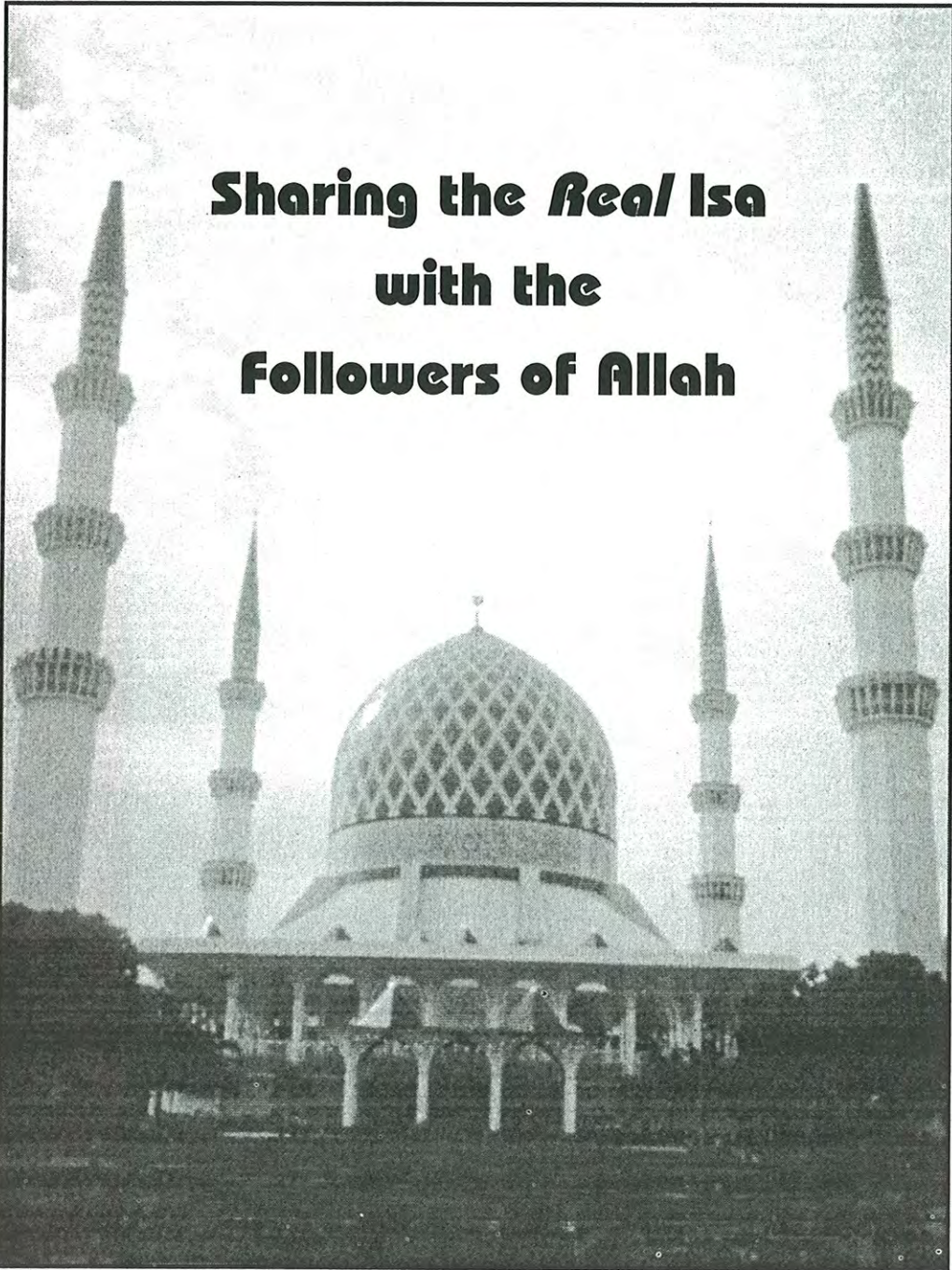


JULY 1997

CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS



**Sharing the *Real* Isa
with the
Followers of Allah**

.....
**Muslim
Neighbors**

.....
**The *Real* Chicago
Hope**

.....
Three Little Pigs

.....
**The American
Dream**

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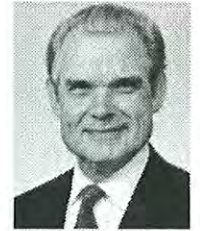
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Melvin Worthington

Awaiting the Advent

During His final discourse to His disciples in John 13-16, Jesus encouraged them by reminding them of His second coming. After Christ's ascension in Acts 1, angels declared, "... Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven," (Acts 1:11).

Paul says that observing the Lord's Supper reminds us of our redemption in Christ along with His return, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come," (I Corinthians 11:26).

John describes this hope as a *cleansing hope*, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure," (I John 3:3).

Paul denotes it as a *comforting hope*, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words," (I Thessalonians 4:18).

Waiting Perceptively

Waiting perceptively means that we *read* the times. Paul asserts this principle when he says, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed," (Romans 13:11).

Paul assures believers at Thessalonica that the coming of Christ would not catch them off guard, "But of the times and seasons brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief," (I Thessalonians 5:1, 2, 4).

Waiting perceptively means that we *redeem* the time. Paul told the Ephesian church, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil,"

(Ephesians 5:16). He admonished believers at Colosse to, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time," (Colossians 4:5).

Waiting Patiently

James admonishes us, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," (James 5:7-8).

Peter reminds us that scoffers will try to persuade us that Christ will not come the second time. He further declares, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," (II Peter 3:9-10).

Waiting Prayerfully

Matthew admonishes, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," (Matthew 26:41). Watching,

waiting and working are three responsibilities which Christians have in light of Christ's second coming.

The writer of Hebrews states, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation," (Hebrews 9:28).

Waiting Productively

Jesus told His disciples to "occupy till I come." Christians have a specific purpose for being in this world. They are not of the world but they do minister to the world. Paul tells Titus that Christ has redeemed and purified his peculiar people who are to be zealous of good works and to maintain good works.

Paul says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord," (I Corinthians 15:58).

He further reminds us of this principle, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," (Ephesians 2:10).

Paul sums it up, "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire," (I Corinthians 3:13-15).

Christ's job is to return. Our job is to wait perceptively, patiently, prayerfully and productively. ■

