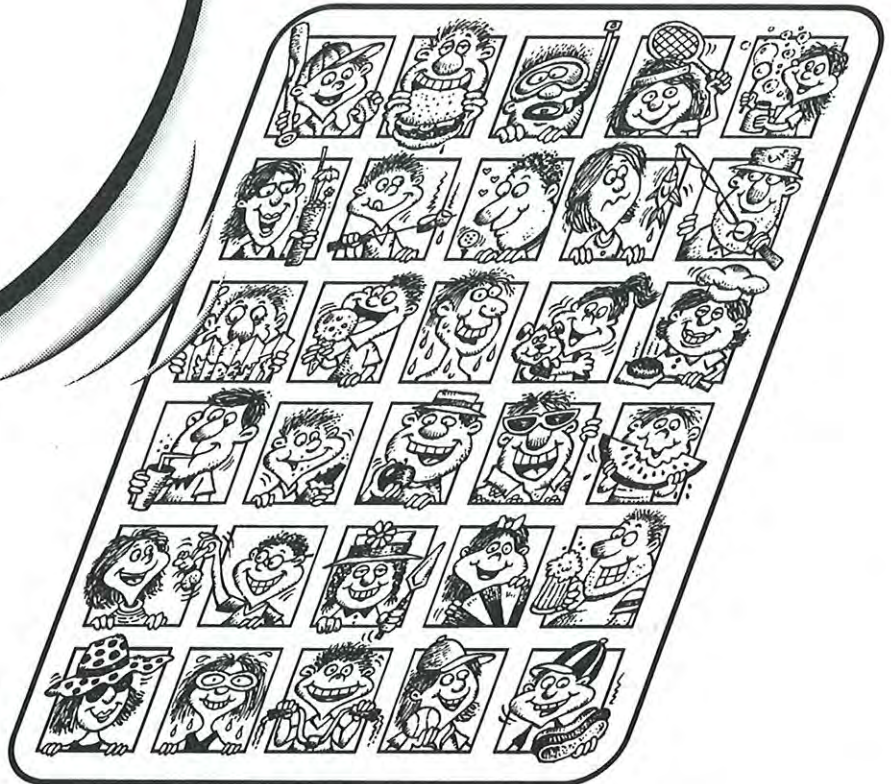
The ups and downs of youth ministry.

“Just My Luck”

By Les McMahan

I'm a youth worker. I must be out of my mind!

Taking a fresh look at youth ministry.



“Just my luck” is a phrase I often use when things aren’t going my way. The air conditioner went down; “just my luck.” The car broke down in rush hour traffic; “just my luck.”

I don’t claim to be a youth expert, but I think I speak for a lot of Christian youth workers. There are certain young people who give you this “just-my-luck” feeling when they enter your class. Johnny’s here; “just my luck.” Susie’s coming; “just my luck.”

I’m just a normal guy in the church trenches trying to help. Youth work has been the place God has used me. It’s “just my luck” to be

working with a group of teenagers on Wednesday evenings. The group averages 15-20 teens.

I’ve been working with teenagers for about 10 years. During this time, I’ve seen many teens walk through my classroom door. I’ve seen many grow up, go off to school or work, get married and start families. In my own way, I’ve grouped teenagers into four categories. See if any of them fit your group.

“Just-My-Luck” Kids

Some teens have reputations that precede them. Basically, they are the *bad* kids. I know that isn’t politically correct. So how about *behaviorally-*

challenged kids? They want nothing from church or the youth group. They give nothing to church or the youth group. And, it appears, they take nothing from the youth group (unless you consider the youth leader’s energy).

“Just-my-luck” kids have no desire to change.

They enjoy being hard and cold to spiritual matters. I’m not sure where this behavior comes from. It could be from parents, music, peers, a past event in their lives or from their youth leader. They don’t want to change.

"Just-my-luck" kids look for opportunities to create controversy or problems.

They know exactly how to press your "hot" button. Maybe these kids start arguments with other students. It could be stirring up controversy during question and answer times or pure defiance during instruction time. These kids love to create problems.

"Just-my-luck" kids associate with the wrong crowd or drag other kids into their mindset.

Face it, if you are a parent or a youth leader, you worry about who your kids hang out with. "Who you hang out with is who you become." This is a popular thing for parents and youth leaders to say and it is *true*.

Kids think they can handle it. They should be able to do what others do, go where others go, say what others say, watch what others watch. However, as is most often the case, kids (nor adults, for that matter) cannot withstand the spiritual pressure when in the wrong environment.

"Just-a-Blessing" Kids

The second kind of teenagers who come through my classroom door are the "just-a-blessing" teens. These are the kids you can minister to. They are a blessing to teach and train. They're looking for something. They're ready for the gospel. Maybe they have tried other things or maybe they want what other Christians have. Needless to say, these kids are a lot of work, but they are receptive to spiritual matters.

"Just-a-blessing" kids are those who need help and realize it.

They may have some emotional, physical or psychological battle scars. Life may have been rough and they're searching for something to remove the pain. As you and I know, Jesus can help them. God placed them under my care to provide the help they need.

"Just-a-blessing" kids need love and want you to share it.

The world that the average teenager lives in is a cold place. Growing up is tough. Kids can no longer be kids. They have to think and make choices

like adults, but in kids' bodies and minds. They make decisions, quite frankly, that I didn't have to make growing up—or have ever had to make. They need love and support. They need unconditional love.

"Just-a-blessing" kids have been misguided and need a new course in life.

Obviously, everyone in society doesn't grow up with white picket fences, a dog, a three-bedroom home in the suburbs, a caring mom who stays home and a loving father. Unfortunately, the perfect home environment is the exception, not the rule. "Just-a-blessing" kids need to be guided onto the proper track in life.

Recently, I went four-wheeling. I rode the four-wheeler onto a path that wasn't far from where I was supposed to be. I ended up in the briars and a very uncomfortable place to ride. Some kids aren't far from where they should be; they're just traveling in some uncomfortable and potentially dangerous areas.

"Just-a-blessing" kids are hungry and need to be fed.

Youth work is so challenging because there are so many other things out there to satisfy the appetites of the kids. (Pastors may say this is true for all people. The difference between adults and youth is that adults have settled into patterns. Kids are still experimenting with things.)

A hunger for something is driving them. They hunger for acceptance, for love, for direction, for someone to care. The hunger they're experiencing can be satisfied by the *Bread of Life*—Jesus. That is what I have and what I need to share.

"Just-a-Pleasure" Kids

These are the kids who are exciting to be around. Jesus has done something in their lives and they are active about showing it. They read their Bibles. They pray. They are witnesses. They volunteer regularly. They are eager. I know, I know. You're probably saying you've never seen kids like this. Fortunately, God has blessed me with some of them. They are "just a pleasure" to work with.

"Just-a-pleasure" kids are true to form.

There is no pretending with these kids. The Holy Spirit has done a work on the inside and it shows on the outside. When times are tough, they look to Jesus. When the youth leader loses his cool, these kids look to Jesus. When others fail, they continue to look to Jesus.

"Just-a-pleasure" kids are faithful to Christ and the church.

Christ can count on these kids and so can I. In a time when no one seems to keep his word, "just-a-pleasure" kids can be counted on. Youth group starts at 7:00 p.m. They'll be there at 6:45 p.m. There's someone needing a helping hand. They're there to help because of Christ. By the way, you can tell the difference when Christ is the reason for the faithfulness.

"Just-My-Calling" Kids

All the kids God brings across my path fall into this category. Every teen needs someone to share the gospel with him, to care about his life, and to bear the burdens life brings. As in the parable of the sower and the seed, some kids are more responsive to God's Word. Some ignore it. Some know the talk but don't walk the walk. Some taste it until other things come along. Some absorb it and bring forth fruit.

It isn't my calling to pick and choose who I want in my youth group. It is my calling to minister to the best of my ability to all I encounter.

Are there days I would love to throw in the towel?

Sure.

Are there days it doesn't seem worth the hassle?

You bet.

Are there disappointments and dashed dreams along the way?

Yes.

However, enough golden rays of hope have come through the dark clouds to let me know—it's "*just my luck*" God called me to be a youth worker. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Les McMahan serves as youth leader of Unity Free Will Baptist Church in Middlesburg Heights, Ohio.

Train a Child— Transform the Future

By George W. Waggoner



An adaptation from a message addressed to parents attending the close of Vacation Bible School some years ago still has significance today.

We have had the privilege of teaching your children for two weeks in our Bible school. As I observed them day after day, I couldn't help wondering where they would be 10 or 15 years from now. I wondered if our efforts would help change the lives of anyone. What would they do with their lives? Let's take a look at some possibilities.

One or more of these children may not live to see the age of 21. That's hard to say and harder to accept. Out of a group this large, we are likely to see some illegal drug users, alcoholics, sex perverts or unwed mothers. We hope that there are none in this group.

The Bible has something to say about this. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train

up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

It is the scriptural expression of the principle on which all education rests. That is, a child's training can determine his after-life. I said, "can determine." I mean, "is likely to determine." Let's look at three areas.

The Parent

To control their children, parents must first be able to control themselves. Rewards and punishments are the results of discipline, both by parents and by God. God's rewards and punishments always fit the act. Parents' rewards and punishments often do not.

When parents punish children, it is often only bad temper at work. For example, a child may make his home a madhouse until his mother's patience is exhausted and she slaps his face. The child realizes, not that she can control him, but that she cannot control herself.

The way to train a child is to train yourself. What you are, he may become. If your hands are morally dirty, his life will be stained by the home-handling he gets.

The spirit of disobedience to God in your heart, of failure to obey, of preferring your own way to God's, will be absorbed by your child as surely as he breathes. The opposite is also true. We must be in heart what we would have our children be in life.

A successful parent will be one who makes the training of children a constant and religious study. It is the last subject in the world to be left to haphazardness. The Bible is plain about parents' responsibilities in this regard.

Parents must live close to God if they are to make God real to their children. Pretense will not do. No talk, however religious, can create an impression that we are friends of God, unless that sacred friendship actually exists.

Without love in the home, all the parents' efforts will fail. And it must be that kind of love that God alone can shed abroad in the heart. The child will not long be fooled by pretense or a make-believe love for God.

The Child

A mother once asked a psychologist when she should start training her child. The doctor asked when the child was to be born. When the mother replied that her child was nearly two years old, the doctor said, "Don't hesitate another moment. You've already lost the most important years of his life."

One well-known church says that if they can have a child for the first seven years of his life, he'll always be faithful to that church. The Bible teaches the importance of training children.

Many Mosaic laws concerned the responsibilities of training children. In Deuteronomy 11:19, God says, "And ye shall teach them (the laws) to thy children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

One could almost say that everything is settled by the time a child turns 15 or 16 concerning the way he/she will go. Most trials and temptations as well as most opportunities for development lie ahead. But the way each person meets the tests—whether they rise, or fail to rise, to meet them—is to a large extent already decided.

