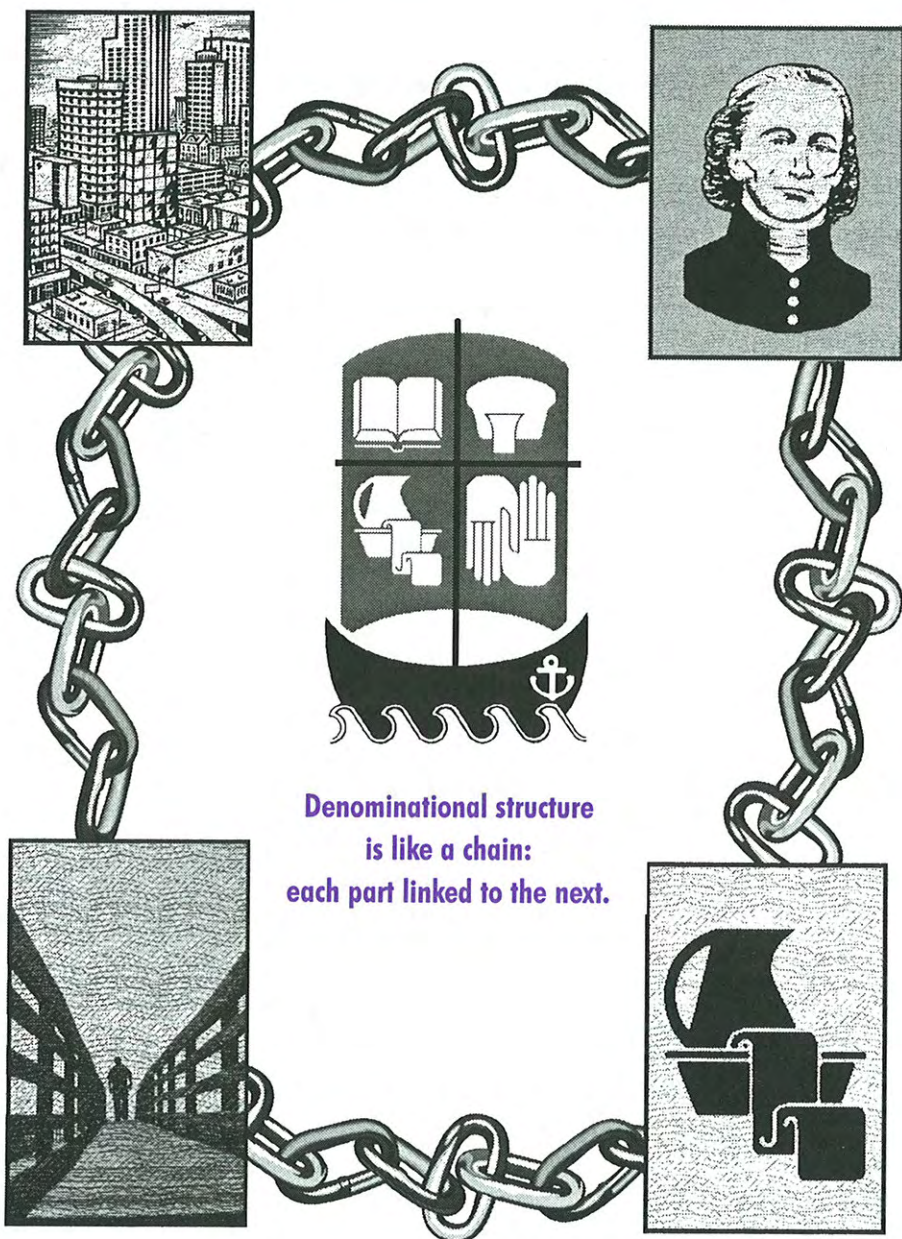


CONTACT

MARCH 1997

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS



Denominational structure
is like a chain:
each part linked to the next.

Unique
History

Big Meeting

Bowl Games

Organized to Serve

Apostasy

INSIDE

MARCH 1997

VOLUME 44, NO. 3

ARTICLES

4 Our Unique History

Historian Bill Davidson surveys 270 years of Free Will Baptist beginnings, growing pains and decisions.

7 I Was at the Big Meeting

A senior minister revisits 54 years of national conventions.

10 Bowl Games

What feet washing means as a practice and a denominational distinctive.

12 The Why of Feet Washing

A devotional interpretation of the upper room event.

13 Organized to Serve

The unique Free Will Baptist structure that produces a biblically-based, congregationally-focused outreach.

15 Retired and Nothing to Do?

He retired as pastor and writer, only to discover that he was busier than ever.

16 The Doctrine of Apostasy

Six reasons to believe in the possibility of apostasy.

COLUMNS

3 The Secretary Speaks

Is Your Church Tax Exempt?

23 The Department Pages

27 Green Tree Bible Study

Simon Peter—The Rock

28 Top Shelf

29 Youth Update

30 Especially for Young Preachers

31 Briefcase

Stand Up and Shine

NEWS

18 Free Will Baptist Newsfront

Carl Young Celebrates 40 Years
International Sets 1998 Theme
Alabama Church Dedication
Convicts Build Tennessee Church
Southeastern Announces Graduation
Convention Instrumental Ensemble
Radio-TV Commission Meets

22 Currently

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Is Your Church Tax Exempt?

Tax exemption status for every Free Will Baptist church is available today. However, for some time confusion has existed regarding the procedure which those organizations holding membership in the National Association of Free Will Baptists (NAFWB) need to follow in order to obtain recognition of proper tax exempt status.

In light of this confusion, we asked our attorney to draft the process and procedure to help each Free Will Baptist church, mission church, association and all other Free Will Baptist entities obtain recognition of proper tax exempt status in an orderly manner. Here are the results of our attorney's work.

The Tax Status

The NAFWB is a Tennessee Nonprofit Religious Organization, chartered in the state of Tennessee on August 17, 1982. The charter was amended on July 26, 1984, during the national convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. The charter was again amended and restated on July 24, 1996, during the annual convention in Fort Worth, Texas.

As a nonprofit religious corporation created and existing under the Statutes of Tennessee, the NAFWB has all the rights and privileges allowed to nonprofit entities, subject to the limitations contained in the Internal Revenue Code to recognize exempt religious entities.

In order to avoid confusion regarding the proceedings by which a new affiliate, including churches, mission churches, associations and other Free Will Baptist entities may secure exempt tax status, the following procedures should be followed to properly claim exemptions from federal, state and local taxes as may be allowed by the prospective laws

of each state. Nonprofit mailing permits require that the mailing entity be recognized as exempt.

The Four Steps

The proper procedure for the listed nonprofit entities, in applying for exempt tax status includes the following four steps: (1) Each entity must obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN). This can be done by filling out and filing a SS-4 form with the Internal Revenue Service in your district. The Employer Identification Number (EIN) identifies the entity for employment and tax purposes.

(2) Each of the entities must be eligible for and affiliated with the National Association of Free Will Baptists, in order to be exempt by the Group Exemption Number (GEN) of the NAFWB, Inc. The inclusion of the Group Exemption allows each entity to use the Group Exemption Number (GEN), entitling it to tax exemption available to the NAFWB. Those entities eligible for membership in the NAFWB, Inc., are identified in the *Treatise* (Article II—Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

(3) Each entity eligible for membership in the NAFWB, Inc. should write the Executive Office and request and give authorization to become a part of the Group Exemption of the NAFWB, Inc. The use of the



Melvin Worthington

Group Exemption Number (GEN) prior to such request and being listed in the *Free Will Baptist Yearbook*, is ineffective, misleading and done without authorization.

(4) To be listed and covered by the Group Exemption and to properly use the number, the request must be received at the Executive Office no later than November 30 in order to be listed in the *Free Will Baptist Yearbook* for the succeeding year. Mission churches (mission works) must be a member of the NAFWB, Inc., *Treatise* (Article II—Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), and be listed in the *Free Will Baptist Yearbook* in order to use the Group Exemption Number (GEN).

Each of the entities, to be exempt from state sales tax, must apply to the Department of Revenue of the state in which it is located and be granted a sales tax exemption based upon the nonprofit status in that state. Since this is unique in each state, it would be wise to secure the services of an attorney to draft and file necessary exempting documents.

The Suggestions

If any church, mission church, association or other Free Will Baptist entity needs to determine the status of its exemption under the NAFWB, Inc., it should write the Executive Office at P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, Tennessee 37011-5002. If you need further explanation or information, please contact us.

Every Free Will Baptist entity affiliated with the NAFWB, Inc., should have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) and request that the Executive Office send a letter certifying its status and providing the Group Exemption (GEN). It is wise when seeking to obtain tax exemption status to secure the services of an attorney. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

March 1997

- 6-7 Oklahoma State Ministers' Retreat
- 8 First Arizona District Association
- 9 First FWB Church
Tucson, Arizona
- 9-13 Bible Conference
Free Will Baptist Bible College
- 14-15 New Jersey District Association
- 21-22 Illinois State Association

Our Unique History

By William F. Davidson

Free Will Baptists

Freewill Baptists



As I reflect now after so many years as a student of history, I am aware that interest in my denominational heritage began when I first saw the huge portrait of Benjamin Randall that hung for years in the old Free Will Baptist headquarters building in West Nashville. The caption read, "Our Founder." At the moment, it seemed to me that our entire history was caught up in that simple conclusion.

Subsequent studies revealed that this bold presupposition was inadequate and, indeed, inaccurate. Only a few churches and associations that later joined to give birth to the National Association of Free Will Baptists could be traced to Randall's work in New Durham, New Hampshire, in 1780. Though Randallite remnants would survive as Freewill

(Randall's spelling) Baptists in Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois and some western states, other independent beginnings would make far more significant contributions to the rise of the new denomination in America.

Multiple Beginnings

The first Free Will Baptist church in America was founded by Paul Palmer in 1727, in Chowan County, North Carolina, near the community later known as Cisco. At this early date, the Palmer movement was related to the English General Baptists, but the churches that grew out of his ministry and that of his

followers, Joseph and William Parker, later adopted the name, "Free Will Baptists," and can be traced all the way through to the present.

The General Baptists had referred to themselves as "free willers" since as early as 1611, and the first Free Will Baptist statement of faith in 1812 used the older name but was signed by Jesse Heath and James Roach, two prominent Free Will Baptist leaders of the early nineteenth century. The Parker churches in eastern North Carolina had been referred to as Free Will Baptists as early as the 1780s.

Spontaneous combustion! At least two other new movements would add to the growing family of Free Will Baptists that later would comprise the National Association. As early as 1827, a body of United Baptists in the mountains of North Caroli-



na had begun to doubt their Calvinistic doctrines and in October of that year they left the French Broad Association of United Baptists.

In their annual conference of October 1830, they resolved that, "... in the future our Churches represent themselves as Free-Will Baptists." There is no evidence that this small group of congregations had been in contact either with the Freewill Baptists of New England or with Palmer's Free Will Baptists in eastern North Carolina, but their adoption of the doctrine of general atonement placed them in close alignment with both.

At about the same time, Lucretia Patterson revealed that a small group of Baptists in Tennessee were being referred to as either "Free Will" or "Separate" Baptists. This group had grown out of the work of Robert Heaton who had begun his ministry in 1809. Rejecting an earlier rigid Calvinism, many of the Baptists in Kentucky had begun to preach that the provisions of the gospel were free and that salvation was freely offered to all.

It was this heritage that Heaton and his followers would enjoy. Heaton founded Zion Church in Davidson County, White's Creek, Tennessee, in 1812. From this church others would be born and the "free willers" were on their way.

The churches were related to Separate Baptist associations in Kentucky until a split in the Concord association into Calvinistic and Arminian camps gave them a denominational affiliation that was closer home. When the two camps began to speak of reunion in 1842/43, Heaton's churches were dismissed to form the Cumberland Association of Separate Baptists. By 1854, they



were using the Free Will and Separate Baptist titles interchangeably.

Growing Pains

From the beginning, denominational growth had been hindered by periodic schisms that had their origins both externally and internally.

Palmer's General Baptists in eastern North Carolina were invaded by the Calvinistic Philadelphia Baptist Association in the mid-18th century and were left with only four churches to carry on the Arminian tradition among the Baptists in that area.

In the mid-19th century that same segment of the movement was divided over the question of Free Masonry



and, again, found itself devastated. In 1911, the Randall group of Freewill Baptists in New England merged with the Northern Baptist Convention and, except for a few associations that rejected the merger, that entire element of the Free Will Baptist movement was lost.

But with pain came progress. By the end of the 19th century, Free Will Baptists in the east had joined in the Triennial General Conference. The new conference not only drew on resources from Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Arkansas, but also included conferences from Ohio and North Dakota, both probably part of the New England remnant.

In the west, on December 27, 1916, delegates from Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas and Texas joined together to found the Co-Operative General Association. This new organization brought all the Free Will Baptists of the West and Southwest together into one body. After the Triennial Conference disbanded in 1910, the eastern churches sought renewal through alliance with Free Will Baptists in other parts of the country.

Hope blossomed in 1918 when the eastern churches met in a joint session with the Co-Operative Association in Nashville. But the timing was premature and difficulties over the question of foot washing sent the representatives of both groups home disappointed but adamant in their own convictions.