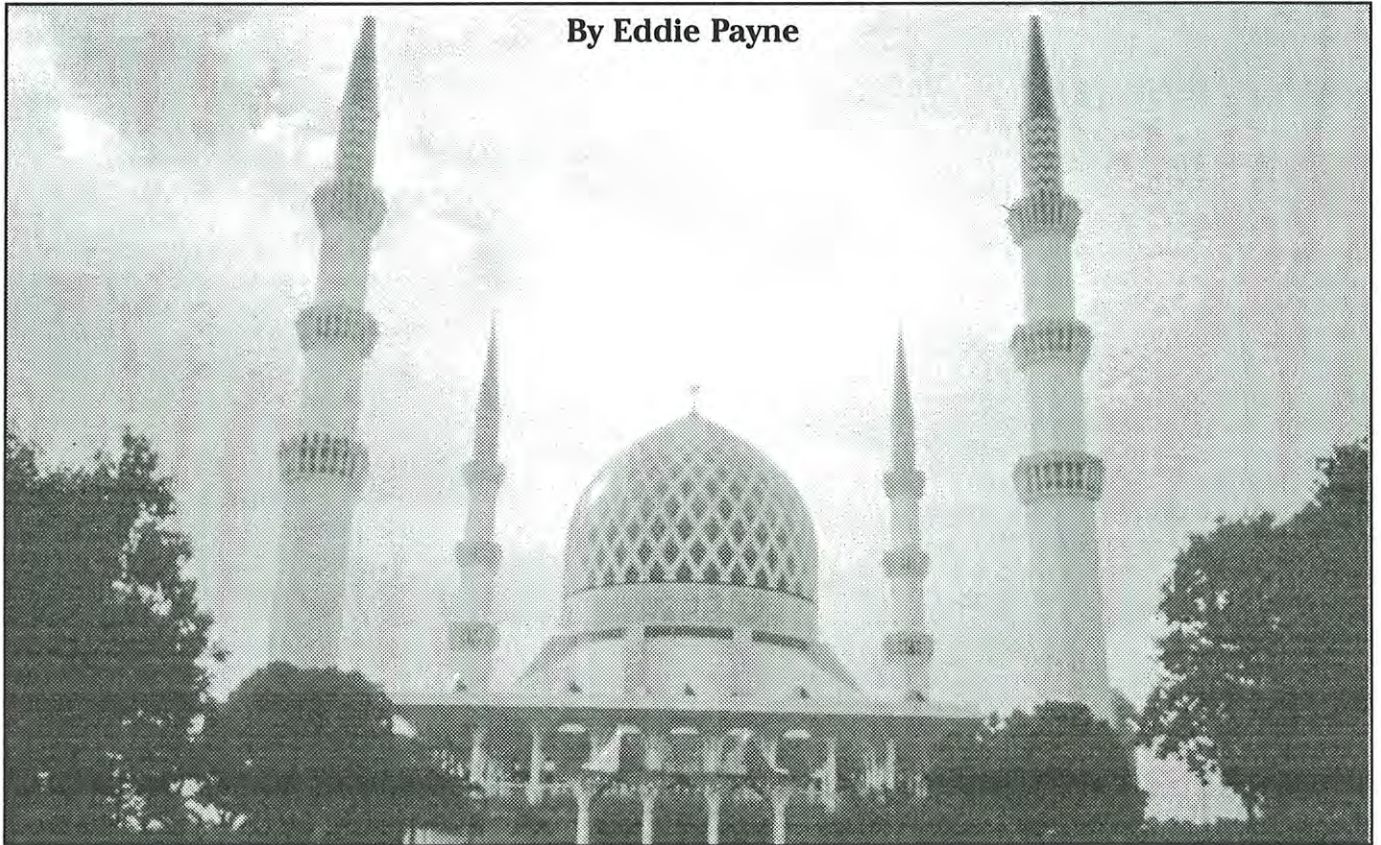
The Secretary's Schedule

July 1997

- 14 Directors' Prayer Meeting
- 15-18 Pre-Convention Meetings
Cincinnati, Ohio
- 19 Executive Committee Meeting
Cincinnati, Ohio
- 20-24 National Convention
- 25 Post-Convention Meetings
- 31-8/3 Mexican National Convention

Meet Your Muslim Neighbor

By Eddie Payne



What is Islam?

Islam, founded by Muhammad (born about 570 A.D.), is a religion impossible to ignore. Fully one-fifth of earth's population, over 1.1 billion people, live their lives and practice their faith as Muslims.

Originating not far from the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity, this third major world religion emerged with a vengeance. Islam, which shares much of the Old Testament with these two major monotheistic religions, struck fear and terror in the hearts of people wherever it was introduced.

Islam initially spread with the edge of the sword through a world of scattered tribal peoples. By 634 A.D. Jerusalem was invaded, followed by the fall of Syria in 636. Egypt, Iraq and Iran bowed in allegiance to Allah by 641.

Barely 100 years after Muhammad's death, Islam spread from India to Spain and overran more terri-

tory than the Roman Empire. Few serious setbacks have challenged the steady growth of Islam since that explosive expansion.

Why do we seem to fear Muslims? The fear is prompted by the manner in which Islam spread in those early years, coupled with frequent front page headlines of fanatical terrorist activities attributed to Muslim fundamentalists.

However, we would do well to lay aside fears and presuppositions about Islam and Muslims and seek to understand the people who make up this major world religion. This becomes more difficult because of the large number of Muslim immigrants flooding the United States (over 15 percent of our total immigrants), and the reality that within the next 25 years Islam will probably become the country's second largest religious community, after Christians.

We must understand Muslims in order to reach out in love and show

them the real Jesus and how God desires their salvation.

What Muslims Believe

The term *Islam* means "submission to the will of Allah." A *Muslim* is one who submits. Muslims recognize Muhammad as the final prophet from God and the founder of Islam. Six major beliefs or doctrines make up the core of Islamic teaching.

Allah (God) is One

He is unknowable, has no partner, and is recognized as the creator and sustainer of the universe. He is said to have 100 names but man knows only 99 of them. They are recited often with the aid of a 99-bead rosary called a *subha*. It is popularly believed that the camel alone knows the 100th name of God and that is why he has such a haughty appearance.

Prophets of Allah

Some estimate that there have been as many as 124,000 prophets. Muhammad is considered the final and greatest of the prophets, while five others—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus—are considered the most important of the rest.

Books of Allah

The *Quran* is considered the holiest of all revelations given by God. It is his final book and supersedes all others. Only the books of Moses, David, Jesus and Muhammad have not been lost. The Bible has been changed and so is not completely reliable today.

Angels of Allah

Angels are ministers and servants of Allah. Gabriel is the greatest but two recording angels accompany every person. One records good deeds, the other evil. Their records are weighed at judgment and determine the fate of the individual.

Jinn are creatures similar to angels, but can be evil.

Judgment of Allah

A day is appointed in which man's life is examined and his fate determined. Even though the records of good and evil serve as evidence of what is deserved, Allah reserves absolute right to send each individual wherever he pleases. No one may know that he is acceptable to God before that final judgment.

Decree of Allah

Everything exists and comes to pass because of the decree of Allah. Evil and good, unbelief and faith are all preordained by Allah. Submission to Allah and his decree is what makes one Muslim.

How Muslims Practice Their Faith

The popularity of Islam is interwoven with and tied to the all-encompassing nature of the religion. Everything the Muslim does is under the authority of and controlled by the practice of the belief system.

Culture and relationships are central and critical to Islam. Muslims val-

ue and honor the family highly. Hospitality is a crucial element in everyday life. Religion means everything to a Muslim. Obedience to and the practice of the pillars of the faith must be understood in this context.

Reciting the Creed

Becoming a Muslim involves affirmation that "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet."

Praying the Prayers

Muslims pray a memorized prayer five times daily facing the holy city, Mecca. Ritual washings and removal of shoes are a necessary part of this lifetime formalized prayer cycle. These prayers are done wherever the person may be.

In Muslim countries it is not unusual to see people praying almost anywhere when the appointed time arrives. If there is a mosque or other designated prayer area nearby, Muslims will usually go there and pray alongside others. Special holidays bring great gatherings of people together to pray.

Giving the Alms

Muslims are required to give about 2.5% of their wealth to help the poor and spread the faith.

Observing the Fast

During the month of *Ramadan* each year, Muslims abstain from all food and liquids, tobacco and sexual relations during the daylight hours. The month is determined by a lunar calendar so the dates are not the same each year. Food may be eaten during night hours and a feast celebrated at the end of the month of fasting.

Going on Pilgrimage

Every Muslim who has the ability to do so is expected to visit Mecca once during his lifetime. This *Hajj* brings merit and status to the participant who may be respectfully called *Hajji* after this arduous act of faithful obedience.

Although it is not one of the official pillars of the faith, some Muslims add the *Jihad* or struggle as a sixth ele-

ment in the practice of Islam. *Jihad* carries the concept of "exertion" in the cause of Allah to the point of engaging in a holy war against evil and infidels in order to spread the faith.

Misconceptions About Muslims

Contrary to perception, not all Muslims are Arabs. In fact the great majority are not. Much higher concentrations of Muslim populations live in Southeast Asia and the former Soviet Republics than in the Arab countries.

Not all Muslims are wealthy. The petroleum riches we often associate with Islamic peoples are held by a small number of individuals when compared to the one billion plus Muslims worldwide. Some of the poorest of the poor live in the Muslim world.

The majority of Muslims are not wild-eyed fanatical terrorists determined to see all Christians killed as infidels. They recognize us along with Jews as "people of the Book," and are at the very least willing to let us coexist even if they feel a strong compulsion to convert us to their faith. Still, there is a great corporate barrier in the minds of Muslims regarding Christians.

They still have a memory of the Crusades (wars to regain the holy land from Muslim "infidels") that colors their tolerance of Christians. They have a fresh memory of the atrocities committed in the name of Christ by misguided zealots to retake sites now considered sacred by Jews, Christians and Muslims. This presents a hindrance to many when we attempt to share a message of love in Christ with them.

Practical Ways to Reach Muslim Neighbors

There is no simple, easy one-two-three answer. Here are eight ideas about how to approach Muslims living around us.

Be a Friend

Become a friend and get to know your neighbors. Take some "safe" item to welcome them. Remember that hospitality and friendship are crucial in the Muslim world view. As strangers, they usually wait for us to welcome them.

They do observe some Old Testa-

ment prohibitions about foods, avoiding all pork and pork products. Fresh fruit or flowers are usually acceptable in saying hello and welcome.

You may need a translator. The children usually attend school and will be able to interpret for you. If no one is available, do your best with smiles and appropriate demonstration of your intention to share and welcome.

Involve Your Family

Tell them about your own family. When you make this first effort to say "we are glad you are here," ask non-threatening questions about their family and children.

Find out where they are from. When you have that information, learn all you can about their home country. Read current history and what might have caused their immigration to America. Learn to talk about what is of interest to them.

Meet Felt Needs

Find out about their felt needs. You may be able to help meet some of them. Volunteer to show the ladies of the house about grocery shopping in the neighborhood. Take them to other helpful locations. As time permits, become a genuine friend.

Talk About Religion

Don't be afraid to talk about religion. Honest openness about who and what you are is usually appreciated. They usually talk more freely about their beliefs than we are accustomed to do as Christians.

Don't blitz them with the gospel too quickly. Find out where they are spiritually and politely answer questions. This will open doors for genuine witness.

Take Them Home

Invite them to your house for a meal. Take the time to show them your house. They will be interested in how you live. They want to get acquainted with the real you. Be a kind host and demonstrate authentic loving Christian behavior.

Expect a return invitation to eat with them and visit their home. By all means, do it! A rejection by you at

this point may close the door for genuine friendship.