For Himself

A child ought to be trained for his own sake. He has body, mind and soul. All are important. Many children get the finest care for their bodies and minds, but fail to get nurture for the most important part of all, their souls. The soul learns its habits the same way the body and mind acquire theirs—by use and practice.

The habit of living without God is one which is easily learned. Unlike some habits, it demands no effort and no self-denial.

There is another habit of the soul—that of living for God, with God and in God—that can also be learned. This habit is not formed so soon or so easily as the other. Yet like most habits, it is formed by a succession of acts (beginning with the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord), and made permanent by practice (daily obedience to God's Word).

For His Parents

A child ought to be trained for the sake of his parents. The Bible says that a foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her that bore him (Prov. 17:25). This can be doubly said of a daughter.

How many parents have "died a thousand deaths" because of their children's sin and sinfulness? Many parents breathe a big sigh of relief

when (and if) their children mature into adults without serious incidence in their growing-up years.

For Others

A child ought to be trained for the sake of others. Everyone who deals with children and young people, including teachers, neighbors, employers, as well as parents, appreciates well-trained, well-behaved children and young people. How does the behavior of your neighbor's children and your child's playmates affect you?

The Training

A child cannot be properly trained, fully trained, without some religious training. And sufficient religious training, in my view, is not likely to be done outside the church. Most parents either can not or do not give enough training to establish that child for eternity—"in the way he should go." They need help.

The church is here to help you and them. Sunday School, Church Training Service and worship services are all designed to teach and train parents as well as children.

Come and bring them: together we will do our best to "train up the child in the way he should go."

We can't do it very well without your assistance. But, if necessary, we will try. If you can't or won't help, we'll do the best we can for them alone.

Do you want your children to become God-fearing, God-loving young people and adults? Or will you abandon them to do the best they can on their own, helpless to defend themselves against the world and the devil?

How will you meet your responsibilities? Why not begin by attending worship services this week? It's never too soon.

In fact, it may be later than you think. ■

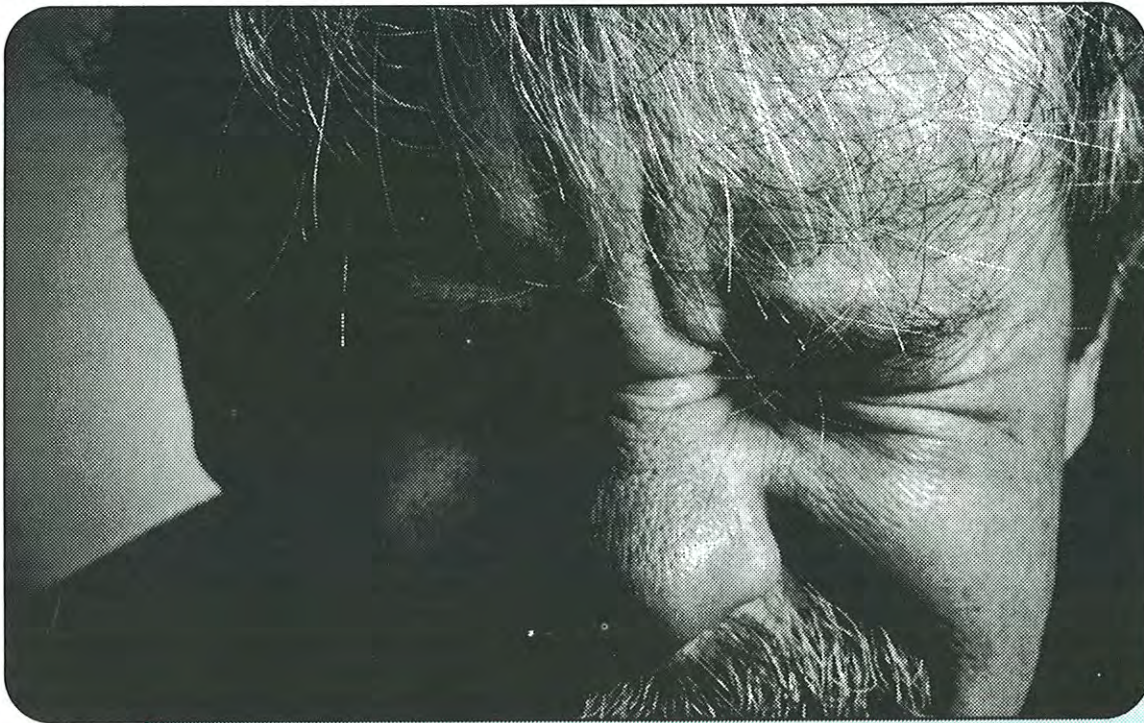
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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend George Waggoner is a retired Free Will Baptist minister who resides in Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

Forgiveness. . . .

What does it really mean? Is it easy to do? Is it necessary?

Hard to Forgive

By Walt Spears



My granddaughter and two nieces were happily playing the other day. They are two, three and five years old. As things generally go, a disagreement arose concerning a toy. One of the girls got her finger pinched.

The barrier of hate immediately blocked companionship until the of-

fender said she was sorry. As quickly as the barrier developed, it vanished. The girls were happily playing as if nothing had ever interrupted their fun. Why can't adults resolve their problems as easily?

To forgive, as defined in the *Thorndike-Barnhart Dictionary*, is "to give up the wish to punish or get

even with; pardon; excuse; not have hard feelings at or toward."

God's forgiveness is far greater than is stated in this definition. He not only forgives us of our sins, but as stated in Isaiah 43:25b, ". . . will not remember thy sins."

The cleansing of our sins by the blood of God's Son, Jesus, is the

greatest example of forgiveness that we can experience. Our sins are forgiven and forgotten.

One example of forgiveness is given in Luke 23:42-43. The thief on the cross asked Jesus to forgive him. Jesus immediately granted the request by assuring the thief that he would be with Him in Paradise. If we accept this undeserved forgiveness, the same promise is given to us.

Two Men at Pearl Harbor

Once we accept God's forgiveness, His love should radiate through us and we should be willing to forgive others.

The Pilot

An illustration of this principle began at the attack of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The man who led the attack on Pearl Harbor was Japanese Navy Air Force Captain Mitsuo Fuchida. He had many close encounters with death during the four years of the war, but for reasons unexplained he was spared.

After the war, Fuchida took up farming. One day, on his way to Tokyo, he was given a tract titled, "I Was a Prisoner of Japan." It was written by the missionary who had given it to Fuchida.

The missionary had been a U. S. Army sergeant who was captured by the Japanese and held as a prisoner of war for three and one half years. During his stay in the prison camp, the sergeant had been given a Bible which he read on a regular basis.

He became a Christian, experienced God's forgiveness and, you guessed it, vowed to return to Japan as a missionary upon his release from the prison camp.

Is this a real example of love and forgiveness that only God can place in our hearts upon receiving His forgiveness and cleansing? To witness to your enemy, the one who led the attack against you and held you prisoner, has to be one of the clearest examples of love and forgiveness here on earth.

The Gunner

The story, however, is not complete. Another man, Joe Morgan, had

been stationed at Pearl Harbor only a short time when the attack occurred. He had fired at the Japanese planes attacking Pearl Harbor.

During the attack, Joe made a promise to God that he would do whatever God wanted him to do if God would just get him through the attack. God called him to the ministry.

After the war, Joe became an ordained minister. He preached love and forgiveness for years. He thought he was practicing what he had been preaching until one day he came face to face with Fuchida—who was now a Christian.

Questions raced through his mind. Could he forgive him? Would he be able to shake his hand? Would he be able to embrace him as a Christian brother? God's true love and forgiveness brought both men through that meeting.

Joe Morgan and Mitsuo Fuchida were able to embrace one another in love and forgiveness. Only God could make that possible.

Interestingly enough, each man was forgiven by his former enemy. They were forgiven by the same people they had attempted to kill during the war. Joe Morgan and Mitsuo Fuchida had exchanged gun fire with each other. Now they are brothers in Christ Jesus and have forgiven each other for past actions.

Joseph and His Brothers

Another illustration of forgiveness took place farther back in history. In Genesis 37-50, we read the account of the plot concocted by the brothers of Joseph to kill him. They sold him into slavery and he ended up in Egypt.

After about 20 years, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt looking for food. Even though they never asked for forgiveness, Joseph forgave them.

These men were his own flesh and blood who had plotted to kill him and then sold him into bondage. He was in a position of power which gave him the opportunity to get revenge. Yet, he forgave them because of his love for God.

Joseph didn't question God about any of the things that happened in his life. He just accepted everything as God's will. This acceptance gave him the power to forgive his brothers.

These stories are of people attempting to kill one another, but through God's love were able to forgive one another. If they can forgive, why do we feel it so important to hold a grudge when we have been offended by a brother/sister in Christ who "should have a better attitude or should be more careful about what they say"?

Many times we condemn others for not forgiving their enemies, but we will not even forgive our family in Christ because they "have not apologized." Joseph's brothers did not apologize, but Joseph manifested a great example of forgiveness. Why do we think we must have an apology to grant forgiveness?

The next time you are hesitant to forgive someone, remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:15, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Jesus did not give provisions for this forgiveness such as an apology or a written statement of guilt. He just said either forgive your trespassers or forget about being forgiven by Him. He was direct and to the point.

If we remember the mercy that God had for us, it should be easier to forgive others. Ephesians 4:32 says, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

That's God's way. That's the best way. And because I am a Christian, that's my way. How do you handle life's wrongs? ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Charles "Walter" Spears, Jr., has been a member of First Free Will Baptist Church in Tucson, Arizona, since 1954. Mr. Spears teaches a collegiate Sunday School class. He also serves as a deacon and song director.



Am I crazy or what?

I love being a woman.

The *Joy* of Being a *Woman*

By Mary R. Wischart

I remember as a child being glad that I was feminine. I felt sorry for men because they couldn't be women.

A man writing in the Middle Ages says:

Women are clearly superior to men. Man was created from dirt. Woman was not. Man was created outside of Paradise. Woman was created inside Paradise. Woman bore God, a thing which man could not do.

To be fair I'd have to say that another Middle Age man wrote bitterly:

Between Adam and Paradise there was only

one woman, but she was not satisfied until she had driven him out of the garden.

I couldn't agree with either view. One tends to put woman on a pedestal, the other to consign woman to the pit. These two views from the Middle Ages have influenced the view of woman held in our day.

Uniqueness of Women

I certainly don't want to be consigned to the pit, but I don't want to be placed on a pedestal either. I just want to be accepted as a human be-

ing, part of the race of man, an intelligent, spiritual being with a mind and a will and a capacity for thinking, loving, and creating (in the sense that any human being can create).

Don't misunderstand me. I like men. Some of my best friends are men. But I have never wanted to be one.