Realizing that a national association was not feasible, eastern leaders met May 26, 1921, to establish the Sec-

ond General Conference of the Original Free Will Baptists of the United States, a revival of the earlier Triennial General Conference. Finally, the Tri-State Association, consisting of Yearly Meetings from Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia, was organized on October 4, 1919. It would eventually embrace some 45 churches in seven quarterly meetings. Though it existed for only 15 years, it met an urgent need for fellowship and cooperation in the Appalachian area.

Today, growth often has been hindered on the one hand by negative traits that have been difficult to jettison—evangelical anti-intellectualism, a tendency to cling to the past which has limited relevance to a modern culture, a reluctance to accept the responsibility of ministry to contemporary urban and suburban communities—and, on the other hand, more positively, a vehement refusal to yield to the temptations of a post-Christian society that calls upon the church to compromise all conviction in order to attain growth through a more attractive appeal to a pagan world.

Character

In character, the denomination has changed little in its 270 years of



existence. From Palmer's small church in Chowan County, North Carolina, to the church in your community in Anytown, USA, Free Will Baptists have continued to look much the same, especially in those areas of the faith that are deemed non-negotiable—Armenian and conservative in theology, convinced of the inerrancy and the authority of the Word of God, waiting expectantly for the imminent second coming of Christ, given to a rather rigid life style in the pursuit of holiness.

Thankfully, change has come where it was necessary. Though the typical Free Will Baptist church still either is rural or resides in a small community and consists of 75 to 150 mem-

bers, the denomination has come to realize that it can minister to the needs of city and suburb. Larger churches, while still the exception rather than the rule, do exist and prosper.

The congregation itself has changed. The farmer has been joined by the lawyer, the doctor, the accountant and the banker. Worship has changed. Though there has been no attempt to aspire to the formality of the liturgical churches, most churches have adopted a more orderly approach and have attempted to adapt worship to the needs of the congregation—a healthy balance between human planning and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Experience has proven that change without compromise of convictions is not only often good, but necessary if the church is to prosper and fulfill its commission.

Missions

Focus on survival in the 18th and 19th centuries left little time for concern for a lost world. Early mission efforts by the New England Freewill Baptists were successful but were lost to the larger denomination through the merger of the smaller group with the Northern Baptists in 1911.

No effective cross-cultural program was introduced elsewhere in the denomination during the 19th century. But the 20th century was to be different. Though the first foreign missionaries were not formally commissioned until 1935, the Eastern General Conference had called for an international missions outreach as early as 1901.

With the commissioning of Laura Belle Barnard for ministry in India and the Thomas Willeys for work in Panama, the denomination finally was actively involved in the task of world evangelization. When the National Association met for its second session in 1938, it adopted a recommended \$3,000 foreign mission bud-



get. By the end of the fiscal year, they had spent \$6,577.39.

Today, the Foreign Missions Department maintains a yearly budget

of \$4,451,000 and supports 95 career missionaries, eight full time affiliates, and 44 national evangelists and pastors in nine countries. At the same time, the Home Missions Board over-



sees 56 missionary couples in 42 states, Puerto Rico and Mexico. Cross-cultural ministries have been commissioned recently among Haitian communities in Miami and among the Indian tribes in Alaska.

From Growing to Growing Up

East and West finally joined hands and hearts when the Eastern General Conference and the Co-operative General Association of the West met together to formally inaugurate the National Association of Free Will Baptists on November 5, 1935.

Official delegates represented conferences and associations from North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Missouri, Texas, Nebraska, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio. Arkansas, though represented at this first meeting, would wait until later to make formal application for membership.

While numerical growth would continue at a relatively modest pace, the new union would allow for significant growth in missions, education, ministries for both men and women, the Sunday School and other training services of the church.

Our Unique History

The story has again been told. Today, the National Association represents Free Will Baptists both in America and in nine other countries. Its people are actively involved in ministry in nurseries, in Sunday School classes, in pulpits, in cross-cultural communities across the world, in jungles, in cities, in rural America. Our unique history!

But, is any of this really unique? Could not most denominations make similar claims? Maybe our uniqueness lies behind and beneath all the

dates and organizations and events.

Maybe it is best found in the denomination's tenacious commitment to the fundamentals of the faith, in unwavering submission to the authority of the Word of God, in faithful preaching of the gospel, in commitment to truth in a postmodern world that denies that truth even exists, in the sheer miracle of survival, without compromise, in a world that demands compromise as the price for acceptance.

Maybe our uniqueness is found not so much in our history as in our faithfulness to the God of history. ■



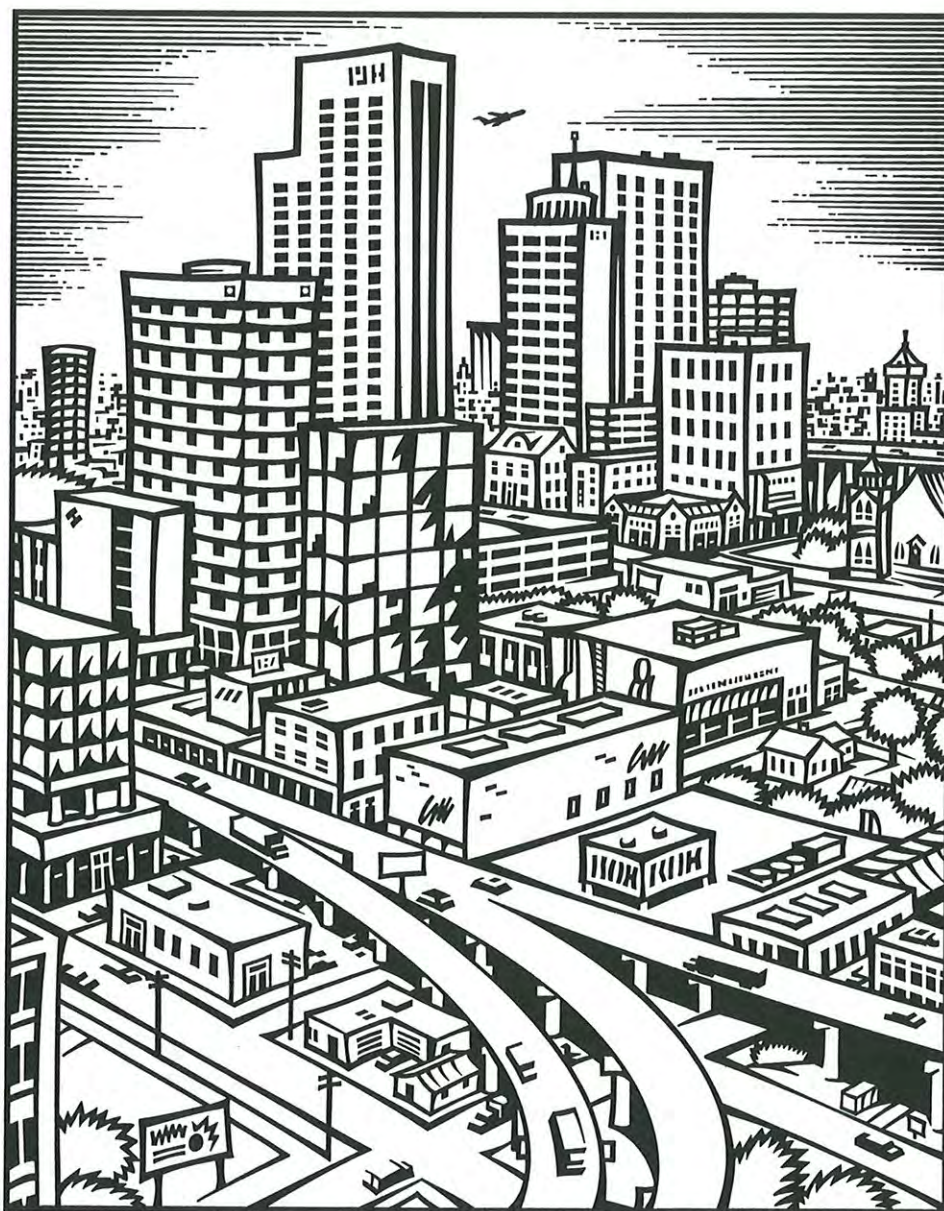
ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. William F. Davidson is professor of church history at Columbia International University. He is the author of *The Free Will Baptists in America 1727-1984*.



54 years of
national
conventions.

I Was at the Big Meeting

By Raymond Riggs



The car was crowded with six passengers on a hot summer day in July 1942, and no air conditioner. My wife, Winona, her parents, Rev. and Mrs. N. P. Gates, her two brothers, Graydon and Lowell Gates and I all headed to the National Association of Free Will Baptists in Columbus, Mississippi. As a quartet, we were scheduled to sing, and I had been assigned to preach.

At that time, I was pastoring Highland Park FWB Church in Michigan, and we were experiencing good solid growth, with an attendance around 300. But, me preach at the National Association? I was scared half to death.

Upon arrival at Columbus, we were assigned to stay in the home of

a family with several children. The children slept on pallets and gave us their beds. The dear lady even provided breakfast for all of us. My wife and I slept in the floor on a mattress that was removed from a bed. At night time we would raise the windows (no air conditioner) and keep the fans going in order to sleep.

The convention met in First FWB Church where Rev. M. L. Hollis pastored. About 200 people attended, and a wonderful spirit of unity and fellowship prevailed. We heard numerous reports, and plans for the Bible College and Foreign Missions were set in motion. At this meeting I had my first encounter with Thomas and Mabel Willey who lit the fire of missions in my

heart that still burns brightly today.

In Retrospect

Since that National Association in 1942, the Lord enabled me to attend all but three. In 1954 I was in India on behalf of our Foreign Missions Department. I missed two other sessions because of illness.

On two occasions our church helped to host the National Association. Once in Michigan and once in Norfolk, Virginia. At the meeting in Michigan (1947), our church members and friends opened their homes and housed almost all the delegates. Fourteen people stayed with us, and we gave them all breakfast.

One of our guests was Rev. Marvin Dalton. While he was at our house, he finished writing the song, "O What A Saviour," and played out the tune on our piano. Also, Rev. and Mrs. Melvin Bingham and others were our guests. We chartered Greyhound buses and took our delegates on a tour into Canada.

At the Big Meeting in Norfolk, Virginia (1961), we broke rank with the state convention of North Carolina Free Will Baptists, and I still wonder if that was the right thing to do. Looking back, I also wonder about some other things we have done: Withdrawing from the National Association of Evangelicals, Evangelical Foreign Mission Association, American Bible Society and Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Why would I say that? For over 30 years, I was deeply involved in our missionary program. In order to do the necessary work effectively, I was thrown in the midst of leaders from these organizations. I helped in the formation of their various policies, slept, wept and prayed with them. I knew their pulse beats for missions and the gospel, and I knew they were not the false teachers and/or imposters that some made them to appear.

In fact, it was Clyde Taylor of EFMA who was responsible for our denomination having the territory we now occupy in Africa, which is one of the most thriving foreign fields. Also, had we cooperated with Wycliffe Translators, we perhaps would not have a stock pile of unused foreign Bibles today.

Now don't misunderstand me, I would never be in favor of compromising any of our denominational distinctives, and we would never need to do so. But to cooperate with other believers on the fundamentals of the faith for worldwide witness and service is not only an advantage but a scriptural command.

The days that are past in our Big Meeting hold quite an assortment of memories. The revision of our *Treatise*, debate over the Cooperative Program, changing of Sunday School literature and publishing houses, the commissioning and firing of missionaries, the purchase of National Office property, the wine and basketball uniform issue, the giving of reports, and knowledge of deficit accounts.

Even though many of the items

were somewhat controversial, we got through them and came out with a workable solution that enabled us to move forward in every area. The memories of spiritual inspiration through fellowship, music, singing (and shouting) and great preaching causes the less pleasant memories to fade into oblivion.

Memories like the special missionary service on Wednesday nights, with the altar lined with people (young and old), many of them now retired veteran missionaries, and many are still out there in the whitened harvest field. Memories like the prayer meeting on top of the "chat" pile in Flat River, Missouri, with Darnon Dodd, James F. Miller, Lizzie McAdams, Winford Davis, Rolla Smith, Eunice Edwards and many others.

Memories like the deep thundering voice of Carl Vallance saying, "Amen," and sometimes letting out a "war whoop" of praise to the Lord. Recently at the Big Meeting, when the mass choir sang, "O, What A Saviour," Brother Carl, some older now and unable to stand, was waving his handkerchief and praising the Lord!

I know these things happened because I was at the Big Meeting.

Introspect

My attendance and participation in the National Association (The Big Meeting) has enriched my life and the life of my entire family. My six children were all exposed to the ministry and participants of the Big Meeting.

As a result, my four sons are all involved in the Lord's ministry. Our youngest, Steve, is a missionary to France. Charles, Ken and Randy are also ministering the Word of the Lord both in word and music. Our daughters Ramona and Pat are both serving the Lord.

Perhaps the greatest benefit has been to Winona (my wife) and me. It has been the hundreds of friends we made and love as the result of being a part of the Big Meeting. Also, the ministry and fellowship with the preachers and saints of the Lord like J. R. Davidson, L. R. Ennis, L. C. Johnson, Charles Thigpen, Wallace and Tom Malone.

Others like Melvin Bingham, Ed Morris, Paul Woolsey, I. L. Stanley,

Clyde Taylor, Tom and Mabel Willey, Laura Belle Barnard, Louis Moulton, Harry Staires, Reford Wilson, J. C. Griffin, Ralph Staten, Joe Ange, Rolla Smith, J. B. Bloss, Darnon Dodd, E. C. Morris, Ronald Creech, Roger Reeds, Charles Brown, Robert Crawford and John Gibbs.