Read Their "Bible"

Purchase a *Quran* and read it. Using helps from the suggested resource list at the end of this article, discover the sections that deal with objections Muslims have to Christianity. Remember how Muslims respect their bible, the *Quran*.

They never place other books on top of it. They never hold it below waist level. They never put a mark in or on it. You need to use an unmarked Bible when witnessing to Muslims. Small things play a big role in how well you are respected and appreciated in dealing with them.

Ask Questions

Ask reasonable questions about your own behavior and lifestyle while in their home. It may be offensive to wear sleeveless dresses when in their homes. It is almost certainly unseemly to expose legs or ankles. Slacks are probably a more modest dress style than the typical dresses women wear.

Teach English Classes

Find out if the ladies of the house need to learn to speak and read simple English. If so, and you feel unable to help them, find someone to accept the responsibility. Simple things that we take for granted may be the keys to opening witness opportunities. You will probably learn by trying. When you make a mistake, admit it and try again.

If you make serious efforts to reach out, be prepared to have folks becoming dependent on you. That is the way things work in most Muslim cultures. There is a saying attributed to the Muslim world that "If you have an enemy, you must kill him. If you become a friend, you must give your life for him."

I suspect that you do not agree with the concept of killing your enemy. I hope you understand the implication of being willing to give your life for a friend. Your Muslim friends will probably take it seriously.

Ten Commandments for Muslims

A special reprint of an excellent,

practical booklet on Islam gives the Ten Commandments for sharing the gospel with your Muslim neighbors. The booklet is published by SIM in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Ten Commandments are presented here in their entirety and are used by permission of the editor-in-chief, David Fuller. Order the entire issue. The 16-page booklet is a treasure house of information on Islam. Please consider including an offering to cover cost of producing, shipping and handling.

Ten Commandments for sharing the gospel with your Muslim neighbors.

Helpful hints for being practical with the Gospel.

- 1. Use the Word of God.** Muslims respect the sacred books: the Law of Moses, Psalms, Gospels and *Quran*. Let the Word of God speak for itself. The gospels are the best portions to start with, particularly Matthew and Luke.
- 2. Be constantly in prayer.** It is the Holy Spirit who wins men to Christ. Seek His guidance and power as you present the Word.
- 3. Be a genuine friend.** Saying "hello" isn't enough. If you really care, show it by inviting them to your home, sharing your time, and helping with their problems.
- 4. Ask thought-provoking questions.** "Do you have assurance that God will accept you? What does the *Quran* teach about forgiveness? May I show you what the Bible teaches?"
- 5. Listen attentively.** When you ask a question, courtesy requires that you listen to the answer no matter how long it takes. You'll be surprised at how much you'll learn.
- 6. Present your beliefs openly.** State what you believe, clearly and without apology, showing scripture passages that support those teachings. Thus you place the responsibility for doctrine where it belongs—on the Word of God.
- 7. Reason, don't argue.** Argument may win a point but lose a hearing. There are some points on which you can argue forever without achieving a thing, except closing a mind against you.
- 8. Never denigrate Muhammad or the Quran.** This is as offensive to them as speaking disrespectfully about Christ or the Bible is to us.
- 9. Respect their customs and sensitivities.** Don't offend by putting your Bible (a holy book) on the floor, or appearing too free with the opposite sex, or refusing hospitality, or making jokes about sacred topics such as fasting, prayer, or God.

10. **Persevere.** Muslims have a lot of rethinking to do when they are confronted with the gospel. But rest assured that the Word of God will do its work, in His good time.

Destination for Muslims

The Muslim concept of a sensual paradise for men is far from what the scriptures teach about God's desire for all humanity, Muslims included. God wants Muslims to get to know the real *Isa* who is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

They need to pass by the way of the cross and be born into God's kingdom. They need to partake of the free salvation that God offers all who will come to Him in repentance and faith.

You may be the only witness many Muslims have to the truth of the Gospel. Earnestly seek how you might do that eternally important job as a faithful ambassador of Christ. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Eddie Payne serves as a consultant with the Foreign Missions Department.

Resources

From SIM—Box 7900 Charlotte, NC 28241-7900

Islam: A guide to understanding Muslim religion, history, and culture.
SIMNOW - World Religions, Special Edition

From MARC—Monarch Publications

Ishmael My Brother, A Christian Introduction to Islam

Compiled by Annie Cooper ISBN: 1-85424-233-4

(If you only purchase one book, make this your choice. An excellent overview of the whole of Islam.)

The Unseen Face of Islam, Sharing the Gospel with Ordinary Muslims
By Bill Musk ISBN: 1-85424-018-8

Ministry in Islamic Contexts, Lausanne Committee For World Evangelization International Institute For The Study Of Islam And Christianity Occasional Paper No. 28

From WEC—Box A, Fort Washington, PA 19034

The Biblical Approach To The Muslim

By Dr. John Elder

From Baker Book House—Grand Rapids, MI 49506

New Paths in Muslim Evangelism, Evangelical Approaches to Contextualization

By Phil Parshall ISBN: 0-8010-7056-2

From Servant Group International—506 Tanksley Avenue, Nashville, TN 37211; Phone (615) 832-2282

Sharing Jesus With Muslims—A nine audio cassette seminar dealing with the problems and opportunities of sharing Christ with Muslims. Presented by Douglas Layton, Director of SGI. A practical and well documented resource.

Coming Next Month . . .

Pastor Appreciation Issue

Planting churches in America's cities.



The raucous sounds of a big city clearing its throat pierce the dawn in Chicago. Tires squeal, "L" line cars rattle over the tracks, irate drivers blow horns and spew profanity toward offenders. Trailing diesel fumes, buses waddle down the street. Smokestacks belch white, black and brown smoke. The city of the big shoulders is awake.

Taverns guard street corners; multi-colored delis pepper the neighborhood. Store owners lift their shades as locals sip coffee in a favorite greasy spoon. Walkways descend beneath the streets where another Chicago waits. Regiments of bungalows, like soldiers at attention, line the street. Tiny yards and alleys form a network of trash cans, garages and skate boards.

That's northwest Chicago where Free Will Baptists sent Home Missionary David Potete to build a church. Wedged between a decaying inner city and the sprawling suburbs, this close-knit, ethnically-connected citadel of stability is also a desert of spiritual despair. Schooled in religion but robbed of grace, faces project the self-sufficiency of a European work ethic . . . and worry lines of uncertainty.

Such is "the city that works," Chicago. Home to Hemingway and Royko, the north-siders and the south-siders, the famous Chicago hot dog and the Sears Tower. A place where even the dead vote and the elected go to jail! One Daley is in city hall and three dailies on the newsstands.



The Real Chicago Hope

By Daryl Ellis

Called the Second City by New Yorkers but known as the first city because of His Airness, Mr. Jordan, Chicago is an amazing complexity of warm hearts and bitterly cold winters.

Accept Challenge

What is the Free Will Baptist response to Chicago's mosaic of poverty, affluence, traditions, diverse lifestyles and ethnic pride?

Cities are challenging. Half the world's five billion people crowd into cities. City-dwellers are just like us—desperately in need of God's grace. Too many Protestant churches have fled the inner city with its harsh realities. But with the light of good news removed, darkness overwhelms the people and the endless cycle spins.

Crucial Attitude

Our attitude is crucial. Most of us did not grow up in a major city and we are disadvantaged when facing this task. Are cities cesspools of sin that we would rather avoid? Are they tradition-filled religionists beyond spiritual impact? Better to leave them alone than toil with little results?

The Jonah syndrome may rule. Why take the message of grace to "them?" They are not like us, thank

God! Maybe they should have another chance, but don't ask us. We can build churches easier in the suburbs or better yet in the rural extensions of these major cities.

Vast Potential

The potential is awesome. World class cities like Chicago span the globe. Some 290 cities have one million or more inhabitants. Could the time be near when foreign and home missions consider joining forces to forge a missions team with different areas of expertise?

The wide world has narrowed with similar challenges facing us around the globe. What was formerly considered "missionary work" or cross-cultural interaction is now part and parcel of everyday ministry in the United States.

Learning to minister effectively in cities will impact missions around the world. One day we will have specific training for urban ministry. Perhaps the lessons learned in Chicago will reach to Atlanta, Houston and New York, then around the world to New Delhi to Osaka to Buenos Aires.

Overcome Barriers

There are barriers to overcome. Ray Bakke in *The Urban Christian* reminds us, "Missions can be divided into two categories. First, there is the traditional mission to people who are geographically distant from us. The second category of missions is to people who are culturally distant from a church but living under its spire."

Let me tell you what many pastors in the United States already know—we need to plan and work like foreign missionaries. Villalba, Doropo, Araras and St. Sebastien do not have a monopoly on cross-cultural ministry.

The Courage to Try

Many of us confess that we are challenged by cross-cultural missions, never thinking that we would be thrust into this arena, unlearned and untrained! Fortunately, our leaders in missions and education are moving to face the issue.

Our Home Missions Director said, "We do not know how to build urban churches." He has led us to the starting place of learning. This urban challenge is bigger than all of us.