As a woman I have an eye and a mind for detail. I have a mind that can manage several files at one time. (Sometimes this is a handicap, but often it is an advantage.) I can read five books at once, readily skipping

from one to the other and not confusing the characters or the philosophies. Witness the books piled in my bedroom at any one time.

Or I can think about my work and the people I love, where they are, what they are doing. Or I can concentrate on a project so that someone will have to shake me to get my attention. I am an emotional creature and not afraid of my emotions. God gave them to me for a purpose.

Dr. Susan Riley used to say, "No minority group on earth has suffered things that women have not suffered as a group. Have they been bought and sold? So have women. Have they been used as slaves? So have women."

As women, we know what she meant. Yet women have risen above this treatment. Those who rise above it without bitterness give testimony to the resilience of the human spirit and the strength of women. And our experience makes it possible for us to identify with all those who are put down, belittled, considered of lesser value in the scheme of things.

Think of all the beautiful women who have lived through the ages. I have the privilege of being identified with them.

Of course as Dr. L. C. Johnson used to say, "No matter which side you're on, there's always someone on it who makes you wish you weren't." Even women!

Biblical Examples

Miriam

Still, I joy in being a woman because I can identify with a woman like Miriam. She was a leader among her people along with her brothers, Moses and Aaron. Miriam was courageous and daring when it came to saving her baby brother.

She was known as a prophetess. She composed the song the women sang at the Red Sea.

True, she stumbled and fell, but God put into the words of Micah the prophet a memorial to Miriam: "I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam" (Micah 6:4).

Deborah

There's Deborah, called a mother in Israel. She must have been a nur-

terer, an encourager. She stood firm for God and represented His presence with the army when Barak led them against Sisera. Did Deborah compose the song of praise in Judges 5? At least she and Barak sang it together.

Ruth

Ruth the Moabitess learned to know God from her husband and in-laws. She clung to Him although it meant leaving her own people and going to a strange land. She was not afraid of physical labor. Whatever needed to be done, Ruth was willing to do it.

Her love and loyalty to her mother-in-law caused the Israelite women to say of her, "Thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons." God placed her in David's line, in the family that would have the honor of bringing the Messiah into the world.

Esther

Think of Esther. She must have been beautiful, beautiful enough to win a beauty contest. Yet I believe her greatest beauty came from the inside out. The keeper of the women, Hegai, was immediately attracted to Esther. She handled the whole situation wisely and well. She listened to good advice. She was obedient to her cousin Mordecai.

Before the king she showed a great deal of wisdom, courage and self sacrifice. The king promised her anything, up to one half the kingdom. She asked only for her people. Noble indeed was Queen Esther.

Samson's Mother

Samson's mother—we don't know her name—knew God. She stands out as a woman of faith. When an angel came to her, she believed. She was willing to accept the task of raising a Nazarite and being one herself. When her husband thought they must surely die, in her wisdom she pointed out that God surely did not intend to kill them. He had just given instructions for rearing the child and had accepted a sacrifice from their hands.

Dorcas

Dorcas used her hands and talents to bless others. Her contribu-

tions were so great that her friends and neighbors refused to let her go. Instead they sent for Peter who was nearby. They showed him some of Dorcas' contributions. And through Peter God restored Dorcas to them. She became a testimony so that many unbelievers came to know the Lord because of her.

Lydia

Lydia was a business woman, a seller of purple, the stuff used by royalty and the wealthy. But she joined with other women in prayer, wanting something more. God opened her heart and she received the gospel message brought by Paul and his company.

Lydia opened her home to the servants of God. The doors were still open even after the men had been beaten and thrown into jail. I like to think that Lydia was a pillar in the church at Philippi, the church Paul wrote to as "my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown."

Free Will Baptist Women

Fannie Polston

Fannie Polston, a business woman and dedicated Free Will Baptist, had a great vision of the possibilities for the Lord's work among us. She was astute, knowledgeable with good discernment, intelligence and sound judgment. She yearned for a Free Will Baptist educational institution and her name is on the charter of the Free Will Baptist University, chartered in Tennessee in 1907.

She believed in the power of prayer and started specific days and weeks of prayer for Free Will Baptist women. She edited the paper, *The Record*, published from Cofer's Chapel FWB Church. She is memorialized in the women's dormitory at Free Will Baptist Bible College, because, like the widow in the New Testament, Mrs. Polston gave her whole living to the college before her death.

Lizzie McAdams

Lizzie McAdams moved in a man's world. But she was dedicated to God and to His will for her life. She seemed to have boundless energy and enthusiasm in the Lord's service. She and



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her husband traveled extensively, serving briefly as missionaries in Barbados and four years as home missionaries. She was known for shouting and waving her handkerchief in praise to God. But chiefly she was known for winning souls to the Lord.

Damon Dodd wrote of her that he saw her as trailblazer, a missionary, a prayer warrior, an angel of mercy. He says in a tribute to her: "In the Lead Belt area of southeast Missouri—more than 3,000 souls were saved out of a population of 15,000—a grand average of one of every five persons. I was one of those persons—and my wife—and my mother—and my brothers and sister."

Mary Welch

Mary Ann Weaver Welch was a girl of about 17 when she joined the Ladies' Aid at Cofer's Chapel. She later married the pastor, John L. Welch. In her quiet, sweet way she influenced many people. She was humble, but firm in her faith.

For 16 years she worked at Free Will Baptist Bible College. There she encouraged students, faculty, administration and staff as well. Remembered for readily quoting poetry suitable for the occasion or handing out a mint with, "To sweeten your disposition," she simply loved the best out of people around her.

Agnes Frazier

Agnes Frazier contributed much to WNAC and Free Will Baptists with her writing and teaching. She gave freely of herself to the women's organization. She had a vision and wanted the women to fulfill that vision. In 1944 she proposed the 50,000 Co-Laborer Band.

People were asked to sign a card saying they would give one dollar a month to the fund. She hoped to have 50,000 Free Will Baptists giving one dollar a month to WNAC. In that same year she also proposed a monthly magazine for the women with a full-time editor. She was ahead of her time and Free Will Baptists are still trying to catch up to her vision.

Laura Belle Barnard

In the new beginning for Free Will

Baptists, Laura Belle Barnard led the way in reaching people around the world. With great spirit and dedication she headed for India in 1935. A great Bible teacher, an administrator, a prayer warrior she built up the church in South India. She taught at Free Will Baptist Bible College on two different occasions and influenced many students in dedication to God's work. She was a woman of strength, courage and daring for God.

And the list could go on and on with women who have made contributions in many areas and especially in God's work.

I am delighted to be a woman because that is God's plan for me. He created woman. He planned for me before I was. The feminist movement spawned a song, "I am woman; I can do anything." Well, I am woman, not a feminist. I do not think that I can do everything. But I want to be God's woman, fulfilling His will for me wherever He places me. And He has promised that in Him I can accomplish all that He has in mind for me—as a woman. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Mary R. Wisehart serves as executive secretary and meeting planner for Women Nationally Active for Christ (WNAC).

Leadership Conference Committee Report

The Leadership Conference devoted its time in December to discussion of the resolutions presented to the National Association of Free Will Baptists by the North Carolina State Association of Free Will Baptists and the Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptists in July 1995. At the end of that conference, this committee was formed and charged to write a report and to prepare a statement affirming the spirit of the meeting and the principles of the North Carolina resolution, reflecting the consensus of opinion in those areas that seemed to be expressed in the meeting, and offering suggestions about ways to prevent drift in the denomination. The Virginia resolutions were referred to the Executive Committee of the National Association for action.

We may say, in summary, that the spirit of free and helpful discussion which characterized the conference in December also characterized the committee meeting on January 22-24, 1996. We believe, through both meetings, that an important measure of understanding was achieved, even when differences remain. We also found that many of our people have concerns about the same kinds of things that the North Carolina resolution expressed concern about, at least to some significant degree. There was a strong expression of appreciation, especially during the meetings of this committee, for the things all Free Will Baptists have in common, especially for the great doctrines of the faith that provide for us a fundamental unity.

The work of our committee, as directed, has been to prepare a statement, which will follow. We recommend that this statement be dealt with, at the National Convention in July 1996, as a proposed amendment by substitution for the resolution from North Carolina. That way, if the body votes to substitute it for that original resolution, this statement will become the item of business to be acted on, even though we have not presented it in the form of a resolution. We present it as a statement to express the denomination's common concerns and commitment.

Statement

There are problems for all branches of the body of Christ, including the Free Will Baptist people in particular. Some of those problems are no different from those the church has always faced; some of them take on new dimensions or seriousness in our day. No doubt we should expect this, given that the Bible warns us that perilous times shall come, that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (II Tim. 3:1, 13).

The society around us becomes ever more secular and relativistic, and we hardly escape being affected. The pervasive materialism of our times, both as a view of what is real and as a view of what is worthwhile to live for, affects believers too. Our young people especially, although not exclusively, tend to be more and more negatively affected by the spirit of the age, by the mind-set of our society about values and standards.

The Biblical worldview that used to be more or less taken for granted in our country no longer prevails. Even faithful Christians are desensitized to sin, often without realizing it. Many churches are in decline. Our denomination does not experience widespread growth. In far too many places there is scant evidence of spiritual fervor or of evangelistic zeal. In many quarters there is perception of a drift away from the fundamental elements that keep the church alive and well and true to its heritage, and it is difficult to argue the falsity of that perception.

Likewise, from almost every quarter there is a sense of need for revival and some uneasiness about the future of our movement if that revival does not come. While we cannot bring revival by any prescribed formula, we can speak to concerns and call for commitment in regard to them. And then we can pray for revival and trust the God whose work it is to bring that in His own time and purpose.

1. We call for commitment to holiness (I Pet. 1:15, 16; Eph. 5:11). In the Bible, holiness is often a synonym of sanctification. This, in turn, is the progressive work of the Holy Spirit to separate believers to God and to separate them from sin. It is His internal work, applying the Word of God, that is inevitably manifested in the Christian's attitudes and behavior.

As noted above, the mind-set of our age is affecting our thinking. We do not have among us the same degree of sensitivity toward sin that we once had, and therefore we do not always have the same level of devotion to values like modesty and purity. Moral relativism has powerfully influenced us; our children often do not have any basis for distinguishing right and wrong.

We believe that, among other offenders against Biblical holiness, the modern entertainment industry is especially effective and destructive. The spirit of antichrist dominates the movies, television, the theater, art and popular literature. Christians must beware!

Some of those who survey Christian opinion tell us that there is little difference between the beliefs of Christian youth and those of unbelievers about sexual activity. We are convinced that there is special need, in our day, for renewed emphasis on sexual purity. The authority of God lies behind the restriction of sexual intimacy to heterosexual marriage. Christians need to promote the kinds of attitude, dress and conduct that help each other obey God's standard and maintain His creative distinction between the sexes (Heb. 13:4).