And more like Eugene Waddell, Herman Hersey, Stan Mooneyham, Raymond Lee, Harold Pitts, Wayne Smith, Robert Picirilli, Bayless McDonald, the Worthington twins, Bobby Jackson, Henry and Billy Melvin, J. P. Barrow, C. F. Bowen, Agnes Frazier—and the list is endless of those who have made an important input into my life, because I was at the meeting!

The Prospect

From my present vantage point (54 years after my first National Association), I can honestly say that I am overjoyed at the progress we have made. I am grateful for the advantages we have today. The modern conveniences, multiplied churches, qualified ministers, dedicated laymen, various departments of work, all designed to obey the last command of our Lord when He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

We have come a long way in overcoming racial prejudice, bigotry and doctrinal discord. It is my hope and prayer that if the Lord tarries, the next century will show much greater progress in every area both in numbers and spirituality. To go from 200 to 8,000 in attendance, and from a budget of a few hundred dollars to millions of dollars is progress.

We need to urgently pray for the Lord of the harvest to call out workers, and also pray for our Bible colleges that they will stay true to the Word of God and to their initial purpose in spite of the changing world around us in these closing days of grace.

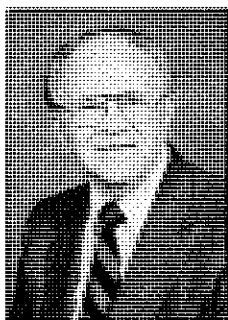
I believe that faithful attendance to the Big Meeting (National Association) and participation in the program will do much to bring this to pass.

I noticed in the *FWB Yearbook* that the dates and places for the Big Meeting are already planned for the next 10 years. It would be nice to attend them all. I would especially like to attend the one scheduled for Detroit, Michi-

gan, July 15-19, 2001. However, I may be gone.

There is a Big Meeting planned in Heaven one day, and even though we do not know the exact date, it could be soon. At that meeting Christians from all over the world, from every denomination, race, creed and color will gather around the throne of God to worship and adore our wonderful Lord Jesus. Those who attend that meeting will never hear a motion to adjourn!

I intend to be at that meeting! How about you? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Raymond Riggs (B1) has been a Free Will Baptist minister, pastor, evangelist for 60 years. He also served seven years as general director of the Foreign Missions Department. Although he no longer pastors full time, Brother Riggs is still available through "Stateside Evangelism" for conferences, revivals, concerts and interim pastoral work. He resides in Algood, Tennessee.

He may be contacted at: P.O. Box 49334, Algood, TN 38506.



Measuring Up To The Standard

Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205
615/383-1340

THE TOGETHER WAY

December 1996

Receipts:

State	Design.	CO-OP	Total	December '95	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 142.90	\$.00	\$ 142.90	\$ 537.21	\$ 6,341.56
Arizona	1,215.62	137.40	1,353.02	613.05	6,339.31
Arkansas	45,361.03	8,268.33	53,629.36	21,934.23	344,013.78
California	75.00	1,042.58	1,117.58	924.44	12,325.54
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	80.07	7,947.87	8,027.94	5,228.43	35,187.93
Georgia	25,153.48	1,650.01	26,803.49	18,086.40	210,415.46
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	8,703.06	2,323.79	11,026.85	10,639.26	133,486.68
Indiana	1,707.46	181.14	1,888.60	.00	10,869.65
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	212.00	918.90
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	353.15
Kentucky	1,146.43	334.09	1,480.52	649.88	11,119.41
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	110.00
Maryland	.00	225.00	225.00	1,101.60	2,759.47
Michigan	28,432.52	4,791.14	33,223.66	39,862.08	207,501.05
Mississippi	.00	403.47	403.47	787.68	6,130.36
Missouri	9,068.92	.00	9,068.92	10,885.34	136,290.16
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	400.75	7,687.58
North Carolina	250.00	495.66	745.66	1,947.33	22,035.21
Ohio	9,929.26	3,072.05	13,001.31	7,003.04	128,809.95
Oklahoma	50,716.25	.00	50,716.25	62,715.94	645,713.91
South Carolina	24,341.76	141.21	24,482.97	23,806.69	266,989.33
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	2,715.36	1,108.00	3,823.36	7,110.38	127,603.86
Texas	5,353.29	315.66	5,668.95	4,218.31	76,879.96
Virginia	1,020.93	25.00	1,045.93	835.49	16,690.95
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	14,048.50	237.67	14,286.17	3,157.89	69,147.16
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	180.00
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	41.93
Northeast Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.12	.12	(0.04)	.83
Totals	\$229,461.84	\$32,700.19	\$262,162.03	\$222,657.38	\$2,485,943.08

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 8,016.43	\$17,985.05	\$ 26,001.48	\$ 25,828.25	\$ 320,333.19
Foreign Missions	119,977.33	3,384.46	123,361.79	112,081.03	1,203,175.88
FWBBC	10,775.40	3,384.46	14,159.86	16,773.69	189,023.56
Home Missions	83,786.90	2,648.73	86,435.63	57,267.41	620,837.47
Retirement & Insurance	764.75	2,060.13	2,824.88	2,345.45	34,154.44
Master's Men	1,331.94	2,060.13	3,392.07	3,094.30	42,707.83
Commission for Theo. Integrity	149.29	73.58	222.87	160.85	2,121.56
FWB Foundation	686.38	882.91	1,569.29	1,237.76	19,659.38
Historical Commission	92.87	73.58	166.45	134.77	1,906.38
Music Commission	70.32	73.58	143.90	134.77	1,831.29
Radio & TV Commission	120.68	73.58	194.26	160.83	2,167.77
Hillsdale FWB College	1,048.27	.00	1,048.27	1,257.48	15,542.74
Other	2,641.28	.00	2,641.28	2,180.79	32,481.59
Totals	\$229,461.84	\$32,700.19	\$262,162.03	\$222,657.38	\$2,485,943.08

The Feet Washing Baptists

Bowl Games

By Danny Dwyer

South Africa is known for its diamond industry. The late evangelist, Vance Havner, told the story of children there playing marbles with diamonds. It seems the value of the gems was insignificant in comparison to the games the children wanted to play. For some reason this is a trait of human nature in relation to spiritual diamonds. We have a tendency to play games with them. Those games are often thinly veiled disguises to cover our pride and self-centered ambitions.

However, it doesn't seem that God is very impressed with our games. Jesus' words of rebuke to the religious games of the Pharisees shows us that spiritual life is not to be taken lightly (cf. Mt. 23:1ff).

There was a popular, anti-establishment song of the 1960s titled, "Oh The Games People Play." Part of the song included a reference to religious games some play.

This is not to approve the song, but to show that even the world recognizes that some things in life are to be treated with respect. The jeering of the world about those who play at the Christian life should cause us some self-examination.

Jesus and Feet Washing

One of the Bible scenes displaying precious truth is found in John's

Gospel recording the intimate discourse between Jesus and His disciples in the upper room. Jesus modeled, by the act of washing the disciples' feet, His own divine humiliation in leaving His kingly throne in heaven and becoming a man with only meager material means.

Included in the works of Christ in interpreting the occasion was the clear command for us to show the same type of servant's heart toward our brethren. This is nothing to trifle with.

The truths communicated in the deliberate action of Christ embody the very essence of Christian theology and life. What greater truth could there be than the Son of God humbling Himself to become a man and suffer death on the cross with all of its embarrassing elements?

His death was more than death in the usual sense of the word. He suffered the wrath of God for sin as He became our sin-bearer (cf. Phil. 2:5-11).

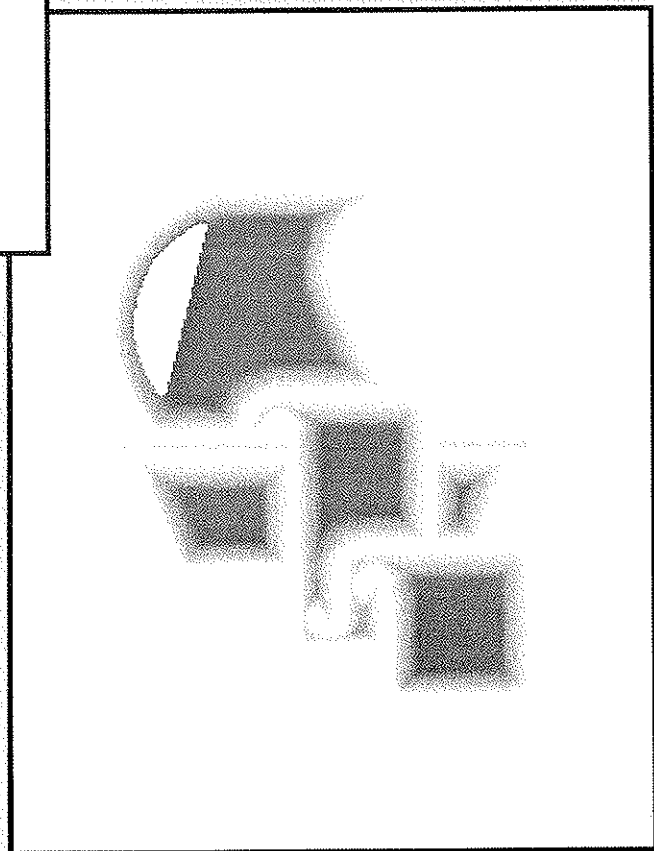
In addition to this, Christ commanded us to display such love toward our brethren that we are to willingly place ourselves in the Christ position of being

servants. All this and more is communicated in the act of Christ washing the disciples' feet and commanding us to follow suit. Again, these are great truths, diamonds if you will, of invaluable quality for spiritual life.

Denominational Distinctive

Probably the majority of Free Will Baptists practice feet washing as a ritual. Some do not. Those who see feet washing as an ordinance to be continually observed in the local church have every compelling reason to so believe. The imagery is vivid and the meaning unmistakable.

The history of the early church includes several references to the practice in the assemblies of believers. At the least, some of them took the words of Christ to mean that it was to be included in the liturgy of the church.



However, to those who do not believe that feet washing should be observed as an ordinance, the truths illustrated by the ritual are nonetheless binding upon one's Christian life and conscience.

The intent here is to show that no matter what one's position may be about feet washing as an ordinance, the truths displayed by the act are not optional in Christian life. Of course, it is possible to practice feet washing as a ritual while having an unmitigated pride about it.

It is also possible to scorn the ritual under some ruse (e.g. "It was only a custom and not a command") and display the same kind of pride. Both are wrong. Both are games people play. If one believes the truths of feet washing, then one is compelled to obedience no matter what his view about its liturgical significance.

I have often been asked what is different about Free Will Baptists (usually in comparison to other Baptists). The frank answer sometimes is, "Not much." While there are some doctrinal differences, we are also known as "feet washing Baptists."

But if the mere practice of feet washing sets us apart, then we have missed the point. The quality of Christian life is never to be measured by rituals or forms (cf. Mt. 23:5; II Tim. 3:5). However, if the truths pictured by feet washing were consistently practiced, there would be much that is different about us.

Meaning Behind Practice

At the college where I teach, we take a chapel service on Good Friday to share communion and engage in feet washing. I don't think we are unique in this. It is a common thing to have students, and occasionally, a faculty member who have never been in a feet washing service. One incident stands out in my mind.

A new faculty member from another denomination had never seen this done and shared with me her reservations about it. I asked her to at least watch the practice and withhold judgment until after the service. She agreed. Following the service she told me of being so moved by the display of love and testimonies that she participated, too.

That is just the point with the service and the intent of the act. Skeptical attitudes usually dissolve at the genuine display of Christian love and fellowship.

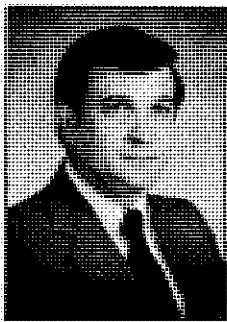
Perhaps it is idealistic to suggest that returning to the simplicity of the servant's heart may just be what we need. However, I cannot think of a greater need among us that would put us in a position of being blessed by the Lord than just that.

There is a tendency for us to stand over one another as if we are in authority. Should we not be kneeling before one another? The place of true spiritual power is in the role of the servant (Mt. 20:27).

Jesus said, "If you know these things, happy are you if you do them" (Jn. 13:17). I do not think He meant that if one merely engaged in the act of feet washing it would bring him a sense of happiness, especially when one considers all of its embarrassing elements. I believe He was speaking of the joy that accompanies freedom from pride and selfish ambitions.

Think about it for a moment. What if our churches were known for having this spirit of selflessness? What if the actual meaning of feet washing was the *usual* display among us in our wider assemblies? Do you suppose that this would please the Lord and He would visit us in renewal? I am aware that we cannot have revival unless we confront our sins. I am also saying that this may well be one of the sins we need to confront.

Are we playing "Bowl Games"? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Danny Dwyer recently accepted the pastorate at First Free Will Baptist Church in Florence, Alabama. He is completing his teaching duties this semester at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in Wendell, North Carolina.

Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign December 1996 Update

State	Goal	Gifts	Balance
Alabama	\$76,397.63	\$ 5,001.15	\$71,396.48
Arizona	1,228.93	2,883.71	(1,654.78)
Arkansas	76,860.94	43,302.13	33,558.81
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	28,990.88	9,188.31
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	8.00	266.99
Kansas	1,287.82	280.00	1,007.82
Kentucky	35,454.34	5,949.29	29,505.05
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	33,794.91	26,689.49
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 Assoc.	883.41	270.00	613.41
Northwest Assoc.	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	3,102.00	15,233.75
South Dakota		175.00	(175.00)
Tennessee	78,557.09	60,667.06	17,890.03
Texas	11,547.20	7,391.52	4,155.68
Virginia	24,323.33	2,027.93	22,295.40
Virgin Islands		200.00	(200.00)
West Virginia	46,204.51	1,023.00	45,181.51
Wisconsin		61.00	(61.00)
Other		2,978.85	(2,978.85)
Totals	\$766,583.39	\$277,014.49	\$489,568.90

Directory Update

ALABAMA

Danny Dwyer to First Church, Florence from Southeastern FWB College, Wendell, NC

MISSOURI

Roy Littrell to Faith Church, St. Louis

TEXAS

Stephen Harris to Pleasant Mound Church, Buffalo Springs from Southside Church, Fort Smith, AR

Allen Moore to Buncombe Church, Carthage

Ned Graham to Eastside Church, Houston

Warner Collier to Zion Church, Corpus Christi

Jeffrey Conner to First Church, Carthage

The Why Of Feet Washing

By David Taylor



There is an undeniable tie between the Lord's Supper and the washing of the saints' feet; "And supper being ended . . . Jesus . . . rose from supper and . . . began to wash the disciples' feet" (John 13:2-6). The close proximity in their establishment was no accident. Whereas the Lord's Supper is seldom challenged, the practice and observance of washing of the saints' feet is challenged, argued against and omitted by many.

Washing the saints' feet serves many purposes. It is a clear warning from our Lord about the danger of pride. Pride causes once pliable minds, hearts and knees to stiffen, even rebel. When practiced, feet washing teaches humility and service.

Humility is the opposite of pride; it is the foundation and framework of the kingdom of God. Service is the practical expression of genuine humility. But feet washing also expresses a philosophy of Christ's kingdom that is different than the world's.

God has always done things different than man. His weakness is more powerful than the accumulation of all man's strength and power, His

foolishness is wiser than the totality of man's knowledge and wisdom. God uses things that are (to the mind of man) weak, simple and foolish to accomplish and build that which cannot be explained or eliminated by the world.

The kingdom of God is not founded, framed, filled or finished the way man would do it. In God's kingdom greatness, stature and prominence are the product of service to others.

To put it simply, we wash feet because Jesus said "you also ought to wash one another's feet." Jesus did it and left us a clear example of how to wash feet, so we do it. He spoke about why we do it, so we wash feet.

But the greatest reason that we repeatedly observe this ordinance ought to be our love for Jesus; we love Him more than we love anything else. Washing feet gives testimony that our love for Jesus is greater than our pride, our wisdom, our fears, our understanding, our love of the world.

It seems reasonable that if Jesus said that a cup of water given to a stranger in His name is the same as giving Him a cup of water, then wash-

ing the saints' feet certainly symbolizes washing His feet . . . feet that were pierced with a nail for my sin, and for yours. Yes, I love Jesus enough to wash my brother's feet. Do you?

"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet . . . a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:14,16,17 NKJV). ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend David Taylor pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Tucson, Arizona.

The unique Free Will Baptist structure.

Organized to Serve

By Herbert Waid



Amos asked, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" A denomination was born when two people agreed on their understanding of what the Bible teaches. From that time on they could work together, and they did.

We need each other. Lions stalk the lone straggler for an easy kill. Our adversary, the devil, as a dangerously aggressive lion seeks to destroy us. When wounded, one needs tender loving care. If alone, death is inevitable. Yes, we really need someone to care, to help, to walk with us.

Dynamics of Origination

Our Lord sent the 12 to witness two by two. Later, He sent the 70 in groups of two also. He was implementing a principle that energizes every cooperative endeavor. If two Christians or 100 church members or thousands of members of a denomination work together, a dynamic principle called synergy empowers the united effort.

Synergy is concerted action producing a result much greater than the participants could bring about independently. Automobile companies do not market a car with a one cylinder engine because mechanical engineers comprehend the formidable power of synergy. Doctors and physical therapists understand synergy, for

groups of muscles working together give the human body mobility, coordination and strength.

The body of Christ, the Church, should be no less productive. If one can win one soul, then two together should be able to win two. Wrong! Remember the awesome might of synergy. If one can win one, then two with synergy should be able to win five or 10 or more.

Biblical Structure

Nowhere in scripture do we find the words: *a district/quarterly, state or national association of churches*. Incidentally, the word *Bible* is not in the Bible either. But who would say the Bible is not biblical?

Although denominational structure is not mentioned by name in the Bible, it is well documented in Holy Scripture. A pattern is found in the Old Testament. When Israel left Egypt, they walked together for 40 years. They did not mill about aimlessly as a confused mob.

Organization was established. Leaders were designated. Duties

were assigned. Positions were maintained. When leadership was challenged, justice was swift and severe. The ground opened and swallowed the rebels.

When the Jews entered the Promised Land, order and structure were maintained. Land grants to tribal leaders and their clans were assigned. Solidarity and consolidated worship were maintained.

The New Testament churches fellowshiped and cooperated with each other. Church members traveled to sister churches carrying messages back and forth. Offerings were sent for ministries far removed from the giving congregations.

Preachers freely moved about ministering among the churches. Standards for ministerial ordination and conduct were established. Ministry goals for churches and acceptable behavior standards for members were set. Men served in leadership roles over groups of churches.

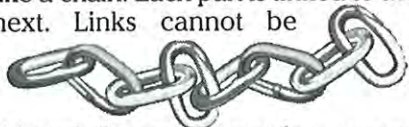
The word *denomination* is not in the Bible, but a cooperative bonding of local churches certainly is.

Congregational Government

The basic unit of a denomination is the local church. Churches are the building blocks from which all other structures are built. Meantime, all denominational ministries exist for the benefit of the local church.

Although the local church is an autonomous body of believers, it is not independent. It is not isolated from the Free Will Baptist family. It is interdependent. A member church both contributes to and receives from the denomination.

The denominational structure is like a chain. Each part is linked to the next. Links cannot be



skipped. Everyone must be a member in good standing with a local church.

When that church joins a district/quarterly association, its members become part of the broader body of believers. The district association is a fellowship of local churches. An individual cannot join, only churches.

Likewise, a state association is a fellowship of district associations and the National Association is a fellowship of state associations. One's only door into the denomination is an affiliated local church.

We meet, worship, praise the Lord, pray, give, fellowship, serve and vote in the local church. We also meet, worship, praise the Lord, pray, give, fellowship, serve and vote at the district, state and national associations.

We have the Lord's business to conduct but we are not primarily a legislative body. We are a fellowship of like-minded believers who choose to work together to accomplish great things for our Lord that we cannot do alone.

Denominational Services

When the church needs a pastor to love, teach and lead their people, they choose one from the pool of Free Will Baptist ministers. When doctrinally sound Sunday School literature and teaching aids are needed, the denomination supplies them.

When the local church needs a missionary to assist them in obeying our Lord's command to evangelize

the entire world, the church looks to the denomination. As a stream cannot rise higher than its source, even so, a church cannot rise higher than its leadership. Trained church leadership has a potential for a greater ministry. Free Will Baptist colleges provide this training.

In return, the denomination asks the local churches to be loyal. Solidarity is achieved as churches undergird denominational ministries with prayer and finances. Attendance at meetings enhances the members' fellowship and assures group unity.

District Associations

The district association affords the greatest potential for church to church interaction. It is the only body that is delegated the authority to examine, ordain and discipline a minister. Thereby, the minister is dealt with by his closest peers.

Some plant new churches in their district. Some host mission conferences, conduct youth rallies and sponsor summer camps. They may have a monthly time of fellowship for their ministers. Some sponsor Bible institutes for their churches. District associations collect statistical data from member churches.

State Associations

State and district association ministries may overlap. However, by pooling more resources, the state has a greater potential for diversified ministries. For missions: a state may support national home or foreign missionaries while planting new churches in their state.

Christian Education and Youth: a permanent camp site may be maintained with a full camping program. Youth, couples, senior and ministerial retreats may be sponsored. Bible institutes may be staffed. Financial aid can be given to member students studying at one of our denominational colleges.

A state office coordinates the state ministries and receives funds from member churches for district, state and national ministries. It helps churches locate new pastors. A state publication promotes all denominational ministries. State associations compile church statistical data received from member district associations.

National Association

With deep roots reaching all the way to the local churches, the National Association draws resources to evangelize and plant churches in every state—*Home Missions*, and around the globe—*Foreign Missions*. Receiving funds and enlisting students from all our churches enable us to have the *Free Will Baptist Bible College*. Most leaders on all levels of our denomination are a product of our college. Either they or their teachers received some or all of their college preparation at FWBBC.

Our publishing house, *Randall House Publications*, produces top quality literature that is true to Free Will Baptist doctrine. The *Sunday School and Church Training Department* also coordinates our national youth ministries.

The Foundation assists our people to fund any Free Will Baptist ministry with endowments, irrevocable agreements and revocable trusts. The *Retirement and Insurance Department* helps pastors and full-time Christian workers to have financial security in their retirement years.

The *Master's Men and Women Nationally Active for Christ* challenge and mobilize adult workers for the Lord's service.

Our national *Executive Office* represents us to other Christian organizations and the United States government. It is the denomination's nerve center coordinating and promoting all national ministries. The Executive Office plans the National Association's annual session and prepares and distributes each department's report in a printed digest of reports.

It also collects local church statistics from the states and compiles our annual national *Yearbook*—Minutes and Church Directory. This very publication, *Contact*, is published by the Executive Office and nurtures cohesiveness among our membership.

Our Latent Potential

The denomination is no better or worse than our local churches. In fact, we have only our church people to be the district/quarterly, state and national association. Every part of the structure has come into being as

Some things you have to learn the hard way.

Retired and Nothing to Do?

By Malcolm C. Fry



Here I am . . . 68 years old, recently retired, selling out and moving to an unfamiliar area (save for a few visits). Decisions, decisions, decisions. Purchase a condo or a house? What size? The scripture cautions against purchasing property without seeing (proving) it (Luke 14:18). However, caution was "thrown to the wind" as I relied heavily upon the advice and suggestions of my youngest daughter, Becky Gwartney.

A member of Fellowship FWB Church in Park Hills, Missouri, was building a house three blocks from Curt and Becky's residence. So many

choices to make; paint colors, flooring and carpet, lighting fixtures, bathroom fixtures . . . on and on the list went. Some samples were submitted to me prior to the move, yet in all areas I relied solely on the decisions of my daughter. (Guess one figures by now that she has good taste!)

In one day the move was made from Madison, Tennessee, to Desloge, Missouri. Becky served as traffic coordinator, instructing the volunteer workers as to where each item of furniture was to be placed. Details have been left out of the story, but you get the idea.

The house is small, but adequate: a two-car insulated garage is attached, with a door opener installed; two bedrooms—a third used as an office/study; two full baths; a living room; a kitchen/dining area; a nice front porch and small patio at the back of the house; concrete driveway, etc. My grandson almost keeps me broke mowing my lawn (at a nominal fee).

Fellowship FWB Church opened their membership doors for my entrance. It is my privilege to serve as an Assistant Adult Teacher and also to sing in the church choir. I participate in shut-in visitation on Wednesday mornings as well.

In my spare time, I also serve as Volunteer Chaplain at the National Health Care Center (nursing home) nearby. My duties/responsibilities are as follows:

- ◆ Serve as chaplain to all residents, regardless of their religious or denominational affiliation.

- ◆ Visit in-house residents at least once a week, time permitting.

- ◆ Minister as spiritual care-giver to family members of residents in cases of terminal illness and/or death.

- ◆ Endeavor to establish rapport with members of the medical profession.

- ◆ Conduct a weekly devotional program involving the residents, normally on Mondays.

- ◆ Attempt to maintain a schedule of churches who assume responsibility for conducting a Sunday worship service.

- ◆ Together, with the activity coordinator, try to find substitutes for churches who are unable to keep their Sunday afternoon services and/or Monday devotional.

'Looks like retirement isn't just sitting in a rocking chair and twiddling thumbs! ■

a result of a perceived burden or need of the local church. Only by working together, maximizing potent synergy, will we be able to realize the full potential of what God can do through Free Will Baptists in our lifetime. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Herbert Waid serves as executive secretary for the Georgia State Association of Free Will Baptists.