Free Will Baptists are inexperienced in urban settings. Few, especially those in suburban and rural areas, have the answers we need. Let's accept the challenge, marshal our resources, refocus the dedication that marks our people and become effective in the cities.

We may be tempted to label words like "culture" and "ethnicity" as excuses for not growing, but they are the realities we face. Unless we recognize the challenge for what it is, we will fail to address the issues head-on. As humbling as it may feel, we need to interface with other Christians who have developed skills through experience.

What We Did Well

Free Will Baptists have had tremendous impact in some cities. Many of our churches in the north tend to be sub-cultures of southern Christians, visitors to a northern city until retirement pulls them back to their roots. Thank God that we have been at our best reaching those wonderful people living in a strange land because of work opportunities.

However, the sober reality is that

we have often failed to reach the people of the city and suburbs who were there before the southerners arrived.

We forget that there was a strategy, even marketing if you will. Services were planned appealing to southerners. Southern gospel music attracted people to our churches. We knew them well because we were like them. Music, cultural practices and vocabulary were naturals.

In urban ministry we are trying to reach people we do not understand well. Quite a disadvantage, even to the most dedicated. We expect people to become like us and we, unknowingly, put our own spin on the gospel.

David Hesselgrave characterizes the core issue of any church mission in *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, "The ultimate objective in evangelistic communication is clear and persuasive presentation of the gospel to every person we can possibly reach within the area of our responsibility to those whose hearts have been specially prepared by the Holy Spirit; to those to whom there are in-built channels of communication; but also to all who will hear us. We want them to respond in repentance of sin; faith in Christ and commitment to His cause."

What We Can Do

Jesus teaches us in the parable of the soils that sowing seed is one thing, while receptivity is quite another. Excitement fills the air when those who have been waiting to hear the good news receive it. Look at the former Soviet Union! Contrast that with sowing in rocky places where the thrill is missing because the decision reports are meager.

No doubt that is why some suggest searching for southern people living in Chicago, because that kind of church would be easier to grow than trying to reach Poles, Italians, Hispanics or African-Americans, not to mention the yuppies in Lincoln Park.

If we're looking for a quick fix to satisfy number crunchers, let's pull out of Japan, Europe, South America and all major cities. Forget the Muslims, the generation X-ers, professionals and anyone else who is not easy to reach at this time.

Our brethren in Europe, the Americas and Asia could teach us a lesson about staying power while preparing

a more receptive soil for those who follow. Today's conversions in Côte d'Ivoire are the result of faithful sowing and cultivating in years gone by.

Please understand. Chicago may not be any more difficult than anywhere else. Faithful men have served well before. What makes the Chicago mission effort unique is the deliberate choice of Northwest FWB Church to reach the northerners.

What We Face Now

Chicago has the second largest Catholic diocese in the country. Parochial education rivals the city school system for students. Local parishes maintain a working relationship with the city which pays off handsomely.

Whether a Catholic is devout, practicing or dissenting, the aura of the church is overwhelming.

If anyone wishes to question the value of religious education, he ought to evaluate the lasting impression that Catholic indoctrination has achieved.

For many in Catholic country, a Baptist is a high-risk person. Like Baptist parents who warned their kids about Catholics, many Catholics have not taken kindly to Baptists. You can imagine the attitude toward a *southern* Baptist.

People always fear what they do not know, and in Chicago being Baptist is questionable. I recently attended the funeral of a new member's father at Mary, Queen of Heaven Catholic Church. Although I had been in a Catholic church many times, I was uneasy about the funeral mass liturgy.

I was not sure what was going on and what I was supposed to do. I walked away wondering how one of those parishioners would feel if he visited my church?

Penetrate the City Mentality

The city mentality is different. With that European closed mind the message is often, "You leave me alone and I will leave you alone." Travel is measured in time, not miles. People are in a hurry and they do not connect easily with strangers.

Barriers like these call for a strategy to penetrate the resistance. Penetration takes time and makes you feel as if you are beating your head against the wall. This is why moving into an area,

putting up a shingle and preaching the gospel does not always result in people knocking down your door. Does that happen at the church you attend?

The Urban Pastor

Free Will Baptists have often ministered in a friendly culture. That is, we fit in with the community and the prevailing Protestant mindset. Now we see the need for pre-evangelism, God's way of drawing people closer to Himself before they are ready to respond in faith. The effects of pre-evangelism take time, which creates problems for church planters who are under the gun to produce quickly.

Urban church specialists often resist initiating public services until they have been in the area for one or two years. They use this time to learn the people and establish themselves in the community.

Effective church planters discern the felt-needs of the people. Understandably, critics react to the notion of felt needs and fear a cave-in to culture or the tail wagging the dog. But looking for felt needs is merely staking out common ground in the love of Christ for a greater receptivity to the gospel. Hurting people listen when caring people speak.

I'll never forget FWBBC President Tom Malone telling me in 1981, "The key to your church's effectiveness is persuading the community you care about them."

One of the hardest things for a church planter is the expectation (or perceived expectation) of others around the country. Denominational meetings are dreaded where they are quizzed, "How many are you running now . . . Have you ever tried . . . ?"

Such advice is rarely helpful. We may feel better about our own frustrations when we become experts on someone else's work.

Clear Expectations

Expectations must be clear. Planting a church in the city has no different objectives than any other work. The circumstances change depending on where you are in the world. We need hard-working men and women to plot a long-term strategy. They should be held accountable for the following:

- ♦ Access the understanding and favor of the locals, if possible.
- ♦ Connect to the "ready to receive the gospel," if there are any.
- ♦ Establish a presence and convince the community of your care.
- ♦ Be creative to gain a wide hearing for the gospel.

Freedom To Adapt

Let me say this as gently as possible. Freedom to be creative is a struggle any church planter faces who has a denominational connection. Pressure may be conveyed that the mission should look and act like other churches in the denomination. People want to find a church there just like the one they attend back home.

We forget that the typical 20th century church is quite unlike those first century fellowships. We've changed from the 19th century methods and practices. How unreasonable we look suggesting that the 21st century church look like a 1960's church.

While we may not want to make adjustments, the effective urban church will be drastically different. The best thing we can do is overcome aversion to different styles and approaches in ministry, and support those who venture into this new arena. After all, our goal is reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Four Supportive Actions

What can we do as fellow Free Will Baptists who may be unfamiliar with an urban ministry? Be supportive by taking the following actions:

Prayer

Pray for the missionary family. The pastor's family faces enormous pressure. Family members often get busy maintaining church programs and neglect personal and family needs. Expecting full programs from a mission church is not only unrealistic but destructive to the pastor's family and the future of the work.

Trust

Give the church planter the benefit of the doubt as he follows God's leading for the ministry. Why should we expect him to build a church like

ours in such a different environment?

Remember, the church planter's objective is to reach people with the gospel. Some of the trappings we hold dear may have little to do with the gospel.

Accountability

While it is proper to hold a missionary accountable, ask yourself, accountable for what? Attendance figures? We who require accountability from others must keep an eye on ourselves, lest we question the missionary's effectiveness while our own churches stagnate.

Encouragement

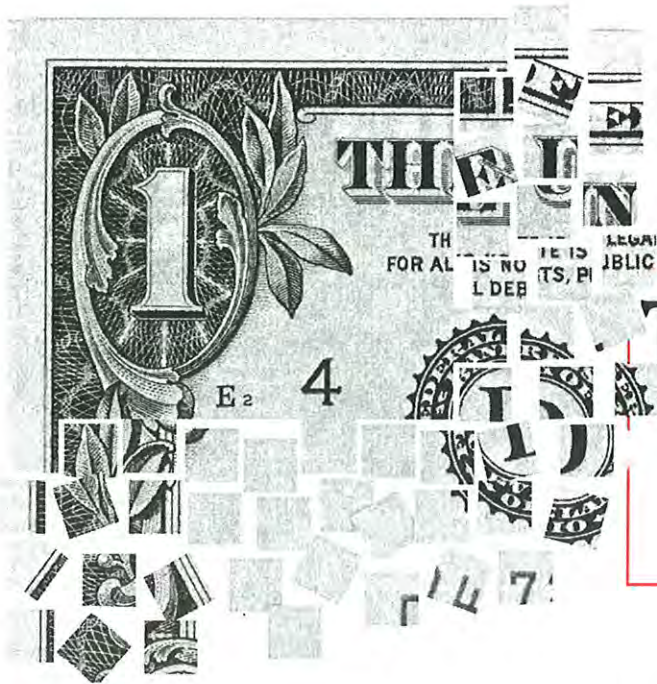
Encourage missionary leaders and supervisors to study urban ministry and interact with those God is already using with great effectiveness. Perhaps we should rethink some of our approaches. Praise God for the new partnership between Free Will Baptist Bible College and the Home Missions Department.

Free Will Baptists are people with a pioneer spirit. We expect obstacles. We now stand at an opportune time in our history. We know that diversity is a strength which can be focused on the common goal of reaching lost people not only in the country, but also in the city.