We also believe that the use of illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages is a curse on society that should not be sanctioned by the Christian. Even the use of tobacco, although legal, is increasingly understood to be both detrimental to one's physical health and to pose the danger of addiction. We would reemphasize the historic and Biblical stand of Free Will Baptists for total abstinence from the use, as well as sanction of the sale, of intoxicating beverages. Our covenant statement remains trustworthy in this regard and applies in principle to other forms of voluntary self-enslavement (I Cor. 6:12; II Cor. 7:1).

Free Will Baptists have generally been known as a conservative people—conservative in theology and lifestyle. We believe that holiness requires us to continue to be conservative of Biblical values in private and public life, values like the traditional family and the right to life.

2. We call for commitment to ecclesiastical separation from false doctrine and its teachers. Within our generation, many churchmen appear to have ignored the fact that some whom they recognize or cooperate with, as though they were Christians, deny doctrines essential to the Christian faith and therefore show themselves to be proponents of a false religion. It seems clear that this tendency is one of the deplorable effects of the new evangelicalism.

We believe that the Bible clearly forbids Christians from such recognition or fellowship on religious grounds. This is most certainly one form of being "unequally yoked together with unbelievers," forbidden in II Corinthians 6:14. We believe that II John 10,11, in principle, applies.

There are movements which tend to promote disobedience to this Biblical principle. Among these may be a pragmatic desire to reach a broader audience, the ecumenical movement, or the charismatic acceptance of all who seem to have received the gift of tongues.

In the midst of compromise we must be wise about such trends and faithful in guarding the Biblical principle that is at stake here.

3. We call for a commitment to sound, Biblical preaching (II Tim. 4:1-5; I Cor. 1:18-25).

There have always been, from time to time in some circles, ill-advised efforts to build the church on something other than the forthright proclamation of the Word of God. Indeed, there are some voices abroad in our day that appear to play down the importance of the preaching of the Word.

We believe that the preaching that is needed, and that should be at the heart of the local church, especially, is exposition of the Word of God by the pastor-teacher (Eph. 4:11) in the power of the Spirit—regardless what variety of sermon structure he may use. The church's traditional theologians have always insisted that the proclamation of the Word of God is one of the marks of the true church.

We believe that the preacher, insofar as it is the Word of God which he preaches, and interprets and applies correctly, does so with the authority of God Himself.

We believe that the Word of God should be preached for evangelism and for edification. Thus we believe that it is by the preaching and teaching of the Word of God that people are spiritually begotten (I Pet. 1:23), nourished (I Tim. 4:6), guided (Ps. 119:105) and sanctified (Jn. 17:17).

4. We call for commitment to church music that has artistic craftsmanship, lyrical value and sound theology.

We believe that music plays an important role in the life of the church, both for the glorification of God and for the teaching of believers—as indicated in Eph. 5:18-20 and Col. 3:16. Good church music is both worshipful and instructive.

Music is both an art form and a means of ministry. We recognize that esthetic tastes differ, and that there is room for some variety in the styles of Christian music preferred. At the same time, we are confident that the musical composition, even apart from the lyrics, has meaning and value that may indicate whether a given composition or style is an appropriate medium for spiritual truth. Any artistic medium that attracts attention to itself, away from the message linked to it, is defective art.

Among other implications of these principles is the fact that we need to consider carefully whether the associations of a given musical style are such that it will not provide an appropriate medium for the message. If for no other reason than this, therefore, we believe that rock music is one clear example of a musical medium that is not appropriate for spiritual truth. No doubt there are others.

We urge the training of ministers of music in Bible and theology, and we believe that the pastor should play an active role in general oversight and evaluation of the musical ministry of the local church.

5. We call for commitment to the revitalization of Sunday schools as a key part of the life of our churches, both for evangelism and for edification.

We appreciate the concerted efforts that the Sunday School Department has made toward developing what is an excellent program of literature for use in Sunday schools. We appreciate especially the fact that it is deliberately based on thorough coverage of the Bible.

But we remember days when the building of Sunday schools was deliberately and effectively promoted as one of the most basic methods of reaching new people and growing the church. And we are saddened to learn that, in many circles—including many Free Will Baptist churches, Sunday schools are in decline, thus testifying to the fact that the Sunday school is neglected in this manner.

We believe there can be a renewal of focus on the build-

ing of Sunday schools as an effective means of promoting the growth of the church. We urge our pastors and church workers in general, and our Sunday School Department in particular, to give deliberate and concerted efforts to provide personnel who will motivate and educate us toward this end.

6. We call for a commitment to missions, both at home and abroad, that has evangelism and church planting as its strategic goal.

We believe that the Lord's commission to the church is to evangelize and to disciple converts in the teachings of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 28:19, 20). We believe that this typically calls for the planting of local churches that continue the accomplishment of the mission.

At the same time, we believe that Free Will Baptists have not yet reached their full potential in carrying out the missionary endeavor. Both in the United States and in the countries of the world there is need for the taking of the gospel and the planting of churches. We need to mobilize our denomination for this task, a mobilization that includes provision for training, sending and supporting those who go.

We believe that those who are sent should have a clearly defined strategy for accomplishing this basic objective. Even those who go in roles that provide support for the church planter, or who look to longer-term goals, should have a clear understanding of the strategy involved.

We also believe that those who plant churches for Free Will Baptists should make every effort, and have it as part of their strategy, to plant churches that will be Free Will Baptist in name and practice, as defined in our *Treatise of Faith and Practices*, and that will appreciate and maintain their ties with Free Will Baptists everywhere.

7. We call for a commitment to servant leadership that will uphold the principles set forth in this document.

Leaders set the tone for the movement, whether local pastors and church workers or those serving the organization at the district, state or national level. We, therefore, urge those who are chosen to lead to commit themselves to these principles, and we urge all those who help choose leaders to consider these principles in making those choices.

Since our document speaks especially to the needs of the national body, this should be specifically applied to the se-

lection of officers, speakers, board members and the employees of the several agencies. We will always need leaders who demonstrate the high qualities of leadership ability, integrity, spiritual maturity, wisdom, purity of motive and life, discernment, statesmanship, a servant spirit and a concern to minister to all Free Will Baptists.

No policy can control the free elections of a deliberative body such as the National Association of Free Will Baptists, nor should it. To repeat then, we urge care in the selection of leaders. Only as we have sound leadership can we expect to have a vital and progressive organization.

Ways to Prevent Spiritual Decline

In conclusion, as we consider ways to prevent spiritual decline, we are first impressed with the fact that keeping the commitments called for in this document will be primary in this regard. These are the principles, and the implementing of these principles should make a significant contribution toward keeping us true to the Bible and the values that have made us what we are.

Beyond that, we would also suggest the following more specific things.

1. We must promote evangelism. One of the points effectively made at the Leadership Conference was that a continuing burden for the lost and active efforts toward winning them will contribute greatly toward maintaining spiritual zeal and purity.

2. We must promote, at all levels of our church life, positive preaching and teaching of the Bible. This should include preaching about godliness and holiness on the one hand, and about sin and Hell on the other. Hearing the full counsel of God on such subjects can help resensitize us toward sin and kindle within us a love for holiness.

3. We must make it a special concern, throughout our churches, to teach a basic Biblical worldview and morality. Our minds, including the thinking of each new generation, must be conditioned by the Word of God or else God's way will be foreign to us.

4. Life at the National Association lev-

el, and at other levels too, ought to reflect the concerns and commitments expressed in principle in this document. While the true life of the denomination is found in the local churches, what transpires at a denominational meeting ought to exemplify what is desirable and good. Thus care should be exercised that the selection of music and speakers, for example, provide examples of the kind that have been defined above. As has been noted, people in leadership roles should be chosen because they personify a high quality of leadership. Missions agencies should foster concern about these principles in the appointment and supervision of missionaries. Educational endeavors should model sound, Biblical teaching and goals.

5. We must promote prayer. People of energetic prayer are much less likely to drift spiritually. We believe that prayer is too often neglected, and that there should be a renewal of emphasis on the importance of seeking God. We need to pray for revival, for a burden for the lost, for a heart for holiness, for discernment, for courage to stand for the right and for the unity of the Spirit.

6. We must promote getting to know one another lest we drift in different directions and lest we perceive about others what is not accurate. We need to find ways of fostering interaction that will help us to be transparent and honest with each other and to influence one another for good. We need ways to express dissent and differences, such as has been true during the 1995 Leadership Conference and this committee meeting, without being misunderstood.

Robert Picirilli (Tenn.), Chairman
Dann Patrick (N.C.)
Tom Lilly (N.C.)
Keith Burden (Okla.)
James Forlines (Ark.)
Milton Worthington (Mich.)
Daryl Ellis (Ill.)
Ralph Hampton (Tenn.), Advisor
Melvin Worthington (Tenn.), Advisor

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Ben Scott, Arkansas Pastor, Retires

N. LITTLE ROCK, AR—After 50 continuous years as a Free Will Baptist pastor, Reverend Ben Scott announced his retirement from the pastoral ministry. The 72-year-old Missouri native completed 24 years at his final pastorate on December 31, 1995.



Genelle and Ben Scott with sons Len (L), Randy (4th from left) and Fred.

Members of First FWB Church in North Little Rock gathered over 200 friends and family from across the nation on December 30 to say, "Thank you," to Pastor and Mrs. Scott. Reverend Scott's three sons (Fred, Len and Randy), all of whom pastor Free Will Baptist churches, shared in the celebration.

Colleagues and friends praised Ben and Genelle Scott for their commitment to the local church and for their world-wide vision. At the conclusion of a tribute program honoring the Scotts, the church gave them retirement

gifts. Wendell Leckbee, chairman of the deacon board, presented a diamond pendant to Sister Scott and a 1996 Chevy S-10 truck to Brother Scott.

Mrs. Scott was cited for her leadership in the local church where for 17 years she directed children's church at North Little Rock. She also served as president of the Arkansas State Auxiliary work and as president of Women Nationally Active for Christ.

Reverend Scott's pastoral

ministry began in Missouri when he was 21 in 1945. His first full-time church started in 1949 at Third FWB Church in St. Louis. He then moved to another Missouri church in Fredericktown, and later to Oilton, Oklahoma.

The majority of Ben Scott's pastoral years were invested in the state of Arkansas where he pastored three churches—Pocahontas, Jonesboro and North Lit-

tle Rock. He led First FWB Church in North Little Rock 24 years.

In addition to his pastoral duties, Scott served as Arkansas' General Board member and served 12 years on the Board of Trustees at Free Will Baptist Bible College. He moderated the Arkansas State Association 10 years.

A prolific writer and public speaker, Brother Scott frequently published articles in state and national publications. He conducted revivals and conferences in 15 states.