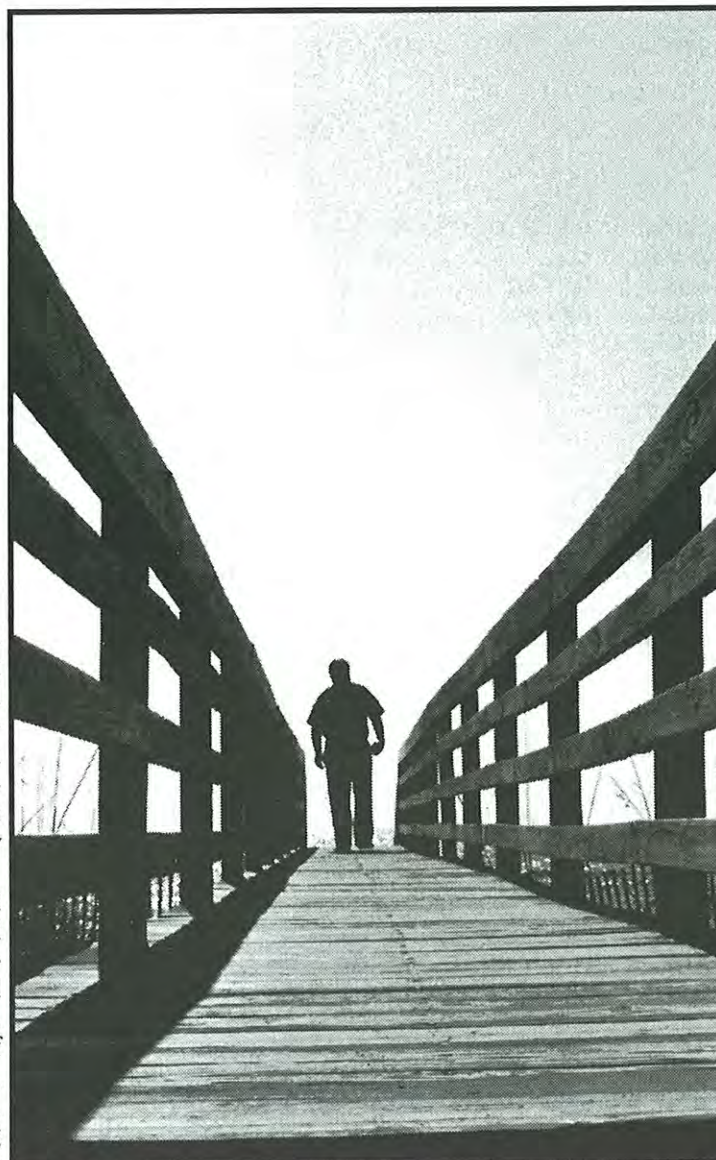


ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Malcolm C. Fry retired in 1996 after 40 years as a Free Will Baptist pastor, writer, editor and meeting planner.

Six reasons why I believe in . . .

The Doctrine of Apostasy

By A. B. Brown



We need to be clear about who saves and keeps the believer and on what condition or conditions. We also need to be clear on what is meant by the doctrine of apostasy.

A person is both saved (John 3:16) and kept by God (I Peter 1:5) on the sole condition of faith, not his good works (Ephesians 2:8-10). Good works are the *fruits* of salvation (Ephesians 2:10), not the *roots* of salvation. God does both the saving and the keeping, but He does both on the condition of faith (I Peter 1:5).

In the scriptures, continuous salvation is always conditioned upon continuous faith. This does not condone sinful living, since genuine faith is evidenced by the transformed life (II Corinthians 5:17).

Those who have been born again do not live lives characterized by sin (I John 2:29; 3:9). That person who claims to be a genuine believer and

has no regard for the law of God is a liar (I John 2:3-4).

Apostasy is defined by the contemplated actions of the Hebrew Christians in Hebrews 3:12-14. Such an act would have demanded a *willful renunciation* of one's faith in Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah, and His atoning death. They would have had to go back and accept the same position as those who crucified Jesus, which involved a total and willful re-

pudiation of His Messiahship and all that it involved.

This is why Hebrews 6:6 mentions crucifying Christ afresh and putting Him to an open shame. Thus, one's relationship with God is severed by the willful renunciation of one's faith in Christ.

Here are six reasons which dictate the biblical doctrine of apostasy.

Jesus' Words

Jesus spoke of an individual believing, then ceasing to believe. While explaining the parable of the sower and the seed in Luke 8:13, Jesus tells us that the seed which fell on the rock represents those . . . "who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in the time of temptation (testing) fall away."

In His explanation of the seed mentioned in verse 12, Jesus makes it clear that He is talking about believing unto salvation when He says, . . . "lest they should believe and be saved." If

Jesus warned about a danger, then that danger has to be real and we must take it seriously.

Conditional Covenants

All of God's major covenant dealings with men have been conditional, which clearly suggests that the covenant of salvation (New Covenant) is conditional also.

The first covenant in history, the Adamic Covenant, was clearly conditional. Regardless of dispensationalists' irrational denial, the Abrahamic Covenant demanded that he leave his country and his family and go into the land which God would show him.

The Davidic Covenant was later interpreted by both David and Solomon as being conditional. Over 120 times in the New Testament, faith is set forth as the condition necessary to being saved or becoming a participant in the New Covenant.

New Testament Passages

The many New Testament passages which urge and warn the believer to continue in the faith demand that not continuing in the faith be a possibility. Otherwise, we have God warning us of a danger where no danger exists, and that violates His holy nature.

Because of space limitations, I will not list all the passages suggesting the possibility of ceasing to believe. Consider these—Colossians 1:21-23; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 3:17; I John 2:24; Hebrews 6:4-6.

Clear Warnings

Hebrews 3:12-14 clearly warns the believer of the danger of departing from God. If one will simply apply the established rules of hermeneutics to the book itself, to the preceding and succeeding contexts, he will be forced to acknowledge that this is a genuine warning to genuine Christians.

By the way, nowhere in the entire Word of God are unbelievers admonished to exhort other unbelievers about the danger of their departing from God, especially in light of the fact that an unbeliever never has come to God.

Real Danger

The holy nature of God dictates that if He issues a warning, there is a danger. The doctrine of eternal security denies that such a possibility exists, making such warnings ludicrous.

When God says, "The just shall live by faith, and if any man shall draw back, my soul shall have not pleasure in Him," we must take seriously the warning about drawing back from the faith.

John says that, "If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." If eternal security is true, the very mention of the danger of not continuing in the Son and in the Father would clearly violate God's holy nature.

Principle of Congruency

The principle of congruency dictates the doctrine of apostasy. Someone rightly observed that if one has the key which unlocks all the doors, he must have the master key or the correct key. It is possible to interpret the scriptures in light of the doctrine of apostasy and not be forced to violate the rules of interpretation.

However, it is impossible to interpret such passages as Hebrews 3:12-14 and other related passages (basically the entire book of Hebrews) without violating the rules of interpretation. It is time that we hold our eternal securitist brethren accountable and require that they play by the same rules they apply to other passages.

It is indeed interesting to read most commentators' introduction to the book of Hebrews. They openly declare that it was written to a group of Hebrew Christians undergoing persecution and contemplating a return to Judaism, and that the book is a warning admonishing them not to do so.

Yet, when they encounter these warnings in the text itself they then, for theological reasons and not for exegetical reasons, deny the warnings. The warnings suddenly become "hypothetical situations" as a means of distinguishing the true believer from the false believer.

I want to categorically state that in no context in the book of Hebrews is the criteria for distinguishing the true from the false believer ever under

consideration. That must be imported into the text for theological reasons.

It is possible to apply the rules of interpretation to the so-called eternal securitist passages and still interpret them in light of the doctrine of apostasy. For example, John 10:27-30 can easily be interpreted in accordance with the doctrine of apostasy, even though eternal securitists repeatedly bend the rules of interpretation in order to maintain their position of eternal security.

Free Will Baptists do believe in the security of the believer; we do *not* believe in the eternal security of the unbeliever. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend A. B. Brown serves as academic dean at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in Wendell, North Carolina.

**Rev. A. B. Brown
has prepared
a 175-page syllabus on
the security issue
titled**

***The Security of the
Believer.***

**Readers may purchase
a copy by sending
\$19.95 (includes
shipping) to**

**A. B. Brown
P. O. Box 1700
Wendell, NC 27591.**

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

International FWB Fellowship Sets 1998 Program

MIAMI, FL—After meeting for three days in Miami, the Executive Committee of the International Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Churches (IFOFWBC) agreed on a program theme for the October 12-16, 1998, General Assembly meeting. The theme will be "The Church, Culture and Customs," according to the secretary/treasurer Melvin Worthington.

IFOFWBC president John Poole (Brazil) and vice president Ramon Sanchez Carril (Cuba) met January 6-8 at the Wycliffe House in Miami, along with Melvin Worthington and observer Jimmy Aldridge (USA).

The committee reviewed the IFOFWBC documents which will be recommended to the 1998 General Assembly meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay. The documents include the IFOFWBC poster, letterhead, logo, envelopes, handbook design and contents, organizational chart, by-laws, newsletter (*The Free Will Baptist International Journal*), membership application, three-month reporting form and annual reporting form.

The committee also finalized the 1998 General Assembly program. The theme will be ad-

dressed by representatives from the USA, Côte d'Ivoire and Brazil. Following the presentation by the speakers, time will be given to discussion of the theme each morning.

The assembly will feature morning and evening worship services daily. Each country will select a speaker for one worship service. The climax of the General Assembly meeting will be the observance of the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Saints' Feet.

Each afternoon delegates will discuss the IFOFWBC documents recommended by the Executive Committee. After discussion, delegates will vote on each recommendation.

IFOFWBC member countries include Brazil, Mexico, India, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Spain, Panama, Cuba, Canada, Uruguay, USA and Japan. Each member country will have one official voting delegate. Each country may have two official observers who can participate in the meetings and discussions, but they have no voting privileges. Each country may have as many unofficial observers as it may desire.

Southeastern Announces Graduation

WENDELL, NC—Southeastern FWB College will conduct commencement exercises Thursday morning, May 8, at First FWB Church in Raleigh.

This year's speaker will be the college president, Rev. Billy M. Bevan, who has served



since August 1989. From August 1989 until August 1996, Bevan served as college president as well as pastor of Hilltop FWB Church. In August 1996, he resigned Hilltop Church after 17 years, and assumed the full-time presidency at the college.

This year's graduating class numbers 21. Of the 21 graduates, eight are preachers, four are missions candidates, seven are education majors and two are business students. Included in this year's graduating class is Bevan's son, Billy, Jr., one of the eight preachers.

Alabama Church Dedicates Family Life Center

RED BAY, AL—Members of First FWB Church in Red Bay completed their new Family Life Center and dedicated the facility on Sunday, November 24, 1996, according to Pastor Tom Scott.

The membership voted unanimously to undertake the \$170,000 project. Construction costs were reduced when several companies donated materials; other ma-

hours of labor. The 120 x 75-foot building houses a three-quarter size gymnasium, large fellowship hall, activities room and Prophet's Chamber.

The mayors of Red Bay and Vina attended dedication services which began at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Pastor Tom Scott preached the dedication message. Ross White presented a



Family Life Center at Red Bay, Alabama.

terials were purchased at large discounts and by donated labor.

Several men and women employed by Belmont Homes in Belmont, Mississippi, donated many

tribute in memory of Mrs. Gina Hardin, and Mrs. Audrey Hardman presented a tribute in memory of Amy Hester. Others participating in the dedication service



Pastor Tom Scott preaches dedication service.

included the deacons, trustees and building committee.

Pastor Tom Scott said, "We realize that this project could not have been accomplished without the blessings of the Lord and support of the community and city of Red Bay. It is built for the glory of the Master. We feel that it will be instrumental in reaching people for the Lord, especially young people."

Instrumental Ensemble to Perform at Convention

ANTIOCH, TN—The all-volunteer instrumental ensemble will perform in July at the 61st annual Free Will Baptist National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, according to instrumental director Chris Truett.

The ensemble will accompany congregational singing each night (except Sunday) in the arena at Cincinnati 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.

Join us
in
Cincinnati
at the
National
Convention
July 20-24

Radio-Television Commission Meets

NASHVILLE, TN—The five-member Free Will Baptist Radio-Television Commission met January 7 in Nashville. The commission elected officers at the meeting, retaining Steve Faison as chairman and James Vallance as secretary-treasurer. The commission also approved the continuing membership in NRB, the National Religious Broadcasters. They also discussed in depth the commission's future ministry.

The commission will produce an audio cassette tape to be sent to missionaries as a means to encourage them. The tape will include music, words of encouragement from various denominational leaders and a devotional thought.

Realizing the ever-changing communication field, the commission voted to propose a name change at the national convention in Cincinnati. The name under consideration is The Media Commission Serving Free Will Baptists.

Chairman Faison said, "This would enable the commission to better meet the needs of our denomination in the growing media."

The radio broadcast *Victorious Faith* is being revisited with changes already in the works. Taking great care to build on the foundation laid, the commission is seeking to make a quality program stronger.

The commission approved \$1,500 as part of a joint project with the Florida State Association of Free Will Baptists to produce a television commercial for the denomination. This will be available for viewing at the national convention in Cincinnati.

With the expansion of the computer age, the commission is examining the capabilities of the internet and how to best lead Free Will Baptists into the 21st century making the best use of resources.

Chairman Faison said, "We are also trying to list ways of being of assistance to our pastors currently using a radio or television ministry. If there are any questions or if you have areas for the commission to consider, please feel free to contact us through the National Offices."

Coming Next Month:

- ♦ Convention Housing Form
- ♦ Convention Pre-Registration Form
- ♦ Missionary Who Came Home

Church Honors Pastor of 40 Years

PETALUMA, CA—Members of Eastside FWB Church in Petaluma surprised Pastor Carl Young with a 40-year celebration of his four decades of leadership on September 29, 1996. Guests from as far away as Tennessee gathered to honor Carl and Mary Young for their faithfulness to the Bay Area congregation.