Let's dig deep in our pockets and kneel long on our knees. In the world-class city of Chicago—a city full of despair—we know that hope is not found in a new archbishop, the mayor or a tax increase. The real Chicago hope is Jesus Christ! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Daryl Ellis pastors Butterfield Free Will Baptist Church in Aurora, Illinois. He serves as moderator of Illinois' Fox River District Association and as a member of the national Commission for Theological Integrity.



The Truth About Tithing

By Billy Sharpston

An art contest featured a prize for the best depiction of a dead church. The winning entry pictured a beautiful and fully-equipped church auditorium. A closer look at the canvas revealed mission offering plates with cobwebs over them. One criterion of a successful church is participation in God's plan of giving so the gospel can go into all the world.

Paul's instruction to the Corinthian congregation outlines God's plan of giving. These principles lift the offering far above a traditional line in an order of worship. Tithing becomes a crucial part of Christ's mission to the world.

Involves Every Christian

Paul exhorted each one in the Corinthian church to participate in giving to meet the needs of the world beyond. Giving is not an elective in the Christian curriculum. Christians who fail to tithe bear part of the responsibility for the gospel remaining unknown in vast regions of the world.

Studies of church giving indicate that 20 percent of the members carry the financial load; 60 percent give occasionally, and 20 percent give nothing. The church's world task will remain incomplete until each of us gives to support it.

An Act of Worship

The Corinthians were instructed to tithe "on the first day of every week"—Sunday, the day of worship. Our offering declares God is worthy. The gift is an act of praise and thanksgiving; it is an admission of trust. Tithing affirms God's lordship and our stewardship.

God's people giving together is like a mighty anthem of praise affirming, "Worthy is the Lamb!" Don't fail to give and then miss the opportunity of worship. We haven't totally worshipped until we have tithed. God's plan includes each Christian tithing as an act of worship.

Gives First to the Church

Since our gifts are an act of worship, they are to be presented to God through the local congregation where we bear testimony of Jesus. When Paul encourages each Christian to "lay by . . . in store," he echoes the words of Malachi—"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse . . . in my house," (Mal. 3:10).

The church is God's storehouse. The Corinthian church agreed to gather their resources to help meet the needs of the poor in Jerusalem. Compassion and commitment, planning and preparation lay behind their gift. Several churches united their efforts

in this love gift administered by Paul. Here is a pattern for today.

The world needs to hear the good news and receive the rich gift of salvation. Millions are poor spiritually—impoverished in spirit. Their hearing and believing depends on believers who are faithful in giving of their tithes and offerings, and churches that are faithful as a district, state and national association in sharing those gifts in a worldwide ministry.

Proportionate Giving

Paul anticipates the question "How much should I give?" and states, "As God has prospered." Give in proportion to what God has entrusted to your stewardship. The beginning of proportionate giving is the tithe. G. Ernest Thomas said of tithing:

In view of the New Testament warning about the use of money the tithe as a measure of devotion to Jesus Christ becomes not the end but the beginning of sharing life. The tithe may be a fumbling standard of a person's grace, it is a poor place to stop. But for millions of Christians the tithe is a first and essential step in moving away from the kind of life dominated by materialistic desires and it can become a doorway to a life with the blessings of Christ."

It is difficult to conceive of a Christian wanting to give less than a tenth when the Hebrews gave far more un-

der the law. Jesus said of the tithe, "This you ought to have done" (Matt. 23:23), but He lifted giving above legalism to the level of love and liberality by saying, "Freely you have received, freely give," (Matt. 10:8).

God's will is for all to hear the gospel. "How can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14-15). How can they be sent without resources? Each time the offering plate is passed, an opportunity for God's plan is implemented. Every Christian can participate.

The church has a responsibility to spread the gospel in its community and to expand the mission ministry of its congregation worldwide. What we have begun as a local church, district, state and national, we must continue. Stop and ask yourself a question. Through the ministry of my local church, will what I give this year help influence a lost world for Christ? We should be prompted by these necessities.

A little girl in a church service handed the offering plate to the usher and said, "Sir, would you put it a little lower?" He accommodated her request.

She asked again, "Would you put it lower?" The usher stooped down even lower. This continued until the usher was agitated and the plate was on the floor.

The little girl stood up and stepped into the plate. She looked up at the puzzled gentleman and remarked, "I want to give everything to Jesus." Give because He gave! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Billy Sharpston pastors Heritage Temple Free Will Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio. He chairs the 1997 Hospitality Committee for the National Association of Free Will Baptists which meets July 20-24 in Cincinnati.

THE TOGETHER WAY

April 1997

Receipts:

State	Design.	CO-OP	Total	April '96	Year to Date
Alabama	\$ 735.91	\$.00	\$ 735.91	\$ 1,135.63	\$ 1,719.19
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	1,057.30
Arkansas	14,797.48	17,590.32	32,387.80	24,567.91	99,666.03
California	.00	986.26	986.26	1,036.48	3,935.44
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	4,802.75	6,097.12
Georgia	19,747.44	3,381.80	23,129.24	16,763.59	80,675.69
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	7,701.78	2,222.39	9,924.17	15,087.32	43,967.43
Indiana	993.80	.00	993.80	.00	4,897.25
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	1,243.90
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Kentucky	256.00	527.47	783.47	784.50	3,880.40
Louisiana	50.00	.00	50.00	20.00	50.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	1,498.03
Michigan	25,226.96	5,673.15	30,900.11	1,167.71	55,116.11
Mississippi	173.50	380.34	553.84	331.97	2,039.90
Missouri	49,411.91	.00	49,411.91	12,797.26	185,934.23
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	504.08	52.04	556.12	1067.58	3,449.42
North Carolina	427.02	125.00	552.02	1,107.20	6,659.75
Ohio	8,857.67	4,464.74	13,322.41	11,316.54	40,997.51
Oklahoma	54,558.64	.00	54,558.64	58,638.61	234,808.27
South Carolina	46,198.10	102.97	46,301.07	23,168.11	130,100.93
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	8,342.18	1,617.34	9,959.52	12,071.56	38,636.28
Texas	4,538.81	220.65	4,759.46	4,852.14	25,656.48
Virginia	2,433.54	50.00	2,483.54	1,373.41	4,312.13
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	4,737.80	56.07	4,793.87	4,574.11	15,550.91
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	270.84	19.16	290.00	.00	702.52
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.03	.00	.03	.07	.15
Totals	\$249,963.49	\$37,469.70	\$287,433.19	\$196,664.45	\$ 992,652.37

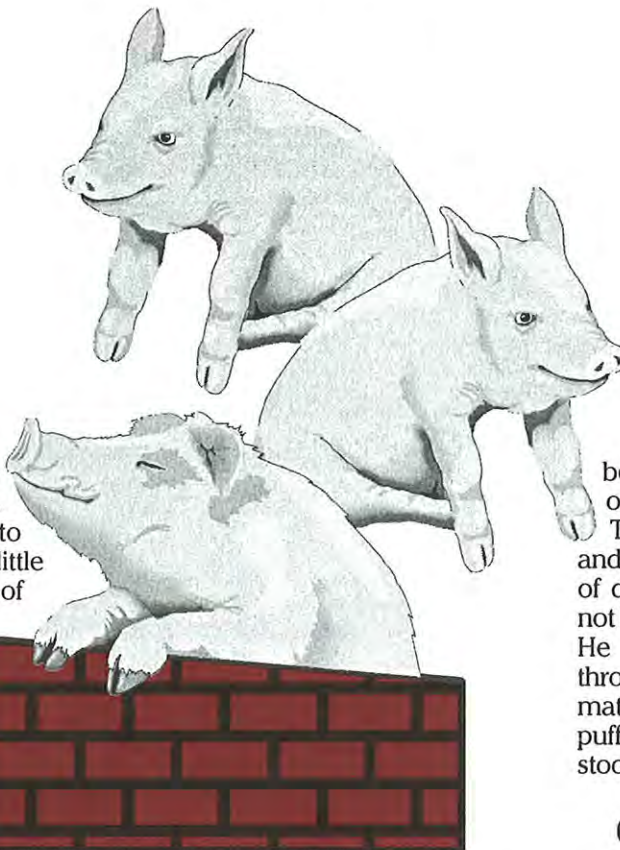
Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 11,980.31	\$18,734.88	\$ 30,715.19	\$ 26,548.90	\$ 103,519.41
Foreign Missions	142,176.61	4,309.01	146,485.62	101,701.94	524,432.94
FWBBC	16,171.23	4,309.01	20,480.24	14,286.51	74,245.57
Home Missions	69,715.56	3,372.26	73,087.82	43,139.81	231,701.76
Retirement & Insurance	1,509.02	2,622.86	4,131.88	2,857.62	13,927.49
Master's Men	2,448.77	2,622.86	5,071.63	3,563.62	17,063.74
Commsn for Theo. Integrity	131.03	93.68	224.71	163.73	768.72
FWB Foundation	935.70	1,124.07	2,059.77	1,622.25	7,475.26
Historical Commission	109.77	93.68	203.45	146.32	699.49
Music Commission	111.67	93.68	205.35	155.06	662.28
Radio-TV Commission	117.33	93.68	211.01	163.80	698.56
Hillsdale FWB College	1,463.25	.00	1,463.25	1,468.37	5,235.65
Other	3,093.24	.03	3,093.27	846.52	12,221.50
Totals	\$249,963.49	\$37,469.70	\$287,433.19	\$196,664.45	\$ 992,652.37

A parable of church growth principles.