The Scotts' youngest son, Len, said his father was "a man who was consistent at home with what he preached in the pulpit."

Deacon Jerry Lewis described



Ben and Genelle Scott drive off in their new red Chevy truck.

Scott as "one who built a bridge for others to cross."

Regarding future plans, Brother Scott said he plans to write another book and would like to begin a ministry of encouragement for young pastors.

Harold Pitts with The Lord

NORTHPORT, AL—Pioneer Free Will Baptist minister, Reverend Harold A. Pitts, died December 31, 1995. The 82-year-old church planter and pastor preached the Gospel 59 years.

Funeral services were conducted at First FWB Church in Northport where Rev. Pitts had one of his most successful pastorates. Reverends Richard Bowers and James Walden officiated.

Called to preach at age 24 in 1937 and ordained in 1938 by Alabama's Jasper Association, Brother Pitts immediately launched his six-decade-long ministry that impacted Free Will Baptists around the world. He pastored churches in Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee.

Always active in denomina-



tional outreach beyond the local church, Brother Pitts served as assistant moderator of the National Association and moderator of the Alabama State Association. He moderated district associations in both North Carolina and Alabama. Three times

(1948, 1958, 1983), he preached at the annual national convention.

In addition to his pastoral duties, Pitts conducted revivals in 19 states. At least nine Free Will Baptist men answered the call to preach under his ministry.

The July 1982 issue of the *Alabama Digest* identifies Brother Pitts as the first Alabama minister to go full-time. "He gave up following a mule with a plow stock, sold his cow and chickens and just by faith in God launched out to preach and serve the Lord."

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Clytee Pitts; and three daughters, Evelyn York of Bartow, Florida; Teresa Jackson of Sarasota, Florida; Ann Reed of Northport, Alabama.

County Honors California Pastor



SHAFTER, CA—Pastor Dean Long and the Shafter Police Department Chaplain Program were honored at the November 16, 1995, fifth annual Regional Awards Program sponsored by the Kern (County) Council of Governments (KernCOG).

KernCOG Executive Director Ronald Brummett said, "The award recipients exemplify the spirit which makes this region a great place to live. They possess

the spirit of home town pride."

Reverend Dean Long pastors Shafter FWB Church. He coordinates the local chaplain program for the Shafter Police Department, a program he founded six years ago.

According to Long, the group is made up of Shafter area pastors who work in conjunction with the Shafter Police Department assisting as needed in various situations on a voluntary basis.

"We're on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week," he said. "Whenever something happens, we're there to help."

Some of the duties of the chaplains include delivering death notices, assisting with family disturbances, giving aide to those in need of food, clothing or other concerns, offering counsel to officers and others, and going beyond the range of duty allowed to officers.

Long also noted that as part of the program, pastors go on ride-alongs with police officers three hours a week.

"We try to be of assistance in times of accident and illness," he said.

In January, Long was named the 1995 Citizen of the Year by the Shafter Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, and was recognized for his many compassionate contributions to the community.

Although the chaplains work closely with trained law enforcement officials, Long insists their duties are very different.

"We're not police officers and don't want to be police officers," he said. "We're all pastors . . . ministers to the community."

"It's a unique program unlike any other, which makes it kind of neat," he said.

Commission Sets Fall Theology Seminar

NASHVILLE, TN—The Commission for Theological Integrity will host a seminar at Free Will Baptist Bible College October 25-26, according to Commission spokesman Daryl Ellis. The seminar will begin Friday afternoon and conclude by noon Saturday.

The purpose of the seminar is to provide opportunity to share in-depth study of biblical and theological issues in keeping with the purpose of the commission. Accordingly, the seminar will strengthen denominational beliefs, alert constituents to alarming theological trends and assist in preserving the denomination's theological integrity.

Any Free Will Baptist—pastor, layman, student—is invited to prepare a paper to read at the seminar. Following the usual format of an Evangelical Theological Society meeting, papers will be read followed by group interaction.

May 1 is the deadline for reserving a place to read a paper. Those making reservations will receive guidelines on writing and presentation. After May 1, the meeting schedule will be finalized.

Direct questions or requests for presentation slots to Daryl Ellis: 708/851-4211; FAX 708/851-9824 or mail to 1405 Butterfield Road, Aurora, IL 60504.

Southeastern Names Commencement Speaker



WENDELL, NC—Dr. Lorenza Stox, pastor of Parker's Chapel FWB Church in Greenville, NC, will be the commencement speaker for Southeastern FWB College May 9.

Dr. Stox and his wife, Dolly, worked at Southeastern during the first nine years of its existence. Stox served as dean of students and as professor. Dolly was in charge of the business office and served as business professor.

In 1991, Dr. Stox resigned from Southeastern to pastor Parker's Chapel FWB Church. During the past five years, under Dr. Stox' leadership, the church has become one of the top giving churches in finances and students.

Dr. Stox will address the graduating class Tuesday, May 9, at 10:00 a.m. at First FWB Church in Raleigh.

Instrumental Ensemble to Perform at Convention

ANTIOCH, TN—The all-volunteer instrumental ensemble will perform in July at the 60th annual Free Will Baptist National Convention in Fort Worth, Texas, according to instrumental director Chris Truett.

The ensemble will accompany congregational singing each night (except Sunday) in the arena at Tarrant County Convention Center, Mr. Truett said. Ensemble participants will practice Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. The hour-long rehearsals will be conducted in the convention center arena.

Truett said, "We are inviting anyone from ninth grade up to participate in the instrumental ensemble. We would like to have

more adults in the group. Last year was a success, and we want to expand the group this year."

Those who wish to participate in the ensemble must notify Mr. Truett by June 1. Musicians should send their name, address, phone number, church name, type of instrument played and number of years' experience with the instrument to:

Unity FWB Church
Attention: Chris Truett
2725 East 14th Street
Greenville, NC 27834
919/756-6485.

Music will be mailed by Mr. Truett to each instrumentalist who responds by June 1.

Directory Update

GEORGIA

Leon Gibson to Cross Roads Church, Cochran
Billy Barlow to Piney Grove Church, Bristol

MISSISSIPPI

Steve Corbett to New Lebanon Church,
Tishomingo from Truth Church, New Oxford, PA

TEXAS

Richard Crook to Lubbock Church, Lubbock

OTHER PERSONNEL

John Voss to Youngblood Church, Beckville, TX,
as associate pastor

Hampton Scholarship Established at FWBBC

NASHVILLE, TN—The family of the late Reverend Ralph Hampton and Mrs. Lucille Hampton established the Hampton Scholarship Fund at Free Will Baptist Bible College, according to Larry Hampton, one of the surviving sons.

Mrs. Lucille Hampton died in September 1995. She was married to Reverend Ralph Hampton for 53 years. He died in 1986.

Mrs. Hampton, a Texas native, is survived by three sons—Ralph, Charles and Larry; 12 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.

Rev. and Mrs. Hampton served churches in Oklahoma, Texas and California in a ministry that spanned 48 years.

For many years the Hamptons supported the college monthly. Rev. and Mrs. Hampton were Honorary Members of the Alumni Association.

All four of the Hamptons' sons attended FWBBC; three of them graduated. Eight of their grandchildren are alumni of the college; four are graduates. Their youngest granddaughter is now in her freshman year at the school.

Two of their sons currently serve as faculty members of the Nashville-based school. Ralph has taught there for 37 years. Charles is in his 21st year at the school.

Friends of the Hamptons are encouraged to contribute to the scholarship established in their memory. Checks should be made payable to Free Will Baptist Bible College and designated to the Hampton Scholarship Fund. All gifts should be sent to Free Will Baptist Bible College, 3606 West End Avenue, Nashville, TN 37205.

Williams Named Top Meeting Manager

SAN DIEGO, CA—The Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) named Jack Williams Meeting Manager of the Year during its January 2-6 convention in San Diego, according to ACOM executive vice president William Just. Williams has been convention coordinator for the National Association of Free Will Baptists for 19 years.

Williams was nominated as manager of the year by Susan Schwint, director of convention services with the convention and visitors bureau in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Free Will Baptist National Convention met in Charlotte last July, registering almost 7,000 people.

Gene Walker of ACOM's board of directors announced that of 30

nominees, Williams was the unanimous choice. "I could write a book on the guy," he said.

Williams earned the Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designation in 1985. At that time, he was one of 31 planners in the United States to pass comprehensive testing procedures established by the Convention Liaison Council to upgrade planning skills in the hospitality industry.

Three other Free Will Baptist planners currently hold the CMP designation—Dr. Melvin Worthington (Executive Secretary), Dr. Mary Wisheart (WNAC Executive Secretary), Mr. Dean Jones (National Youth Conference director).

Williams said, "This award is a tribute to the Free Will Baptist

convention planning team. There is a spirit of professionalism, cooperation and camaraderie among the planners that considers what's best for the entire convention. We work well together."


He continued, "A number of people deserve to have their names on this award, but one man above all others. That's my meeting planner mentor, Dr. Malcolm Fry, who for many years directed the National Youth Conference.

"Dr. Fry taught by example. He was always a Christian gentleman regardless of circumstances. In my opinion, Malcolm Fry set the yard markers for professionalism in the hospitality industry. We all stand in his shadow."


June 24-29, 1996 For Grades 9-12

SUMMER '96 CAMP


At Free Will Baptist Bible College!




BASKETBALL



DRAMA



MISSIONS



MUSIC

Call 1-800-76-FWBBC
or write:
Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205

The **Arkansas Ministers' Retreat** met February 26-28 at Lake DeGray State Lodge in Bismark. Kentucky pastor **Tim York** and Home Missions director **Trymon Messer** spoke three times each. The retreat was sponsored by the Christian Education Board.

Members of **First FWB Church in Greenwood, AR**, completed work on their new church in one year, according to Pastor **Raymond Chronister**. The 11,000-square-foot building includes a 400-seat sanctuary, 11 classrooms and offices. More than 500 people attended day-long activities dedicating the \$296,000 structure. Arkansas promotional director **David Joslin** and Oklahoma pastor **Connie Cariker** preached.

The mission congregation at **West Madison FWB Church in Madison, WI**, found a gift in their driveway: a van presented by **Unicoi FWB Church in Unicoi, TN**. Home missionary **Carlie Lloyd** and Tennessee pastor **Thurman Sullivan** were both wearing smiles.

Two years after the church in **Lewisburg, TN**, closed, the Tennessee Home Missions Board asked Reverend **Charley Carmack** to re-open the work. Eighty people attended inaugural services at **New Life FWB Church**. The group averages about 40 in attendance.

Pastor **Dennis Kizzire** reports that members of **First FWB Church in Smithville, MS**, faith-promised \$1,860 for missions outreach. The **Clingan** family gave the church a computer on which the monthly newsletter is now generated. And Pastor Kizzire experienced his first Mississippi pounding (of groceries, that is) by members. He's happy.