California executive secretary Nuel Brown preached the morning message. Former state moderator Paul Kennedy spoke of the work and accomplishments by Pastor Young and the congregation. Numerous letters as well as a cash gift were given to the honorees.

Reverend Young came to Petaluma from Pinole in 1956 to lead the small congregation that was meeting in the American Legion Building. After relocating his family to Petaluma in 1957, Young led the church to purchase the Old Payran School property, on Ely Boulevard. The remodeled school house served as both a sanctuary and class rooms.

By 1967, the congregation completed a large new sanctuary with a full basement. The property now contains the sanctuary, educational building and a parsonage.

Members assembled a pictorial history of the church's 40-year progress and displayed the collection on tables for guests to view.

Pastor Young said, "The 40 years spent here has been a glorious ministry. Every few weeks we see someone new that we don't recognize. It just so happens (that) they went to church here as a child, but they always visit when they are in Petaluma."



Carl and Mary Young

Inmates Build New Church

MOUNTAIN CITY, TN—Dedication services for the new sanctuary at First FWB Church in Mountain City included a new twist. The \$850,000 sanctuary which seats 600 was built 95 percent by inmates from Northeast Correctional Center.

Pastor Frank Woods leads the Mountain City congregation, the largest in Johnson County. Faced with crowded conditions in their old facilities, the church voted in the spring of 1995 to build. The 450-member congregation needed more room than they could afford to build.

Pastor Woods approached Warden Howard Carlton of Northeast Correctional Center, a medium-security prison, and asked for help. Inmates perform 50,000 hours annually of community service and had assisted with other local construction projects.

Warden Carlton arranged for a 12-man work crew to tackle what he called their largest job—the 17,000-square-foot sanctuary containing 80-foot trusses, the largest unsupported trusses ever built by a Johnson City manufacturer. Fourteen months later the church had invested \$350,000 in the building while the inmate crew had saved the congregation about \$500,000 in labor costs.

Pastor Woods said that virtually all the construction, including masonry, electrical, heating and air conditioning, framing and drywall, finish carpentry and painting was completed by the 12-man inmate crew.

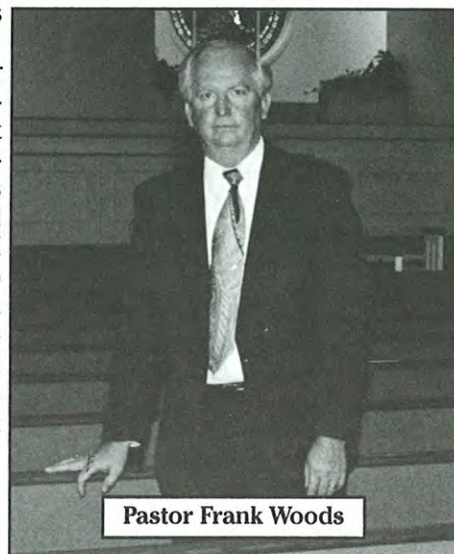
During the project, a close relationship developed between church members and inmates. Members served the workers a meal each day.

"Being with these guys for 14 months, in many ways it felt like they were part of our congregation," Pastor Woods said. Warden Carlton said that the hospitality made the inmates work harder.

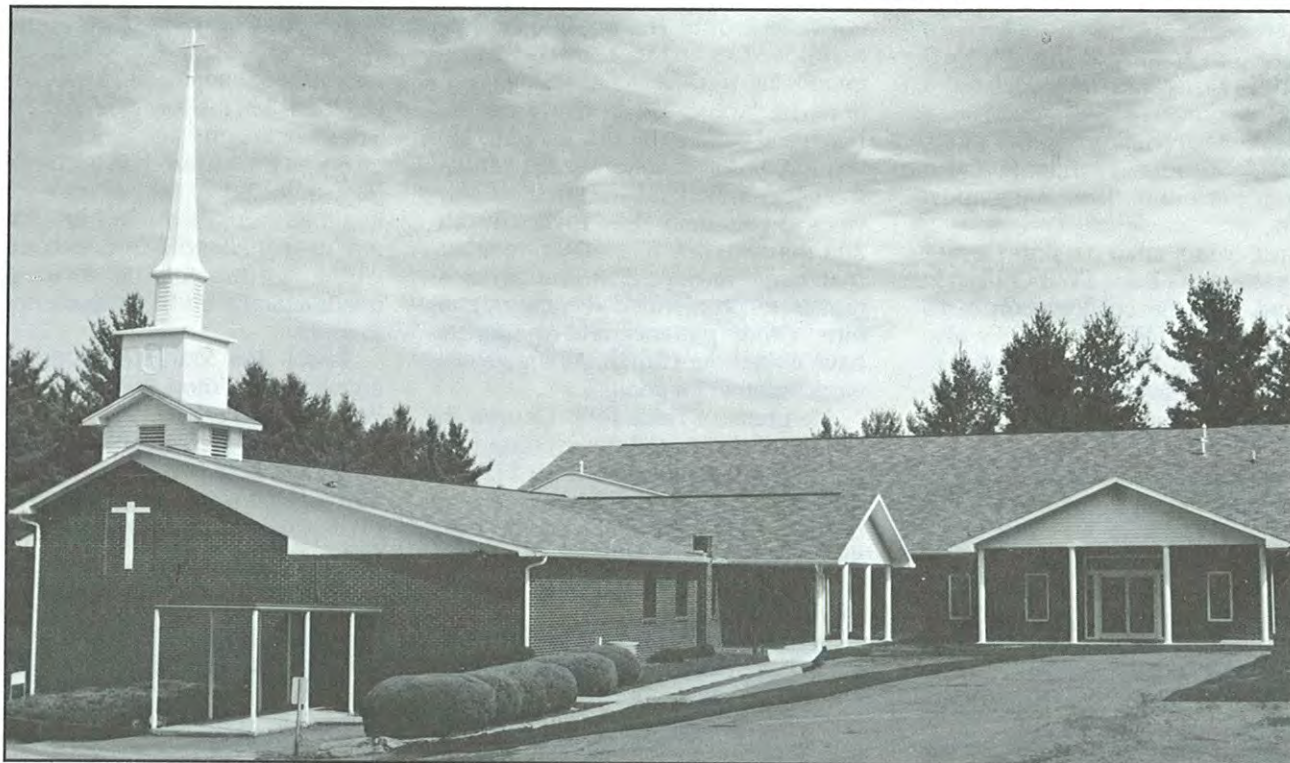
State and local officials joined with the congregation in dedication services on October 6, 1996. Dignitaries included the 12 inmates who did the work, State Corrections Commissioner Donal Campbell, Warden Howard Carlton, Mountain City Mayor Todd Grayson, State Representative Ralph Cole and others.

Pastor Frank Woods has led the congregation 20 years. The church began in 1958 in a home. In 1972, the original frame building was enlarged; an additional wing was built in 1987.

Mayor Todd Grayson said at the dedication, "This is a wonderful occasion. I am happy to make my own announcement. We will be paving the street in front of the church."



Pastor Frank Woods



The **Georgia Union District Association** conducted its first joint Missions Conference with 15 of 17 member churches participating in the five-night event. Coordinator **Charles Barnard** said that attendance averaged 215 nightly with a combined offering exceeding \$8,860 for five missionaries.

Thirty years. That's how long Pastor **L. S. Anthony** has served **Wilson Chapel FWB Church** in **Thomaston, GA**. The grateful congregation sponsored a special lunch in his honor.

A recent revival at **First FWB Church** in **Bakersfield, CA**, resulted in 19 salvation decisions, according to Pastor **Claudie Hames**.

Pastor **Jerry Slep** reports 12 new members, five conversions, five baptisms and two rededications at **Manassas FWB Church** in **Manassas, VA**. The group also raised funds to replace their roof, add a baptistry and purchase two lawn mowers.

After she taught Sunday School for 47 years, members at **Trinity FWB Church** in **Bridgeton, MO**, declared a **Melba Burch Day**. She received a plaque in appreciation for her labor, the thanks of former students and a lunch in her honor. **Lynn Davenport** pastors.

Three years after pastor **Homer Young** started **El Reno FWB Church** in **El Reno, OK**, the congregation of 65 has a prospect file of 200. They also have a 50x120 building, a concrete parking lot and five areas on which to grow. Pastor Young recently baptized four converts.

Something unusual happened during annual Children's Home Day activities at the **FWB Home for Children** in **Turbeville, SC**. **Laverne Bazen** surprised the home with a check for \$25,000 and the keys to two 1997, 15-passenger Ford vans. Taxes and tags for both vehicles had been paid for one year. Yes, indeed, Superintendent **James Willhide** is a happy man.

Mt. Ariel FWB Church turned 100

years old in 1996. The **Conway, SC**, congregation began in 1896 with a membership of 30 in a one-room school house. They called **James T. Todd** as their first pastor.

Members of **Jesus First FWB Church** in **Hamlet, NC**, dedicated their newly-purchased 9,000-square-foot facility, according to Pastor **Jerry Smith**. The \$200,000 purchase price included 1.8 acres, a 300-seat sanctuary, paved parking lot, fellowship hall, Sunday School rooms and a wheel chair ramp.

Most of our readers didn't know him, but when **Bob Denton** died five months ago he took some Free Will Baptist history with him. Bob (70) had been a deacon 44 years in **California**. He was a charter member of **Countryside FWB Church** in **Visalia**, and helped build three FWB churches in the San Joaquin Valley. The U.S. Navy veteran served 24 years as property manager at a local television station.

While former Home Missions Department director **Roy Thomas** was recuperating from a horse riding accident, he "witnessed to every doctor, nurse and patient" he saw in the **Greeley, CO**, hospital. Some weeks later, a man Roy witnessed to attended services at **Highland Hills FWB Church** and got saved. A week later, another man came forward after one of Roy's nurses recommended the church to him. Other patients and therapists have visited the church. All things still work together for good. . . .

Members of **Faith FWB Church** in **Glenpool, OK**, voted to purchase two houses and 1.7 acres, to raise \$75,000 and add 75 new parking spaces, to build a 3,000-square-foot addition on their gymnasium, and to purchase an additional five acres east of the church. **David Archer** pastors.

Members of **Beulah FWB Church** in **Pamplico, SC**, raised funds to purchase 1,000 Bibles for Russia. Earlier, two church members (**Grace Eaddy** and **Shannon Bazen**) traveled to Rus-

sia to help deliver 49,000 Bibles. **James Pierce** pastors.

Sometimes, it works that way. Pastor **David Burgess** preached a revival for his own people at **N. Memphis FWB Church** in **Memphis, TN**. The results were 40 people at the altar, six new members and two baptisms. Members said it was the best attended revival they ever had.

Pastor **David Potete** drove 50 miles to find a baptistry in which to baptize a new convert, **Pam Owen**. It was worth the effort, because Pam has already brought several people to church with her. Brother Potete, who pastors **Northwest FWB Church** in **Chicago, IL**, said, "We long for the day when we will have our own building . . . complete with baptistry." He reports 12 new prospects resulting from two outreach seminars.

Pastor **Ron Parker** reports 13 first-time visitors and two converts at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Shreveport, LA**. The church started a youth church with 15 in attendance and purchased a van for use in the day care and Sunday School outreach.

Berea FWB Church in **Battle Creek, MI**, conducted its first services with 45 in attendance. Pastor **Robert Trimble** reports that attendance then averaged 26 the first month. The congregation needs a pianist and a permanent place to meet.

Pastor **Joe Van Meter** reports 12 converts at **Union FWB Church** in **Wheelersburg, OH**.

Pastor **Homer Brooks** reports six new members, five conversions and two baptisms at **South Charleston FWB Church** in **South Charleston, OH**.

Pastor **David Schug** baptized four and reported 11 converts at **Woodland Chapel FWB Church** in **Ironton, OH**.

Pastor **Buddy Manson** reports six converts at **Greater Columbus FWB Church** in **Columbus, OH**. ■



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BEYOND BELIEF



FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Three New Deacons

By Dr. Robert Picirilli, Academic Dean

We just ordained three new deacons at our church.

No big deal, I guess.

On the other hand, as the ceremony progressed, I got to thinking, and the whole thing took on a special meaning. I don't think it was because one of the men is my son-in-law—although that alone made it important to my family.

But there was something else about it, something that the three men have in common, that says something important for our whole denomination, I believe, and for the college it sponsors.

The FWBBC Connection

The fact is, all three are preachers' sons, but it goes deeper than that. All three are also Free Will Baptist Bible College alumni. Deeper still, it turns out that FWBBC has had quite an influence on all three families.

Two of the three new deacons are children of FWBBC alumni, both parents in one case. Two of them—not the same two—are married to FWBBC alumni. Those two wives have had brothers or sisters who attended FWBBC. All three men have had siblings enrolled. The oldest child of the three is now a freshman at FWBBC.

I don't think I'm prejudiced when I say that these are three fine men. I believe they meet the Biblical qualifications for deacons. All of them are faithful and active, as are their families. Each of them teaches in church and plays a leadership role.

I can't help believing that FWBBC made some contributions to these families and to the prepara-

tion of these men for service to their church. As I said, I think there's something important here, something that congratulates Free Will Baptists for sponsoring such a college, something that promises a better return on our investment than the most generous bank can offer, something that speaks highly of FWBBC and its effectiveness.