The Three Little Pigs

By Kevin Riggs



Once upon a time there were three little pigs. Each pig felt called to build a church. The first little pig built his church out of straw. He built huge, beautiful buildings, using the most modern architectural designs. He filled his church with programs of all sorts, sizes and shapes. This church was known far and wide for its beautiful mud ponds. Pigs from all over traveled to attend this church of straw.

But one day the big bad wolf came to a service. Not liking what he saw, he planted discord among the members and enjoyed an abundant harvest of conflict and criticisms. He huffed and he puffed, and he blew the straw church down.

Stick Church

The second little pig, thinking he had learned from the first pig's mistake, built his church out of sticks. He purchased land on the corner of Busy Street and Bumper-to Bumper Highway. He built a user-friendly auditorium, complete with all the latest gadgets in computers, videos and sound equipment.

First Church of the Sticks had a large budget for advertising. They ran

ads in all the local papers, and on television and radio, and they used mass mailings to get into neighborhood homes. All types of pigs flocked to this church, and they baptized many, turning them from pigs into swine.

But one day the big bad wolf came to town. He lured the church to sleep through apathy and insincerity. He huffed and he puffed, and he blew the church down.

Brick Church

The third little pig—the littlest pig of all—used bricks to build his church. Spending all his resources on bricks left him unable to afford a great location or build a marvelous structure. He dreamed of what he could do with more, but remained focused on building with bricks. As a result, his church

became strong, both inwardly and outwardly.

The big bad wolf came and huffed and puffed, but to no avail. His hot air of discord, conflict and criticism did not budge this church made of bricks. He could not lure them to sleep through apathy and insincerity. No matter how hard the wolf huffed and puffed, the church made of bricks stood firm.

Church Growth Conference

One hot July summer day at the National Association of Churches Founded by Pigs (NACFP) the three pigs got together, along with thousands of other pigs, and discussed why some churches grow and others do not. All sorts of reasons and excuses were given.

"A church that grows must make sows feel like hogs instead of pigs," one expert said.

Another proclaimed, "Pigs just aren't the same these days. We are living in a post-swine culture. Hogs are more self-centered, and only live from one slop trough to the next."

Still a third said, "If we want to reach this generation of pigs, we must become more pig-like and wallow in the same holes as they."

A fourth pig commented, "The problem is not with the pigs in the

pews, but with the pigs in the pulpit. Pigs of the clergy have compromised and are afraid to call suey, suey!"

Each reason was logical, each and every excuse justified. Each one contained nuggets of truth. In the final analysis, however, it was concluded that churches which grew and made an impact in local mud holes across the nation, were those that were built on, and with, bricks.

Biblical Church

What is the moral of this story? "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire," (I Corinthians 3:11-15).

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," (I Peter 2:4-5).

Is your church being built out of straw, sticks or bricks? What do you consider to be the bricks and stones that build a healthy church? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Kevin Riggs pastors Franklin Free Will Baptist Church in Franklin, Tennessee.

Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign April 1997 Update

State	Goal	Gifts	Balance
Alabama	\$76,397.63	\$ 5,026.15	\$71,371.48
Arizona	1,228.93	2,883.71	(1,654.78)
Arkansas	76,860.94	43,422.13	33,438.81
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	29,035.88	9,143.31
Hawaii	184.54	727.26	(542.72)
Idaho	353.37	25.00	328.37
Illinois	16,176.29	4,949.47	11,226.82
Indiana	7,868.27	1,846.75	6,021.52
Iowa	266.99	0.00	266.99
Kansas	1,287.82	280.00	1,007.82
Kentucky	35,454.34	5,949.29	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	33,809.91	26,674.49
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	63,820.01	14,737.08
Texas	11,547.20	7,491.52	4,055.68
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	\$280,472.44	\$486,110.95

Directory Update

GEORGIA

Gerald Brown to First Church, Tifton from Perry Church, Perry

MISSOURI

Gary Parker to First Church, Monett from First Church, Waynesville

TENNESSEE

Dale Walker to First Church, Knoxville

Jim Shepherd to Pleasant Hill Church, Dover

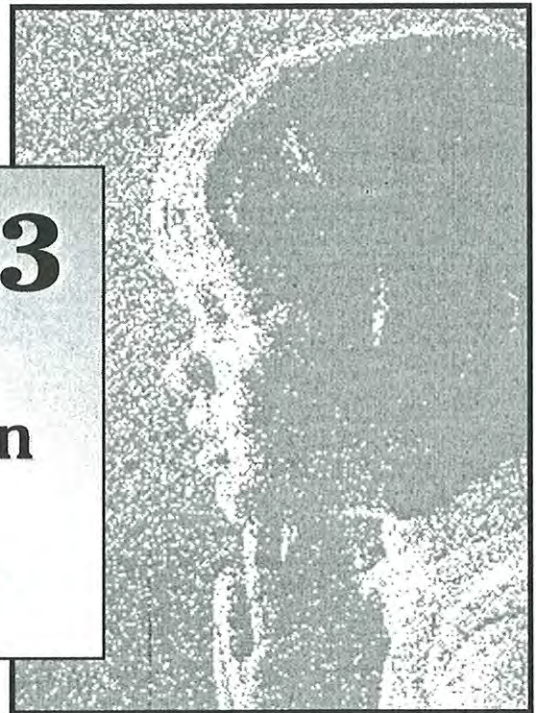
OTHER PERSONNEL

Bryant Harris to Bear Point Church, Sesser, IL, as youth pastor

Ken Austin to First Church, Denison, TX, as youth minister

Lee Smith to First Church, Savannah, GA, as youth minister

July 13
National
Convention
Day of
Prayer



The Radio-TV Commission

On Target With The Dream

By Steve Faison

During the 1983 national convention in Columbus, Ohio, Free Will Baptists approved the testing of a new Radio-Television Commission. It was with great anticipation that our denomination turned in that direction.

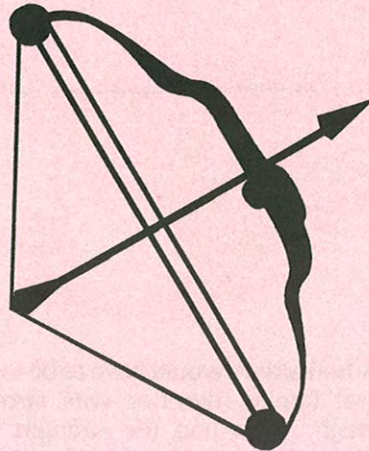
A decade later, delegates to the national convention in Louisville, Kentucky, asked me to serve on the Radio-Television Commission. With a sense of nervousness and awe, I accepted the position. I felt that a great responsibility was placed on me as I worked alongside men who had blazed trails before me.

The men who served prior to me on this commission saw a dream come to fruition. A dream to share the gospel of Jesus Christ under the auspices of Free Will Baptists through means of radio. *Victorious Faith*, a 15-minute radio broadcast was aired in several markets across the denomination.

The plan was simple. The Commission would provide cassettes to radio stations and the churches would pay stations for the air time. A one-time fee to the Commission would get the process started and help defray shipping and production costs. The cassettes would rotate and could be reused for years to come.

Realizing the changes in media and society since the inception of the Commission and *Victorious Faith*, the Commission is reevaluating our service to the denomination. In media, technology rules much of what we are able to see and do today. Some say the media dictate what society thinks, others say it's reciprocated. Society dictates what we want and media meets the desire.

In either case, we are finding out that a 15-minute broadcast may not be meeting the needs of our denomination. The Commission's aim was,



and continues to be, to serve the entire denomination's goals.

Currently, each member of the Commission has an area of expertise to offer. The expertise ranges from experience in the fields of radio, television, music and technical support to the fields of business and marketing. Every member is committed to collectively doing what is in the best interest of our denomination. We hope you will be pleased with the results.

Fulfilling our charter, the Commission is pioneering new areas within our denomination. We believe we are well within the direction of the national convention set for us in 1983. Endeavoring to keep that spirit alive, we present to you *The Arrow*, the first professionally-produced television commercial for the Free Will Baptist denomination.

This was a joint effort between the Commission and the Florida State Association of Free Will Baptists seeking to bring the highest quality technology to represent our denomination. With the concept approved by both the Commission and Florida Free Will Baptists, Commission member Ron Hunter (FL), led in the production work. We can now assist churches in placing this commercial on the air.

The Commission is building on the foundation set before us in 1983. Strong leadership in blazing those trails with dreams have set an example for us to do the same. Blaze the trails with us as we dream and see our dreams come to fruition to the glory of God.

In the television commercial, *The Arrow*, we specifically target men and women ages 25-54 in order to send a strong family-oriented message. Using Florida as a test market, the Commission expects positive responses from both churches and communities. We will report that data to you at the 1997 convention in Cincinnati.