When a friend of the **FWB Children's Home in Eldridge, AL**, died and left his estate to the home, the board immediately authorized construction of a two-story, multi-purpose building. Director **Levy Corey** said the new steel structure will house the dining room, kitchen, offices and recreational facilities. The home also completed a new cottage that houses 12 children. Two more cottages will be added in the next three to five years.

California Christian College in **Fresno** remodeled space for business, typing and computer classes, according to President **James McAllister**. Maintenance director **Bob Taylor** estimates that it will cost the college \$3,000 to remodel each classroom and \$6,000 for the library.

Members of **Lesslie FWB Church in Lesslie, SC**, gave Pastor and Mrs. **George Brasington** a plaque of appreciation. They also gave Pastor Brasington two suits and gifts of money.

"This Is Your Life" at **Parkway FWB Church in Spartanburg, SC**, did more than surprise Pastor **Jim Miller**. Members arranged for his brother, Dan, whom Pastor Miller had not seen in 10 years, to attend the special occasion. They also gave the pastor a \$2,000 gift.

After 16 years at the helm, Pastor **David Anders** resigned at **New Life FWB Church in Lancaster, SC**. During that time, he led the church through a \$350,000 building program that was paid off in nine years. The day Brother Anders left the church, members gave him a \$10,000 love gift.

The **Hillside FWB Church in Florence, SC**, purchased a 15-passenger van for church activities, according to Pastor **Todd Smith**. The church's missions giving is up 90 percent over the previous quarter.

First FWB Church in Chester, SC, has a new \$3,500 sign and a surprised pastor. One Sunday morning the congregation gave Pastor **Jimmy Sanders** a basket full of money (uncounted!) and a \$500 gift.

Congratulations to Pastor **Daggett Duncan** and **New Vision FWB Church in Rock Hill, SC**. The congregation moved from mission status to self-supporting in two years. After beginning in a trailer chapel with 18 people in 1993, the group purchased 10 acres and erected a new building at a cost of \$75,000. The church added 20 new members when they relocated.

After Pastor **Earl Stapleton** had heart surgery and a foot amputation, he was unable to attend **Mount Ver-**

non FWB Church in Russellville, AR. Not to worry: 44 members decided to take the church to their pastor one Sunday night. They crowded into Pastor Stapleton's living room, sang hymns and gave testimonies of God's goodness. The pastor is getting better fast.

Great news from **White Oak Hill FWB Church in Bailey, NC**. Pastor **Tim Stout** said a record 390 people attended homecoming services. That's not bad in a town with a population of 541. The church averages 142 in Sunday School and 183 in worship services. Former pastor **Henry Hughes** brought the homecoming message.

October 1995 was a month to remember at **Emmanuel FWB Church in Wabash, IN**, according to Pastor **Douglas Phillips**. The church experienced nine conversions, nine rededications, eight baptisms and exceeded their offering budget by \$3,400. The group hosted Indiana's Youth Rally in November. Teens from all three district associations attended the rally.

More than 150 people attended homecoming services at **Beech Springs FWB Church in Satillo, MS**. The church had paved the parking lot in preparation of the day's festivities. The church also honored Pastor **Earl Langley** with a new recliner and rug. That same day members gave a \$100 offering to home missionary **Ken Bozeman** and pledged \$125 in monthly support.

Contact welcomes **Fellowship Facts**, publication of **Fellowship FWB Church in Bryan, TX**. **Lynn Wood** pastors.

Members of **Lee's Chapel FWB Church in Waynesboro, MS**, presented an appreciation plaque to Deacon **Alford Bunch** in honor of his 30 years of faithful service to the church and community. **Gary Walters** pastors.

Pastor **Bobby Shepherd** feels appreciated. Members of **First FWB Church in Batesville, AR**, gave him a 25-inch color TV and cooked dinner in his honor. Then member **Bill Hobbs** wrote a moving tribute which he read to the congregation. ■

**Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign
December 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	42,747.13	34,113.81
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	28,588.88	9,590.31
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	5,674.29	29,780.05
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	19,588.10	21,335.56
Oklahoma	92,271.60	10,432.08	81,839.52
South Carolina	18,335.75	2,102.00	16,233.75
South Dakota		175.00	(175.00)
Tennessee	78,557.09	57,443.39	21,113.70
Texas	11,547.20	7,116.52	4,430.68
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	\$271,233.82	\$495,349.57

Coming Next Month

- ◆ **Convention Housing Form**
- ◆ **Convention Pre-Registration Form**
- ◆ **What Every Free Will Baptist Needs to Know About Missions**
- ◆ **Holding the Ropes**



December 1995

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	CO-OP	Total	December 1994	Year To Date
Alabama	\$ 537.21	\$.00	\$ 537.21	\$ 7,600.68	\$ 79,066.74
Arizona	613.05	.00	613.05	769.09	4,376.09
Arkansas	13,634.68	8,299.55	21,934.23	23,543.29	345,648.57
California	.00	924.44	924.44	30.00	8,781.67
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	5,228.43	5,228.43	.00	30,916.04
Georgia	15,961.53	2,124.87	18,086.40	15,909.87	183,915.84
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	8,963.19	1,676.07	10,639.26	11,942.95	138,504.98
Indiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	9,687.06
Iowa	212.00	.00	212.00	132.00	332.00
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	359.95
Kentucky	397.00	252.88	649.88	2,321.20	8,538.76
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	10.00	110.00
Maryland	.00	1,101.60	1,101.60	903.27	4,307.06
Michigan	36,392.02	3,470.06	39,862.08	47,680.79	201,101.11
Mississippi	335.76	451.92	787.68	516.88	6,225.96
Missouri	10,885.34	.00	10,885.34	8,725.07	140,995.50
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	362.02	38.73	400.75	348.24	5,154.89
North Carolina	1,202.33	745.00	1,947.33	412.00	23,670.44
Ohio	5,240.66	1,762.38	7,003.04	15.00	119,832.02
Oklahoma	62,715.94	.00	62,715.94	71,010.31	626,856.56
South Carolina	23,687.74	118.95	23,806.69	23,514.08	282,995.69
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	6,365.05	745.33	7,110.38	9,796.53	98,077.14
Texas	4,056.21	162.10	4,218.31	50.00	95,181.64
Virginia	810.49	25.00	835.49	2,013.86	14,361.13
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	3,055.52	102.37	3,157.89	3,647.62	61,898.60
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	256.92	114.29
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(.04)	(.04)	(.01)	.12
Totals	\$195,427.74	\$27,229.64	\$222,657.38	\$231,149.64	\$2,491,009.85

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 9,490.44	\$16,337.81	\$ 25,828.25	\$ 27,201.71	\$ 334,840.13
Foreign Missions	109,575.90	2,505.13	112,081.03	121,745.07	1,253,063.90
FWBBC	14,268.56	2,505.13	16,773.69	11,142.23	191,361.48
Home Missions	55,306.87	1,960.54	57,267.41	63,003.22	565,801.15
Retirement & Insurance	820.60	1,524.85	2,345.45	1,382.71	30,377.25
Master's Men	1,569.45	1,524.85	3,094.30	2,644.05	42,918.00
Commission for Theological Integrity	106.40	54.45	160.85	115.80	2,022.09
FWB Foundation	584.23	653.53	1,237.76	851.81	18,632.66
Historical Commission	80.32	54.45	134.77	102.09	1,886.87
Music Commission	80.32	54.45	134.77	105.35	1,703.63
Radio & TV Commission	106.38	54.45	160.83	115.81	1,839.16
Hillsdale FWB College	1,257.48	.00	1,257.48	903.76	15,465.57
Other	2,180.79	.00	2,180.79	1,836.03	31,097.96
Totals	\$195,427.74	\$27,229.64	\$222,657.38	\$231,149.64	\$2,491,009.85



FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Are You Legally Prepared for Death?

By William W. Evans

You have spent a lifetime earning and saving the property you have. Will you decide how and to whom it will be distributed? A valid will can act in your behalf after the Lord calls you home.

1. **What is a will?** Your will is a written legal document. It names the people—family, friends, church or denominational ministry—you choose to receive your property or “estate” when you die.
2. **Who can make a will?** Generally, anyone 18 or older can make a will. You must be of “sound mind” to make a valid will. This means you understand things like the property you own, its worth and to whom you are leaving it.
3. **Does a will control all of my property?** No, most likely it does not. There are several types of property that pass outside the will:
 - *Joint tenancy property*—This is property held by two or more people as “joint tenants with rights of survivorship,” such as a house, car or bank account. When one owner dies, all the property automatically belongs to the other owner(s) and is not subject to the will.
 - *Life Insurance*—Proceeds from life insurance go directly to the named beneficiary.
 - *Retirement Plans*—If your retirement plan provides for survivor benefits, they will be paid directly to the person(s) named.
 - *Community Property*—In community property states, a spouse may distribute only his or her half of the community property.
4. **For how long is my will good?** Your will remains valid until you change it or write a new one.

You should review your will and consider changing it when: your family changes because of birth, marriage, divorce or death; tax laws change; you move from one state to another; the executor or guardian that you have named can no longer serve; or the value of your estate has gotten much bigger or smaller.

In any case, you should review your will every few years even if no major changes have taken place. If you decide to make a new will,

it should be dated and state clearly that it will revoke all your old wills.

5. **What happens to my property if I die without a will?** It is not true that the state gets everything if you die without a will. That happens only if you have no “heirs”—spouse, children (natural or adopted) or other relatives to inherit your property. But, it is true that none of your property can go to a friend or the Lord’s work.

If you don’t leave a valid will, the court distributes your property to your relatives in the manner set out by law. You may think your husband or wife will get all your property if you make no will. Each state has its own specific guidelines. In Tennessee, a surviving spouse gets everything only if there are no surviving children or their issue. If there is only one child, the estate is divided equally between child and spouse. When there are two or more children, the spouse gets 1/3 with the children dividing equally the remaining 2/3’s. If the deceased has no surviving spouse, children or their issue, then the surviving parent(s) inherit. In the absence of spouse, children and parents, distribution is to the brothers and sisters of the deceased.

6. **Are there other advantages in writing a personal will?** Yes, besides naming the individuals who will receive your assets, you can name your church or denominational ministry; you can make provisions for special needs—an elderly parent, a chronically ill or handicapped child; you name the guardian for minor children; and you get to name the executor. This is the person who will handle your affairs after your death until final distribution of your property.

You may also save some expenses by waiving the normally requested bond. Careful drafting may diminish or avoid some taxes. You can also leave a final statement of your personal faith recorded in the court records.