The Value of Our Laity

Sometimes we are tempted to evaluate the outcome only in terms of the pastors and missionaries we help prepare. And that certainly remains an important measure of success. But it isn't the only one, and when we ordained those three deacons I thought of the hundreds of laity across our churches (and some non-Free Will Baptist ones, too!) whose leadership capacities have been positively affected and developed by the influence of FWBBC, directly or indirectly. And I realized that here, too, is what FWBBC is all about.

Sure, I know it's a little unusual to be setting aside three at one time, in one church, who have such a background. Perhaps it can happen like this only at one of the Nashville churches. And I know that not all the fine lay leaders in our churches are FWBBC alumni, or need to be. But even if the numbers are different, after you've finished counting all the pastors, missionaries, and other alumni in "full-time Christian service," there's still a lot of men and women out there who contribute much more to our churches than they might have, had it not been for FWBBC.

That helps me—and I hope it helps you—know that the work and cost are worthwhile. ■

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FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Reaching the World the Together Way

By William Evans

Shopping for groceries and giving at church have a lot in common. Consider the following rules for the budget-conscious shopper.

Never go shopping when you are hungry. Do not take your kids or husband when shopping. Always have a list. Use coupons when possible. Plan menus ahead. Avoid impulse buying. Compare these to your church and denominational giving.

What does hunger have to do with your giving? Have you ever made a gift under some emotional influence such as guilt or pride? We must guard our hearts, but joyful giving is never the product of guilt or pride. Being motivated by the wrong reasons may develop a root of bitterness which we must avoid.

Giving should be a family decision. If you don't already do so, consider engaging your family in a discussion of your present and future giving opportunities.

Always shop from a list. My wife was preparing a meal for company and realized she was missing one ingredient for the dish. The sad thing was she had just returned from the store.

The advantage of having a list is that it speeds up shopping, gets items you need and avoids those you don't. A list is the product of a settled menu selection. This promises a balanced diet and a manageable budget. At church, a giving list puts focus and direction to our gifts. This assures us our gifts can be proportional, as in tithing, and appropriate in distribution, which will meet the need.

Many shoppers have discovered a great value in using coupons. Some stores will double the value of a coupon. While I don't know of any churches or denominational agencies offering coupons, several companies match gifts made by their employees to certain other charitable agencies such as Christian colleges. Some double the amount of the employee gift. You should not buy any product just because you have a coupon, but if you can use the product and save money, do it. The same is true for any matching program.

Look for good value and buy in bulk when possible. Consider this application: Weigh carefully the ministry of the church or denominational agency as to role, effectiveness and results. In the area of role look for such things

as the geographic area served, how effectively that service is being provided, is there duplication of effort, etc. Effectiveness should consider the differences like culture, results experienced, and the purpose for existence.

Results for churches is not just the number of decisions recorded, but there certainly should be some. It involves conversion, edification, encouragement, education, discipling and sending. Come to think of it, they also apply to some extent in denominational agencies.

Finally, consider the culprit called impulse buying. Notice the racks of notions displayed for review just before you reach the check out counter. They are not there by accident. While waiting, and you generally do, your eyes will wonder over the selections frequently finding something to add to your purchases.

At church, impulse giving can certainly be motivated by the spirit of the Lord. When the Spirit moves you, He will do so in the context of God's whole work. Well thought out support of the Lord's work would not require nearly so much promotional work. We need to know our work and workers, but consider the vast amount of time and money spent raising support. If each Free Will Baptist family gave about \$250 a year, all the gifts budgets of all our national agencies would be met.

Yes, there is a place for the impulse gift, but it should be the exception rather than the rule. Planned gifts will meet the goals God establishes for each individually and all corporately.

Together Way giving, which includes designated and cooperative undesignated giving, enables each Free Will Baptist to reach out to the world with balance and equality.

The next time you buy groceries, consider your method. Is it the same one you are using to support your church and denomination? You may need to consider changing one or both.

The Together Way gives us a balanced giving program providing for each ministry area our denomination has adopted. It also assures that our gifts will be given to support programs that have been planned, reviewed and approved by the national body. ■



HOME MISSIONS

A Bold Adventure for Cross-Cultural Ministry

By Trymon Messer

On December 30, 1996, a meeting of historic proportions took place on the new campus of the Seminary of the Cross in Reynosa, Mexico. Hillsdale FWB College representatives Tim Eaton (vice president of academic affairs) and Thomas Marberry (director of external studies) met with representatives from the Home Missions Department, Trymon Messer (director) and David Crowe (director of missionary assistance) along with James Munsey (coordinator for Mexico) and the faculty of the Seminary of the Cross, to formulate a summer course of study for cross-cultural ministry.

The pilot session will meet May 19-25, and will involve (1) cross-cultural study and communication, (2) appreciation of Mexican culture, (3) Spanish language study, and (4) a special emphasis on worship and our common faith. Participants will also visit local areas of special interest and attend worship services in the Mexican Free Will Baptist churches.

As I sat at the table with educators from Hillsdale College and the faculty of the Seminary, formulating a basis for our cross-cultural ministry, my mind went back to June 1995 when we visited the old Seminary campus in Tampico. At that time we were trying to decide what to do about the future of the school. It seemed that God impressed on my heart that we should move the school closer to the American border and tailor it to help reach the millions of Hispanics everywhere, including the 25 million now living in the United States.

Since we already had a Cuban Free Will Baptist couple at the school, this course of action seemed natural and logical. Relocating the school has made it possible for hundreds of American Free Will Baptists to visit our new campus. Over 500 visited in 1996 alone! I am honored and humbled to be a part of this great event.

The May 1997 pilot program will be taught by faculties of Hillsdale College and the Seminary of the Cross. Classes will meet each day until noon. Each afternoon participants will take field trips to places of interest in the Reynosa area. Two afternoons will be dedicated to a work project on campus.

Brother James Munsey commented that this program has the potential to be one of the best

projects to develop in many years. He further stated that for the first time in our history, one of our Free Will Baptist colleges is offering cross-cultural training in a foreign country at a sister school.

This is a unique opportunity to study Hispanic culture from within the culture itself. Seeing the Mexicans work and worship in their own country will impact all those attending, whether this be their first visit to Mexico or one of many. This course will help us to have a better understanding of the Hispanics who now populate almost every city and county in the United States.

The meeting in Reynosa resulted in the formation of a joint committee to plan and implement the pilot program. Rev. Tim Eaton and Dr. Thomas Marberry represented Hillsdale College; Ramon Zuniga and Rosie Sanchez represented the Seminary of the Cross; Rev. David Crowe and Rev. James Munsey represented the Home Missions Department.

Brother Crowe stated that he was inspired by the dedication and commitment of the Seminary of the Cross staff. He was impressed by the vision and cooperative spirit of Home Missions and Hillsdale College, and he was encouraged by the potential that this project has for the future of the cross-cultural ministry. David said, "I am thrilled just to be part of the team that will plow, promote, publicize, prepare for and present this cross-cultural institute."

The 1997 Cross-Cultural Institute will be limited to the first 35 people who register. The cost for the seven-day school, including room and board, is \$250. Travel to and from McAllen, Texas, will be the responsibility of each participant. College students are welcome, even though the initial program will be geared for adults. This will be an excellent opportunity for churches already involved or considering a local ministry to Hispanics, to send one or more of their leaders to see what great potential this area of ministry has for Free Will Baptists.

For further information, contact Dr. Thomas Marberry at Hillsdale College or the Home Missions Department. ■

Simon Peter—The Rock



Robert E. Picirilli

The Synoptic gospels (Mt. 4:18 ff, Mk. 1:16 ff, Lk. 5:9-11) make clear that the "official" call came first to the brothers Andrew and Peter (following the incident in Jn. 1:40-42), and to their fishing partners James and John just afterward on the same day. From then on, Peter seems to have first place; whenever the list is given (Mt. 10:2-4; Mk. 3:16-19; Lk. 6:14-16; Acts 1:13) or the inner circle is singled out, his name always leads the way.

At birth his Jewish parents gave him the Hebrew name Simeon (as in Acts 15:14 and in some versions of II Peter 1:1), the ancient and revered name of one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Simon is the informal, more familiar form.

As He always does, in one way or another, Jesus gave him a new name, one to fit his personality and the role he would have in the church—"Rock." In the Aramaic language spoken by the Jews of the time, "rock" is Kephass—Cephas (Jn. 1:42), as Paul often called him (I Cor. 1:12; 3:22, etc.). The Greek equivalent is Petros—in English Peter, as we've come to know him best.

Though the incident in Caesarea Philippi (Mt. 16:13 ff) was not the occasion when Simon got his new name (Jn. 1:42), it must explain why Jesus gave it to him. "Whom do men say me to be?" Jesus asks them, "and what do you think?"

As often, Peter does not hesitate to speak up; as not so often, he says exactly the right thing: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!"

"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah [son of John/Jonah]," Jesus responds, "My Father in heaven revealed this to you." And then He adds, "You are Peter ['Rock'] and on this rock I will build My church."

In English we miss the subtle dif-

ference between, and the play on, the words: "You are petros, and on this petra I will build." A petros (masculine) is a specific rock, like a large stone; petra (feminine) is more like rock in general and could easily be used of an outcropping of rock, a rock foundation, bedrock, ground where rock lay just beneath the surface. Someone has suggested we might render, "You are a rock, and on this bedrock I will build my church."

What bedrock? "This" one, the one that Peter has just stated, the bedrock truth of who Jesus is, which carries over immediately to represent Jesus Himself.

This is more than a way around a problem for us Protestants, it is a way of dealing with the difference in words, a way of recognizing how easy it would have been for Jesus to say, "You are Peter, and on you I will build my church"—had that been His meaning. And it is a way of recognizing the confusion that results if we do not set apart the truth that Christ alone is the foundation on which we build (I Cor. 3:11; cf. I Pet. 2:4 ff).

By the way, don't forget that just a few verses later (Mt. 16:23) Jesus rebuked Peter as an instrument of Satan! The Bible doesn't let us ignore our heroes' feet of clay.

Of all the original twelve, we probably know Peter best. The main incidents come easily to our minds: the healing of his mother-in-law and first miraculous fishing-catch (from his own boat!), linked closely to his call (Mk. 1:29 ff; Lk. 4-5); his presence, and foolish words, at the transfiguration (note Mk. 9:6); the temple tax incident (Mt. 17:24 ff); his boldness to walk on the water, only to sink in terror a few minutes later (Mt. 14:29 ff); his quick protest and equally ready submission at the first footwashing (Jn. 13). If we see anything at all in him, we see the contradictions, the

mixed emotions, his capacity to run cold one minute and hot the next.

But we see this best of all in the incidents related to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. He avows his readiness to die with Jesus (Lk. 22:33), and I have no doubt he means every word of it; witness his use of the sword a short while later. But before the night is done he will with equal vehemence deny Him—the only thing about Peter told in all four gospels!

He is glad to be on watch in the garden, but his determination gives way to sleep (note Mk. 14:37). He would follow Jesus to judgment, like his friend John, but his boldness fails and he stops short in the courtyard outside to warm himself and cover up the cold fear inside.

He rushes ahead of John into the tomb after Mary's confusing message, only to leave in disappointment, not yet understanding the miracle (Jn. 20). He will go to Galilee to meet again the risen Lord, and wind up spending the night in futile fishing (Jn. 21). And even when the Lord appears, and personally ministers to him, he almost misses the point in wondering about John!

Don't overlook the impact of that breakfast with the seven by the sea. Three times Jesus asked, and was assured of Peter's personal love—and the Greek words aren't different enough for us to criticize Peter's response as weak.

Three times Jesus gave him responsibility: "Feed, shepherd my flock, the fickle lambs included. This was nothing less than Peter's restoration and commission, and fickleness he understood very well. That, followed by Pentecost, turned Peter into a stalwart among the apostles, as the story in Acts confirms.

Only see that even Spirit fullness doesn't altogether eradicate the tendencies of our personalities. At least

Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave

By Dave Breese

Chicago: Moody Press, 1990, 235 pp., hardback, \$11.99.

Dave Breese is president of Christian Destiny Ministries in Hillsboro, Kansas. He maintains an active ministry as an evangelist, author, lecturer and university speaker. He has written several books and is a staunch defender of traditional Christianity.

The basic premise behind this book is that ideas are important. That is why it focuses on the writings of leading thinkers rather than on the exploits of great military leaders or the pronouncements of statesmen and politicians.

Great writers and thinkers will influence more people for a much longer time than military leaders or politicians.

Breese's book focuses on the writings of seven men whose ideas have done much to shape our modern society. They are: John Dewey, Soren Kierkegaard, Julius Welhausen, Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, John Maynard Keynes and Karl Marx.

These seven men explored many different ideas, and they differ widely from each other. They all, however, have one important thing in common; their approach to the world of ideas is a secular one. None finds room in his system of thought for traditional Christian teachings and concepts.

Charles Darwin developed the basics of an evolutionary approach to biology. His views have been refined and

expanded by later generations of scientists, and are now almost universally accepted in the scientific community.

Karl Marx developed dialectical materialism which defined all reality in terms of atheism and material possessions.

Julius Welhausen was a German Old Testament scholar who radically changed prevailing ideas about the Bible. He argued that the Bible was not the inspired Word of God; it was a collection of important human documents. Divine revelation was not the final arbiter of truth; human reason was.

Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist, revolutionized the study of the human mind by his development of psychoanalysis. He concentrated on sexual factors in neuroses. He saw religion as "mental infantilism" and "mass delusion."

John Dewey was the most influential thinker in the field of education that this country has produced. He opposed absolutes in any form. In his view, the purpose of education was not to transmit basic information, vital skills and societal values from one generation to another. The goal of education was to produce social change.

John Maynard Keynes was a brilliant economist. His primary contribution was to argue for a larger government role in managing and controlling

economic policies and development.

Soren Kierkegaard was the founder of existentialism, a school of philosophy which has become very influential and which is almost impossible to define with any degree of precision. It focuses on experience rather than on God's revelation as the primary source of truth. Today, existentialism influences both theology and secular philosophy. One form of existentialism is neo-orthodoxy which teaches that the Bible is not the Word of God; it only contains the Word of God.

This work by Breese is a book which deserves to be read by all Christians who want to understand the world in which they live. There is no doubt that the ideas these seven men developed still have widespread influence. They are taught in schools and colleges and presented in broadcast and print media every day. Many Christians may not realize how important these ideas are. They are so widespread that many accept them without thinking.

I have only one criticism of this work. At times it is too simplistic; the author tends to blame all of society's current problems on these seven men. Our society today faces a multitude of problems which have developed over a number of years. All of us must accept our share of the blame. ■



Thomas Marberry

Green Tree (continued from page 27)

once more Peter got caught between the extremes, and Paul had to rebuke him publicly (Gal. 2:11ff). By the way, we have no reason to think anything other than that he accepted it like the new man he was.

Once more, then: we don't have to be perfect to serve God effectively. All we have to do is yield to Him whatever we are. Peter was inconsistent, im-

petuous, outspoken, rash—with many natural leadership abilities. But only the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God could tame him and make him into the rock-stable leader he became.

They say ("they" being the not always dependable sources of church tradition) that when it came Peter's turn to die at Rome under Nero's persecution, by crucifixion, he presented himself as unworthy to die like his

Lord and asked to be crucified head down, a request that was granted.

While that's believable, it hardly matters. What does matter is that the One who gave him a new name made him fit it. And his faithfulness in preaching the gospel was matched by an unwavering faithfulness in death. His own inspired epistles (see II Pet. 1:12-15) leave us in no doubt. ■

YOUTH UPDATE

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BE INVOLVED IN WORLD MISSIONS

The Each One Reach One Program is working to help rebuild the hurricane-destroyed church in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Rev. Miguel Vera, and his wife, Adelaida, both natives of Puerto Rico, were converted while living in the United States while Miguel was serving in the military. They began working in Free Will Baptist churches in Virginia and North Carolina, gaining experience in personal soul winning and various ministries. They also attended *Rio Grande Bible Institute* in Edinburg, Texas, and have since been actively working to plant a Free Will Baptist Church in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States. It lies approximately 1100 miles south of Miami, Florida, and about 75 miles from St. Croix, Virgin Islands. The population is approaching the 4 million mark. There is much industry, beauty and adventure in this area, attracting a countless number of people who need the Lord.

Since their church was damaged during hurricane Hugo, they are currently meeting in an open metal carport, with no doors or windows.

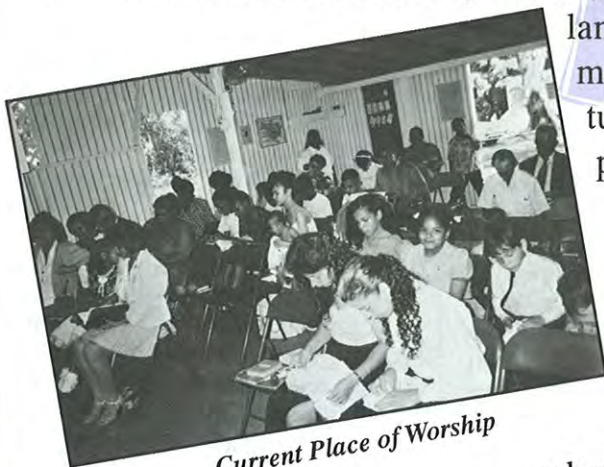
Quite a difference from your church. They need our help to raise money to

rebuild a new

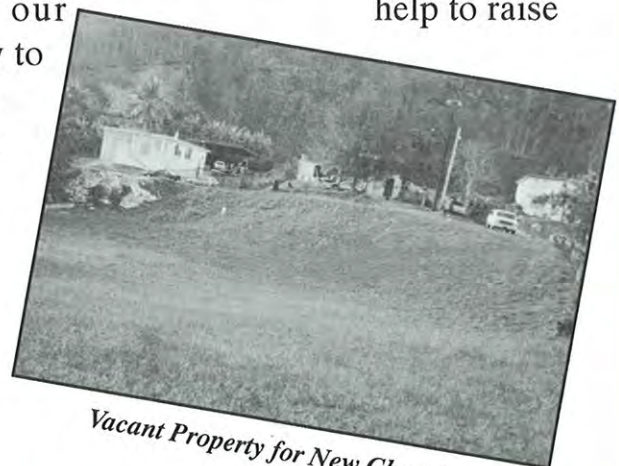
church on the property shown below.

Your youth group or Sunday School class can help in this exciting project by raising funds for the Puerto Rican church fund.

For more information, call the Youth Ministries Division at 1-800-877-7030.



Current Place of Worship



Vacant Property for New Church

Eight Men to Do the Work



Dennis Wiggs

Someone said that a good leader will not do the work of eight men, but get eight men to do the work. That is the challenge for the young preacher.

My brother-in-law, the late John S. Craft, was a missionary to Brazil. After serving one term, John told me how he thought mission boards ought to select missionaries.

He suggested that the prospective missionary be placed in a room with several small children and a box of building blocks. The mission board should observe behind a one-way mirror. If the candidate sat down with the children, taught them how to erect something with the blocks, and allowed them to create the building, approve him to be a missionary.

If the candidate made something out of the blocks in the presence of the children, suggest that he apply himself to another line of service. Maybe this might be a good standard of approval for ordination councils.

Organize

The young pastor is often called to a small congregation. A medical doctor told me once, "Dennis, if you let them, the congregation will permit you to do everything." That advice was much better than the medication he gave me for a suspected ulcer.

Yes, I know it may seem better to

do it yourself. The job will get done and done your way. However, you will find that you can't do everything. The sooner you learn how to organize the congregation, the smoother running the program will operate.

For example, decide what jobs need to be accomplished at the church. Select (or secure through a nominating committee and a church vote) leaders for those positions.

Pray

Jesus prayed all night before He selected the apostles (Luke 6:12). Before you approach anyone for a leadership position, seek the Lord's guidance. Write down the names of the prospective leaders and their responsibilities. Talk to the Lord about those church members.

Seek Counsel

As a young preacher in a new congregation, be sure to talk with an older church member about your leadership selections. In my first pastorate, I put up the names of men I wanted to stand at the front door and welcome visitors to our revival services. That was a mistake. Some of the men on the list had long-standing grievances against one another. Before the meeting began, I was in hot water. Showing the list to a deacon or two would have eliminated or improved that idea.

Follow Up

After leadership positions are given to selected men or women, meet with the leaders individually and discuss their roles. Make the meeting short, maybe after a church service. Let them make suggestions before you dictatorially demand that the positions fulfill certain responsibilities. Pray with the leaders. Then, occasionally meet with them for suggested improvements.

Trust Them

Trusting leaders to minister effectively will demand patience on your part. Pray for the leaders by name. Tell them you are praying for them. Make suggestions kindly. Train the leaders through personal contact, placing a booklet in their hands about their position. Invite them to visit another church to evaluate how that church carries on that particular ministry.

Too many young preachers have acted as a know-it-all, offended church members and destroyed the possibilities of a well-organized church.

Young preacher, you want to leave the church in better shape than when you arrived on the scene. Everything you organize should be for the benefit of the next pastor. Oh, you plan to stay there 30 years! That is an even better reason for organizing the ministry to operate efficiently. ■

Stand Up and Shine

Sh-h-h-h. Don't tell the grumps among us, but I enjoy being a Free Will Baptist. Oh, I know this isn't a politically correct emotion in a day when denominations are supposed to be dying and members jumping ship in record numbers. But the fact is, we're growing, not dying. It's great to be a Free Willer in 1997.

The Nervous Nellies may take counsel of their fears and retreat to the 50s when we were better, to the 40s when we were building, to the 30s when we were organizing or to the 1900s when we were merging. Not me, thank you. This is the best possible time to be a Free Will Baptist.

We finally built enough churches to make a difference, raised enough finances to pay the bills and trained enough workers to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. We matured our own writers to the point that literature now flies off the shelves.

We hammered out a theologically pure doctrine. We grew an academically sound educational program. We logged onto the computer world with a message that matters. It's wonderful to be a Free Will Baptist in 1997.

Thank God. And thank our forefathers. Now's the time to stand tall on the shoulders of those dreamers and builders. They gave us the vehicle we need to reach the next level. We can be the doers. We have the resources. We have the window of opportunity.

Do we face tomorrow with a whimper and a doubt? Not on your life. This day is why God put us here. All we ever asked for was a chance, and now we've got that. Free Will Baptists bring something unique to the marketplace—a voice of authori-

ty in the public forum, a warm heart in the arena of cold philosophy.

Hear that joyful noise in the background? That great cloud of witnesses is our forefathers who came up from bondage and poverty, and who by God's grace did the impossible in just 60 short years. Their tears washed across America, and every place they put their feet a Free Will Baptist church grew.

While the nations were on fire during World War II, our forefathers lifted a rifle in one hand to defend freedom and a Bible in the other to proclaim liberty. They fought the good fight and preached the Good Book. They came home from the Great War and created a miracle in America—they built 1,500 new churches.

They broke up the fallow ground of a rural denomination. They planted and prayed, worked and trained, wrote and evangelized right through the turbulent 60s. The rains came and the crops burst from the soil during the 70s, the 80s and the early 90s.

That roar you hear is the day of harvest breaking across the denomination. Those who came before us can do no more, can give no more. They gave it all, they said it all.

To us goes the honor of unleashing the reaping power of 2,500 churches into the harvest. To us belongs the responsibility of gearing up the printing presses, the college classrooms, the Sunday Schools, the pulpits and the family altars to change our homes, our communities, our nation, our world.

Everything is in place for us. God in His providence brought the nations of the world to our doorsteps. He put advanced technology at our fingertips. He gave us a season to



Jack Williams

train workers for the task. He set among us wise men, skilled men, holy men, determined men. He allowed us to prosper and lay aside financial resources for this hour.

Only one question remains unanswered: Will we fling ourselves with abandon into the harvest? Will we commit our resources to win the lost and disciple the converts? Will we rush into the gathering darkness with the light of God?

What's that I hear? I hear the tramp of marching feet in North Carolina, in Oklahoma, in Michigan, in California. I hear the shout of a junior boy in Illinois, "Here am I, send me." I hear the prayer of a young pastor in Missouri, "Send me, Lord, send me."

Are you listening? I hear the promise of a woman in Kentucky, "I'll go, Lord, I'll go." I hear the solemn declaration of coal miners in West Virginia, "Here, Sir, we'll go. Send us."

I do believe it has begun. The day we all prayed for, the day when the spiritual descendants of Paul Palmer and Benjamin Randall rise up as men and women of God to push back the darkness in Jesus' name.

It's time. As did Gideon's men, let us climb high on the mountain and break our pitchers against the darkness. Come on, Brothers, hold nothing back. Break yourselves at Jesus' feet and shine till the Son of Morning rises to set no more.

What a great day to be a Christian! What a great day to be a Free Will Baptist! ■

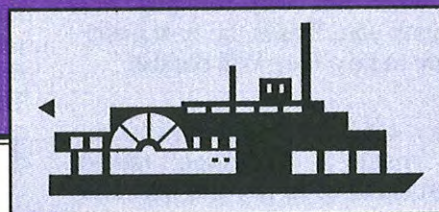
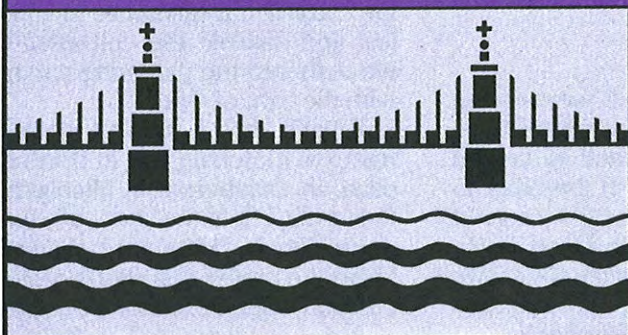
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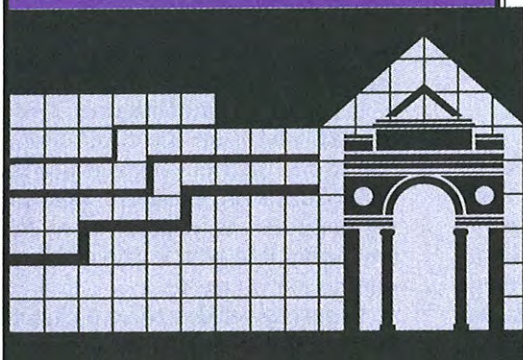
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Church Aflame