Would you consider inquiring how you and your church and/or association could benefit from airing this challenging family message to your community? Come to Cincinnati and see the premier of the commercial to our national body. Stop by the Radio-TV booth and let us share with you our dream! If you are unable to attend the convention but would still like to share our dream, write or call the Commission at:

Steve Faison, Chairman
6700 Cabot Drive A-5
Nashville, TN 37209
615/353-7210

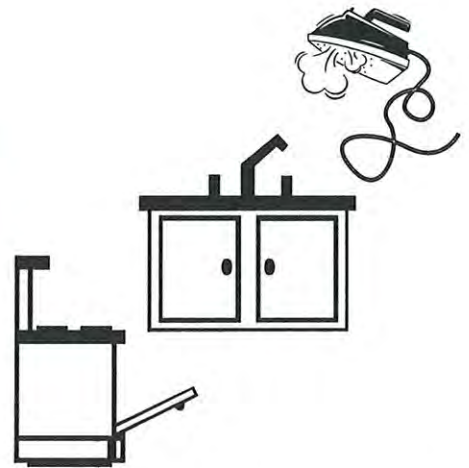
Jim Vallance, Sec./Treas.
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011
615/731-4950 ext. 281

Ron Hunter, *The Arrow*
3637 Old Bainbridge Road
Tallahassee, FL 32303
904/562-8024

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Steve Faison chairs the Radio-Television Commission.

Heart of a Servant

By Becky (Fry) Gwartney



The news was out . . . my mother, at age 61, had gone home to Glory. My mind seemed fogged over. I couldn't think straight. The phone kept ringing and the same story was told again and again. Each time I said it or heard it, the last few hours of my mother's life were re-lived in my heart and mind.

People were constantly stopping by—some with food, some with flowers—all with love and concern for the loved ones left behind. Friends and neighbors gave their condolences and offered their help.

"If I can do anything, anything at all, just let me know," they said. We knew that most of them meant it. Most of these close friends would drop what they were doing to help our suffering family. In our state of shock and sadness, we couldn't function with our own daily necessities. How could we tell another person what needed to be done?

Yes, there were many things to do . . . washing dishes, caring for the children, preparing clothes for the funeral, answering the phone, greeting people at the door, keeping the house presentable, taking flowers from the delivery people, making funeral arrangements . . . on and on the list went. How could we function and keep on top of things in our state of mind?

Once more we heard the doorbell and knew that the details of the past

few hours/days would have to be told. What family member was strong enough? Who had the strength to, once again, cry with a friend as they shed tears on our shoulders for our mom . . . and for us?

Suddenly the door opened. With a heart full of love and concern, a dear friend walked through that front door and hugged each one. Her eyes filled with tears as she shared in our grief. She didn't stop at the front door, though, but looked around at this family that had just lost its "queen" and asked, "Now, what needs to be done?"

"Oh, we're all right," we said, not really knowing what was needed and what had been neglected.

"Okay, I'll start in the kitchen," she said as she walked past the cluster of family members gathered in the living room.

The next several hours our family relaxed and recuperated. Meals were served, the dishes washed and put away, laundry and ironing done, clothes prepared for the funeral, the phone and front door answered, messages taken for family members, stories read to the children . . . as our "Florence Nightingale" rescued our exhausted family.

Did this friend *offer* to "do anything"? No, she just *did it!* And, in so doing, she taught our family one of the greatest lessons in being a servant—don't *offer* to be one, just *be* one!

Paul said in Philippians 2:3-7 (NIV),

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus; who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."

Thank you, Marge Workman, for "*taking on the very nature of a servant*" in our family's time of greatest need and for teaching us, by example, how to be more like Christ! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Becky (Fry) Gwartney is a member of Parkview Free Will Baptist Church in Desloge, Missouri.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mrs. Marge Workman, the willing servant who helped the Fry family in their time of sorrow, is dean of women at Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee.

These People Are Different

By Levan Hubbard

I was reared, taught and churched in Arkansas as a Free Will Baptist. I remember good times of summer revivals when people got saved, and a country community where most people who lived in the community had the same standards of morality and way of looking at life and the church. Everyone around had heard the gospel and knew how to get saved. I especially liked the potluck dinners or when the preacher, who drove a long way to our church, came to our house for lunch.

Now, I pastor in the city and *these people are different*. While we all would like to have a country church with a community atmosphere in the city, it is not possible for every church to be alike. I think our church is as spiritual as the one you like best. But I have come to realize that we must minister to those in our community with methods and worship that will reach people best.

If we schedule a summer revival, almost no one comes because of their busy schedules. Even potluck dinners don't have nearly the excitement of days gone by because people are used to eating out.

No longer can we expect the church to be the center of social life as it was 50 years ago (unless we have social events.) People around here do not know the songs we have always sung. We sang "Amazing Grace" recently without our books, and almost no one knew it.

They do not know what the Lord can do in our lives and what important role the church can play in our lives. People used to gather at the summer revival and as a consequence of being there and hearing the preaching, they got saved. Yet, there are people within rock-throwing distance of our church who have

never heard the gospel.

The responsibility no longer is just for the preacher to preach good with God's anointing.

Now, along with that, everyone must personally witness, invite, influence and pray for people to be won to Christ. Some will not be saved by walking the aisle at invitation time, but by personal one-on-one evangelism by a caring individual who represents Christ and the church.

You have heard this statement, "We don't want people like that." In other words, people who are not like us are not welcome in our churches. No wonder it is hard to reach people; there are few people like me.

I have heard some say, "We need a church in that city because there are some Free Will Baptist families there." While potentially that should help build a core group, home missionaries do not go to a city to find Free Will Baptists, but to convert sinners and teach them to be followers of Christ. When we do that, they then join the Free Will Baptist family.

Personally, I have been uncomfortable at times with people who were different from me. A man who: had a pony tail, drank alcohol, didn't follow my dress code, had a different religious background, used bad language. . . . At times I backed off because I didn't know how to handle it.

The church has forgotten that Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

I don't want to lower the standard by any means. I also don't want to be intimidated any longer because people I minister to are not like me. I get very frustrated trying to change people and arguing over things that only God can do in people. Anyone should be able to attend our churches. They will not have godly standards until they meet Christ and are transformed

by the renewing of their minds.

Members and leaders should exemplify the standard God set and then those who come can be taught to follow. I know that coming to Christ still changes lives. If we are following and we teach them to follow Him, then we all become like Christ. We will not be different any longer.

We must realize that our standards, lifestyle, worship style and ideas we hold dear will be challenged when "different people" start asking "why do we do this" and similar questions. The truth is, if things we are doing are scriptural convictions, it will only make us stronger in our resolve to do them. If they are not, when challenged, we might find a better way.

These "different people" are the ones Christ came to save. They are the future inhabitants of Heaven, because they are children who have been separated from and need a Savior. Notice the people who kept company with Jesus.

These "different people" are the future for the church and our denomination. We need to find them where they are and bring them to Him. After all, the Great Commission does say, Go. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Levan Hubbard is a home missionary who pastors Rolling Oaks Free Will Baptist Church in Maumelle, Arkansas.

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Hillsdale Names Carl Cheshier President

MOORE, OK—The Reverend Carl Cheshier, moderator of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, has been named president of Hillsdale FWB College, according to Will Harmon, chairman of the college's Board of Trustees. Cheshier, a 58-year-old Oklahoma native, begins his new duties August 1. He succeeds Rev. Jim Shepherd who resigned this spring.

Trustees' chairman Will Harmon said, "We are fortunate and extremely excited about Brother Carl coming to Hillsdale. He brings experience, knowledge and vision to the school. He is committed to quality education among our people and will focus on the training of ministry related degrees. The future is bright at Hillsdale FWB College."

Reverend Cheshier said that two of his primary responsibilities will focus on fund raising and student recruitment, "I want us to



make some positive changes in these areas as well as other adjustments on campus."

Cheshier brings a wide range of denominational and administrative experiences to the presidency. Elected moderator of the National Association in 1996, he served the previous nine years as assistant moderator.

He led the Arkansas State As-

sociation 18 years as moderator, completing his tenure in 1993. Cheshier has served as pastor of Cavanaugh FWB Church in Fort Smith for 28 years.

He began pastoring in 1957 in Prague, Oklahoma, spent four years in Richmond, California, as a youth pastor; then pastored five years in Star City, Arkansas, and one year in Midland, Texas, before moving to his extended pastorate with the Cavanaugh FWB Church in 1969.

In addition, Cheshier served 12 years on the Sunday School and Church Training Board (1975-1987) and five years on the Arkansas Mission Board.

Converted in 1955, Brother Cheshier was ordained to the ministry in 1956 at age 18. He is an alumnus of the University of Arkansas. Carl and Barbara Cheshier have two adult children. The Cheshiers' last Sunday at Cavanaugh Church will be July 27.

46 Attend New Mexico District

CARLSBAD, NM—Forty-six delegates, ministers and visitors met April 10-12 at Carlsbad FWB Church for the 29th annual New Mexico District Association, according to Clerk Doris Heard. Moderator Len Blanchard led the business sessions.