If you have a will, review it again. If you do not, we would be glad to provide a simple will guide for your use in assembling information for drafting your will. ■



HOME MISSIONS

Mexican Bible Institute to Relocate

By Trymon Messer

Joining the Texas and Arizona borders is our neighbor to the south, the country of Mexico, with a population of approximately 95 million people. It is one of the most fruitful mission fields for Free Will Baptists. We have more than 30 churches and a Bible institute in Mexico. At present there are no American missionaries serving in Mexico under the Home Missions Department. Our Mexican coordinator, James Munsey, lives in Weslaco, Texas. James is also president of the Bible institute, which is presently located 325 miles inside Mexico.

The Home Missions Department feels that the best way to reach the Mexican people for Christ is to provide them with the training tools and assistance needed, and they will get the job done. This department is presently responsible for:

1. Assisting with the salaries for 16 pastors and teachers. (For \$150 to 250 per month, a pastor can serve on a full-time basis.)
2. Building churches in which the people can worship. (For about \$10,000, a church building can be built.)
3. Providing a Bible institute and assisting with tuition and lodging for training young people. (The staff is made up largely of the Mexican people training their own people.)

Reasons to Relocate the Bible Institute

1. Health is a primary concern. A chemical processing plant adjoining the property is causing health concerns.
2. The noise caused by heavy truck traffic is another factor. It is intolerable and makes it very difficult to teach or concentrate.
3. There are problems with the main water line that comes to the institute. This line is approximately one-fourth mile in length and in constant need of repair.
4. Mold and mildew are present inside the first floor area due to dampness caused by the second floor walkway. The fence surrounding the property is in a constant state of deterioration caused by area air pollution.
5. There are difficulties in getting personnel and

supplies through the second customs checkpoint on the way to the institute in addition to the dangers in travel for visitors because of the badly maintained roads.

6. The main reason. The Home Missions Department has a greater long range vision of training pastoral personnel to reach out to Spanish-speaking people both at home and abroad. There are presently two Cuban students studying and making preparation to return to their homeland to share the gospel with their people. There are over 25 million Spanish-speaking people right here in America, many of whom need the gospel. One main goal is that some of our students will attend the institute, learn Spanish in a cross-cultural setting then return to minister to the Spanish people in the United States.

Reasons to Locate the Institute in Reynosa

1. Reynosa is more accessible because it is located just across the border from McAllen, Texas. Our missionary coordinator, James Munsey, and his family live within a short driving distance. Associate missionaries, Bud and Ruth Bivens, have moved near the border and will be joining the institute staff as well as doing evangelistic work in Mexico.
2. Reynosa will be more accessible to American workers, students and visitors.
3. Reynosa will be more favorable to importing supplies for the institute since there will be only one checkpoint to clear.
4. Due to the shorter distance and safer roads, more of our people will be able to visit the institute. Our schools will be better able to take their students.
5. Because of these and other reasons, the Home Missions Department has purchased 25 acres in the city of Reynosa for the purpose of relocating the Bible institute to that area.

More information will be announced at a later date. ■

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Summer Camp: Memories and Challenges

By Bert Tippett, Public Relations Director

Many of us treasure memories of weeks spent at a Christian summer camp. . . friendships, bonfires, romances, getting short-sheeted, and learning that homesickness was not fatal.

We also remember the impact of services and counselors who cared about our spiritual well-being. Some of us made decisions at camp that redirected our lives. We seemed to hear the Lord more clearly there. There was something about getting away to a



place where we could listen to Him and follow His leading, free from the unwholesome peer pressure most of us lived with during our teen years.

Some have criticized the camp ministry, claiming that decisions made in that environment are short-lived. The same could be said of some decisions made during revivals, but none of us are ready to call them off. The truth is, any activity is good when it helps us face our relationship with God seriously and encourages us to move closer to Him. And many, like myself, can testify that we made decisions at camp that are still influencing us today.

Several years ago, Free Will Baptist Bible College got into the summer camp ministry. It opened the campus for a week to young people who wanted to get away from other pressures so that they could have fun and draw closer to God.

From the beginning, the college broke its camp into interest groups so that campers could develop their unique gifts. Music and drama have always been included. What began as SALT Camp has given way to a missions emphasis. A few years after the program began, basketball was added.

This year's campers will have the opportunity to choose between attending Music Camp, Drama Camp, Missions Camp and Basketball Camp at FWBBC. Each camp will be directed by a qualified leader who will help

campers sharpen their skills in the chosen area. FWBBC students, with similar interests, will assist each director.

Regardless of the area chosen, every camper will be challenged to commit his/her life to Jesus Christ and to strive for excellence in His service.

The 1996 edition of FWBBC's *Summer Camp* will be June 24-29. In many ways, it will be like those that have gone before. But every camp takes on a flavor of its own, thanks to the unique mix of Free Will Baptist young people from across the denomination. That is one of the factors that make FWBBC's camp unique. It gives campers a week to fellowship with their peers from different places. A Tarheel meets a Razorback and finds out he's not so bad. East meets West; North meets South. It's like a National Association, without the business or the stresses.

This year's *Summer Camp* is just \$175. In addition to room, meals, and training sessions, every camper will enjoy a day at Opryland USA theme park and will receive a camp t-shirt and a camp notebook. Space in each camp is limited. Reservations must be made by June 15 to allow time for camp leaders to prepare materials for every camper.

Some former FWBBC campers have later chosen to enroll at Free Will Baptist Bible College and many have assumed leadership roles. Others have gone on to serve God in other places. The important thing is that many are active in Christian service today, thanks in some measure to their time at *Summer Camp*.

We had to eliminate the camp fires and the walks in the woods, but we made sure we kept the spiritual challenges and other factors that have made the summer camp experience unique. Prayer, Bible study and commitment are at the core of our program.

If you know someone who would profit from information on FWBBC's *Summer Camp '96*, please send their name and address to the college. If you would like some brochures on the camp to distribute to your youth group, let us know. We are eager to pack the campus with young people who will profit from a week of learning and challenge. ■

OUR READERS COMMENT

Enjoys Magazine

Thank you so much for the great *Contact* magazine. I especially enjoy the Briefcase by Jack Williams.

Carol Hudson
Clinton, Oklahoma

Pastor Clarifies McClure Statement

I'm writing to clarify a statement printed in the November 1995 issue (Newsfront section, p. 20) regarding the John McClure family. The statement gave the impression that the McClures have left Free Will Baptists. That is not true.

The McClures are members of Berean FWB Church in Independence, Missouri. Their work in Mexico (Mision De Amor) operates under the auspices of the Berean FWB Church.

In order to facilitate their legal standing with the Mexican government, the Mision De Amor voted to withdraw, at this time, from the Mexican FWB National Association and register the work directly with the federal government.

The McClures are not leaving Mexico. They are continuing to build Free Will Baptist churches in Mexico.

If anyone would like further information about the McClures and/or Mision De Amor, they may contact me at the church or by phone at 816/257-4607 or 816/886-4735. I would gladly talk to them and answer any questions they may have.

Reverend Dennis Bowman, Pastor
Berean Free Will Baptist Church
Independence, Missouri

The Bureau of Control Exists

Yes, Mr. Editor, there is a Bureau of Control. The only trouble is the "religious bureaucrats" you spoke of aren't as candid as the ones at American Express. At least those guys eventually let you know they don't want you to leave home without their marvelous card in hand to pay for all your purchases.

The denominational "bureaucrats" I have encountered purport to have only one agenda: restore holiness to our churches through revival. That is a noble goal. Surely, no Free Will Baptist (at least none that I know) would dispute that God commanded us to be holy.

However, I do know many Free Will Baptists who take issue with the edicts telling us all how to live prepared and distributed by the Bureau of Control. And, as you might have guessed, revival can only come if we see and do things their way. Sounds like control to me.

I for one am glad American Express caught you on a bad day because the incident provided a good way for you to introduce a very insightful look at a perpetual problem in the church.

Larry Hampton
Nashville, Tennessee

Disagrees with Book Review

Thomas Marberry's book reviews are usually very good and accurate. But, in the November 1995 issue, he reviewed Tony Campolo's *Carpe Diem: Seize the Day* and is way off base in his comments.

Campolo is neo-orthodox in his views. He endorses Soren Kirkegaard's, "This age will die, not from sin, but from lack of passion." This is absolutely ridiculous. Campolo's whole ministry seems to be geared toward taking our eyes away from sin and salvation, and putting them on the modern mishmush of Christian pop culture and psychology.

This is only fitting. Soren Kirkegaard is considered to be the father of existentialism and neo-orthodoxy. Leroy Forlines has already shown us the danger of these movements in his articles on "Inerrancy and the Scriptures" and "Theological Separation." Tony Campolo's books (including *20 Hot Potatoes Christians Are Afraid To Touch*) are nothing less than repackaged neo-orthodoxy with an underlying existential philosophical base.

I recommend that Mr. Marberry read and review books like David Breese's *Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave*. And I hardly recommend that any Free Will Baptist waste a penny on anything written by the likes of Campolo or Kirkegaard unless it's for research on false teaching and liberal theology.

Reverend Greg Miller, Youth Pastor
Sciotodale Free Will Baptist Church
Portsmouth, Ohio

BEYOND BELIEF





Robert E. Picirilli

The Fifth Commandment

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. (Exod. 20:12; cf. Deut. 5:16)

Is commandment five part of the first table of the law, or the second? There are different opinions, and the answer probably doesn't matter. As I said in the introductory article in this series, I prefer to think that this one is part of the first table, more related to our duty to God than to our duty to our fellow man.

In the family structure, which is the basic unit of society in the plan of God, the parents represent God in important ways. Honor given to them is in one sense honor to God. One cannot honor God without honoring his parents.

Paul warned us, later on, that in "the last days" people will be "disobedient to parents" (II Tim. 3:2). We don't have to wait any longer for that; it is a clear characteristic of our age.

The rate of juvenile delinquency, of crime and violence among teenagers, is dramatic testimony to the need for parents who will provide their children with the right kind of direction and for children who will obey them.

Indeed, this commandment is pointedly quoted in the New Testament—in Ephesians 6:1-4 and the parallel Colossians 3:20. The reasons for its importance are obvious. The child's nature is depraved, inclined toward sin, and so the child needs a strong hand.

The child's own welfare demands this obedience, given that parents have already learned some of the dangers that the child can't possibly understand yet. The stability and order of society require this. The breakdown of law and order in our day demonstrates exactly what happens

when parents do not give good guidance and children do not submit.

Most important, only when a child learns to honor and obey his parents can that child be expected to come directly to honor and obey the Father in Heaven. And if for no other reason, this commandment should be obeyed because it comes from God, and He has the right to run our lives.

Children, therefore, should obey their parents. Disobedience to parents is one of the ugly things the Bible everywhere condemns. In Romans 1:30, for example, this sin is listed along with other vile wickedness as a mark of human apostasy from God. No wonder Deuteronomy 27:16 calls for a curse on one who dishonors father or mother!

What if obeying one's parents would call for disobedience to God? In that rare instance one would be justified in disobeying parents—though even then with care and respect. In real life, most of us are never faced with that dilemma. Honor in deed and disposition are demanded.

To be sure, direct obedience of parents' rules and instructions is especially for the younger years when the child is still their responsibility. But respecting and honoring one's parents is never completely over.

Regardless how old we become, or they, we should still show them deference and reverence, affection and a self-sacrificing submission that calls for us to seek their welfare, especially when they are no longer able to seek it on their own. More than mere lip service is required.

Of course there are too many kinds of situations for us to be able to give any easy answers to the question how we look out for them when they can no longer manage for themselves. But whatever the situation calls for, we must not be guilty of ne-

glect and indifference.

Now, what about the "promise" that is attached? Does it mean that every person who properly honors his parents will automatically live longer than those who don't? Perhaps not.

For Israel as a people, the promise no doubt included the idea that the nation that made this a practice could expect to occupy the land longer than if their society broke down. Being obedient and faithful to parents who themselves taught the ways of God would keep the nation obedient and faithful to God, and He would establish them.

But Paul gives it Christian, and no doubt personal, application. Does God automatically extend the life span of a person who honors his parents? Even if He doesn't, there is a strong, general truth here.

Children who obey good parents don't engage in the vices and crimes that shorten life; they don't play in the street or play with fire. Obedience to godly parents begets virtuous habits that are conducive to longer life. And God may well look out for them personally.

In all this we have the best possible example, that of our Lord Himself: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them" (Luke 2:51). A Christian should do no less. ■

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY NEWS

Hmong Believers Increase in Number

LAMIRADA, CA (EP)—Christian radio broadcasts are being credited for an increase in Christianity among the indigenous Hmong people living in the mountains of Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, China and Myanmar (formerly Burma).

The Vietnamese government forbids evangelization of the Hmong, but word of a possible "great harvest" came in an article published in the Hanoi daily newspaper, in which a communist ideologist lamented the fact that whole villages in the highlands were abandoning their traditional spirit worship to accept Christ. Christian "radio broadcasts from the Philippines" were blamed.

Vietnamese sources and Hmong leaders claim that up to 300,000 Hmong in Vietnam alone have "turned to Christ" because of the broadcasts made by the Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC), a worldwide, interdenominational Christian radio organization that broadcasts in more than 145 languages.

"Whatever the true number may be, the phenomenon appears to be real, and it is clear that Christian radio has been and still is an important vehicle of the gospel for the Hmong," said Jim R. Bowman, president of FEBC.

Leaders at FEBC recently gained possession of raw video footage from workers with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who secretly toured several isolated Hmong communities. The footage includes a village chief explaining how he came to Christ. It also featured multi-village worship services and descriptions of persecution of known Hmong Christians by the government, as well as hundreds of men and women praying in a small village meeting house.

The video also contains specific greetings to FEBC from villagers, thanking the broadcaster for the Christian radio programs and requesting more programs on various spiritual subjects.

Government Halts Search for "Lost Tribe"

BRASILIA, BRAZIL (EP)—A nine-year search for a tiny Amazon tribe has been halted by

government officials, according to Youth With a Mission, which headed the search.

A government agency that guards the Amazon's isolated Indian groups from outsiders stopped the three "explorer-evangelists" at the brink of success, YWAM said.

Efforts to trace the Himarima tribe began in 1986, when the first YWAM team was sent into the remote jungle lands of the Amazon. Since then, a number of other expeditions have been made, with sightings from the air and traces of the tribe on the ground.

The Himarima—one of the 31 tribes protected by the government—are a difficult group to track, YWAM said, because they are a nomadic tribe making temporary shelters in trees while they hunt and fish for food.

Hopes for a face-to-face encounter with the Himarima grew in recent months as the latest team toured the area near the Piranha River, where they found evidence of a recent visit by the tribe. At that point, the missionaries were discovered by authorities and were forced to leave the restricted area.

"It was very disappointing, after coming so close to a contact after all this time," said Braulia Ribeiro. "We are concerned that this incident might cause us some difficulties in the future. We fear that otherwise some of these small tribes could be destroyed before they ever got the chance to hear the gospel."

Japanese Government May Crack Down

TOKYO, JAPAN (EP)—Lawmakers in Japan are considering a bill that would give the government more freedom to investigate the financial affairs of religious groups.

If passed, the bill would give authorities the right to check the financial accounts and other related documents, and would require religious organizations to provide detailed information regarding financial matters to the government.

The new bill has been criticized by the main opposition party in Japan's ruling socialist coalition, the New Frontier Party (NFP).

The NFP is supported by the largest

Buddhist organization in Japan, Soka Gakkai. The NFP is accusing the ruling coalition of using planned changes to the law to avenge the losses it suffered during the July elections for the Upper House of Parliament.

However, Japan's government claims that revisions to the existing laws that guarantee freedom of religion are being made because of crimes allegedly committed by the Aum doomsday cult, the group accused of the nerve gas attacks on Tokyo subways that killed 11 people and sickened more than 5,000 passengers last March.

Scientology Increasing in Former USSR

MOSCOW, RUSSIA (EP)—Scientology is gaining ground in politics, business and the media in some parts of the former Soviet Union, according to a professor at the Russian Orthodox University in Moscow.

An article written by Alexander Dvorkin and published in the German magazine *Berlin Dialogue* stated that "hundreds of factories, banks and insurance companies in Russia were applying the scientologist system." *Berlin Dialogue* is published by Thomas Gandow, the German expert for issues concerning sects, cults and philosophies for the Protestant Church in Berlin-Brandenburg.

The manager training courses, which promise a rapid increase in productivity and profits, are in very high demand, Dvorkin wrote.

L. Ron Hubbard's system has had much success in Perm, a city with a population of 1.5 million. The mayor of Perm was converted to scientology, along with many of the city's employees, he added.

The new president of the only local television station in Perm is a scientologist, Dvorkin added. And the mayor of the city of Novgorod near St. Petersburg has also completed one of Hubbard's training courses. ■

Growling Cats Don't Purr

Awounded cougar cornered by people desperate to help him. That's my friend, Walter. He's so full of inner pain that he bites and scratches and growls at anyone who gets near his hurts.

Walter's pain consumes him. His life twists around an emotional betrayal that re-interprets everything he sees, everything he hears. He feels rejected because *nobody* understands his circumstances. He can't shake feelings of distrust.

Several of us have claw marks from close encounters with Walter. He knows we're trying to help, but sometimes he views life through a red haze. He thinks he deserves the pain. He doesn't, of course. No one does.

Is Walter illiterate? No. Is he handicapped? No, at least not physically. Is he addicted to liquor, tobacco or drugs? No, no and absolutely not.

Walter's war with life left him unmarked outwardly. He's college-trained, middle class, a business man . . . and about the most miserable person I've ever met.

He's the picture of physical health. He exercises regularly and counts calories. But on the inside, Walter stumbles from crisis to crisis like a blind man in a furniture store. He erects internal boundaries with heavy doors that seldom open. He has a lot to offer society when he's not trapped inside himself with his own terrors, afraid of being hurt again.

He arrived at adulthood better equipped to interact with books and machines than with people. He thinks he's a victim of his own childhood, even though he understands high finance and cross-cultural ministries. Walter considers himself a failure.

What can we do for the Walters of this world? They'll be around a long

time. We work side by side with them, worship at the same altars and pass them in the check-out lanes at Wal-Mart. Here are five suggestions for the Walter in your life.

Get professional counseling.

While counseling is not the magic bullet that solves all and explains all, it offers a key to unlock closed doors. The pastor may be all the counselor your Walter needs. On the other hand, some cases require more time and effort than the pastor can give.

Most cities have a Christian counseling center. Not only do Christian counselors use standard counseling techniques, they also understand how to apply biblical principles.

Stay in church. The church family provides stability when life seems to fall apart. Sadly, one of the first things the Walters usually do when problems erupt is stop attending church.

They feel ashamed at not being in control of their own lives. They're embarrassed when they can't seem to get it together like everybody else.

But the church is for all of us who hurt, who weep, who feel abandoned or mugged by society. Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician but they that are sick." That's all the qualification anyone needs for an appointment with the Great Physician—to simply not be well. That's us!

Give it time. The human body and spirit are resilient. When a bone breaks, we know that with proper care and attention the body will heal itself. But it takes time, unhurried time. Wounds and breaks will not be rushed.

That's also true when the emotions and spirit have been scraped and snagged and torn. The passing of

time, distancing oneself from the moment of trauma can trigger the soul's inner-healing resources. Yes, it's a slow process, but the invisible balm of grace and love and compassion unexplainably restore a measure of health.

Look beyond self. Get involved in helping others. Nothing cures so well as being distracted from our own cuts and bruises, and extending a kind word, a gentling touch to others. Somebody always has it worse than we do.

Ask the hard questions. It's no sin to gaze heavenward and shout, "God, why is this happening to me?" Sometimes, verbalizing the question with no answer starts us moving toward a solution.

Don't be afraid to ask why. God will not be surprised nor offended. He may nudge us to a scripture passage or a friend with a listening ear. Hard questions don't bother God. He has answers . . . if we really want them.

Last night, I talked with Walter again. He's seeing a professional counselor and he still attends church. He has tried to settle in for the long haul. He's not happy yet, but he believes he can be.

Somebody listened. Someone cared. He took a chance and reached out to others. He still hurts and growls at times. But after all his growling and scratching, Walter is a big cat on the mend. He may learn to purr again. ■



Jack Williams

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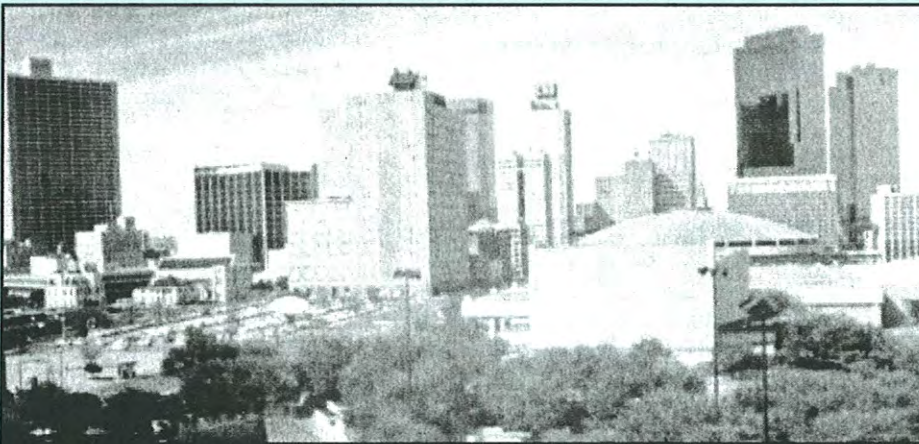
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