Delegates instructed the Executive Board to word necessary constitutional changes needed so that the organization could officially make the transition from

state to district status.

The group also agreed to a constitutional change retroactive to 1996 that mandates electing officers every two years.

Special recognition was given to three young men who have been called to preach—Buddy Pollock, Steward Swafford and Justin Swafford.

Four sermons punctuated the three-day gathering. Messages were delivered by Fred Bailey

(Texas), Melvin Worthington (Tenn.), Richard Adams (Tenn.) and Billy Wilson (N.M.).

The New Mexico Women Active for Christ sponsored a Friday banquet. Guest speaker Anne (Mrs. Melvin) Worthington spoke on the subject of prayer.

The 1998 district association will meet April 16-18 at Artesia FWB Church.

Rev. Frank Davenport With The Lord

GOLDSBORO, NC—Longtime North Carolina pastor and church planter, Rev. Frank Davenport, died April 10 in Goldsboro of a heart attack. He was 73. His ministry spanned 45 years in North Carolina and Kentucky. He was a native of Pitt County.

Reverend Davenport organized 12 Free Will Baptist churches in North Carolina where he spent most of his ministry. He also helped start four Christian schools—two in Goldsboro, one in Warsaw and one in Hookerton.

His longest pastorate was a 20-year tenure at Faith FWB Church in Goldsboro, one of the 12 churches he organized.

Other North Carolina pastorates included First FWB Church in Goldsboro, Tippet's Chapel FWB Church in Clayton, Johnson Union FWB Church in Smithfield, Faith FWB Church in Kinston, Hugo FWB Church in Grifton,



First FWB Church in Tarboro, First FWB Church in Grifton and Elm Grove FWB Church in Ayden.

Converted at age 24, Brother Davenport was ordained to preach five years later in 1952. His influence spread well beyond local pastorates. He was elected to numerous positions of leadership both in North Carolina and on the national level.

He served with distinction six

years on the national Home Missions Board, and on the national Executive Committee. He also served on the North Carolina State Home Missions Board and the Bible Book Store Board. He served as manager of Camp Jubilee, Inc., and as treasurer of the FWB Superannuation Association.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday, April 12, in Goldsboro. Reverends Bobby Jackson and A. C. Morgan officiated. A tribute service was conducted at Faith FWB Church in Goldsboro on April 13 with Pastor Dann Patrick officiating.

Brother Davenport is survived by his wife Bertha; two sons, Wayne Davenport of Topsail Island and Donald Davenport of Pikeville; two sisters; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Carolina Senior Chosen FWBBC Student President

NASHVILLE, TN—Matthew Price, a senior from Belmont, North Carolina, was elected to a second term as Student Body President at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Elections were held in early April when students tapped the youth ministry major for a second year in the office.

Kristy Douglas, a junior from St. Anne, Illinois, was elected vice president. Kristy majors in secondary education.

Other 1997-98 student officers are: Cristina McClary (secretary-treasurer)—a junior Eng-

lish major from Omaha, Nebraska.

David Mizelle (chaplain)—a junior youth ministry minor from Chesapeake, Virginia.

Matt McAfee (worship leader)—a junior pastoral training major from Woodstock, N.B., Canada.

FWBBC officials are confident these outstanding young people will set worthy examples for students to follow as the new school year begins in the fall. Please pray for them and for all the members of the Free Will Baptist Bible College family.



(L) Matt Price, Kristy Douglas, Cristina McClary, David Mizelle, Matt McAfee.

Randall House Announces Enlargement Campaign Results

NASHVILLE, TN—The following Sunday Schools earned first and second place in the Spring Sunday School Enlargement Campaign sponsored by Randall House Publications. Plaques were prepared for each first and second place church in their respective division.

Church	City	State	%	#
Division D				
1. First FWB Church	Checotah	OK	6.8	15
2. First FWB Church	Farmington	MO	6.7	20
Division E				
1. First FWB Church	Northport	AL	20.3	33
2. Phillips Chapel FWB Church	Springdale	AR	19.7	31
Division F				
1. Heritage Temple FWB Church	Ashland	KY	82.5	123
2. Goodwater FWB Church	Newton	AL	44.5	45
Division G				
1. Keensburg FWB Church	Elizabethton	TN	138.2	94
2. Eggville FWB Church	Tupelo	MS	50.	45
Division H				
1. Buncombe FWB Church	Carthage	TX	125.	30
2. Stage Road FWB Church	Willowsprings	NC	120.	42

Pastor Tim York of Heritage Temple FWB Church in Ashland, Kentucky, said, "Our church has just completed the most successful Sunday School campaign in its history."

"It was the best Sunday School enlargement in the history of our church," said Pastor Mark Street of Keensburg FWB Church in Elizabethton, Tennessee.

The fall enlargement campaign will use the theme, "Adopt A Family." The campaign encourages church families to build relationships with unchurched families and then lead them to Christ.

Southeastern Sets Fall Opening

WENDELL, NC—Southeastern FWB College opens its 15th year of operation August 25 with a three-day revival, according to President Billy Bevan. Arizona home missionary Howard Gwartney will preach the kick-off campus revival as students register for classes.

Reverend Gwartney pastors East Valley FWB Church in Mesa, Arizona. He will speak four times. The Gwartney family (wife Patsy; daughters Brooke and Fawn) will sing during each service. Brooke

Gwartney will enroll as a freshman at Southeastern this fall.

Brother Gwartney began the mission church 10 years ago in Mesa. Dr. Billy Bevan (Southeastern's president) and Rev. Jack Lassiter (assistant to the president) both traveled to Arizona in the fall of 1996 to preach in the Mesa church.

Opening services are scheduled at First FWB Church in Raleigh. The campus revival services will be conducted in the college chapel.

309 Attend Bible College's Welcome Days

NASHVILLE, TN—Some 309 visitors from 16 states attended Free Will Baptist Bible College's spring Welcome Days in Nashville, March 27-29, according to Kenny Simpson, recruitment director.

Registration figures revealed that 223 visiting students and 86 parents and sponsors made up the Welcome Days crowd. Of the visiting students, 52 were high school seniors who are considering FWBBC in their educational futures.

Georgia, with 28, had the greatest number of visiting students, followed by Michigan (27), Tennessee (26), North Carolina (22) and Alabama (20).

The visitors attended classes and chapel, and enjoyed special events planned for them.

Mr. Simpson noted that several recent FWBBC graduates brought prospective students to the campus. "This expression of loyalty and support was recognized by several faculty and staff members," he said. "It is always a joy to see our graduates come back home."

He also observed that Welcome Days made a powerful spiritual impact on the visitors. "One of our students, K. C. Kohn, a junior from Decatur, Illinois, gave his testimony of how the Lord saved him during a Welcome Days visit. He challenged the young people to trust the Lord with their lives. He gave an invitation and many made decisions for the Lord."

The next Welcome Days is scheduled for November 13-15. For information, please write or call the college:

Welcome Days
Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205
1-800-76-FWBBC
Email: ksimpson@fwbbc.edu

37 in Bible College Class of 1997

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College graduated 37 students from 16 states and Canada in commencement exercises held on campus Thursday, May 15.

By classes, the college granted 12 Bachelor of Arts Degrees, 21 Bachelor of Science degrees, three Associate of Christian Ministries degrees, and one Associate of Science in Business degree. Ten members of the class have prepared for pastoral or youth ministries. Among the B.S. degree graduates, 11 are business administration majors and eight majored in education.

President Tom Malone honored two members of the faculty and staff who recently left the college. Dr. Stanley Outlaw is leaving the biblical ministries faculty after 31 years of teaching at FWBBC. He will pastor Woodbine FWB Church (Nashville) and continue to teach part-time at the college. Mrs. Ann Beech was honored for 29 years of work in the food service area.

Dr. Malone also honored Margaret Hampton and Tom Sass for competing 25 years of service to the college.

Commencement included the awarding of these

other honors:

Yearbook Editor's Medal: Melissa Hale, Taylor Ridge, IL

Student Body President's Medal: Matt Price, Belmont, NC

Best All-around Students: Amber Whatley, Slocomb, AL; Bobby Edwards, Springdale, AR

Class Medalists:

Freshman: Amy Campbell, Kinston, NC

Sophomore: Allysa Hampton, Nashville, TN

Junior: Jeff Caudill, Wayne, MI; Liz Rasar, Decatur, IL

Senior: Stephanie Utley, Marion, IL

Delta Epsilon Chi Honor Society: Jennifer Chamberlin, Wheelersburg, OH; Stephanie Utley, Marion, IL; Eric Paugh, Nettie, WV

Faculty Advisor of the Year: Suzann Harris (teacher education)

Society Spirit Awards: Louisa May Alcott Society (women) and William Jennings Bryan Society (men)

The following are members of the graduating class of 1997:

Associate of Science in Business Degree

Melissa Lynne Hale
Taylor Ridge, IL

Associate of Christian Ministries Degrees

Joseph W. Beckon
Slocomb, AL
Johnny F. Lewis, Sr.
Cordele, GA
Jimmie Dianne Thompson
Macungie, PA

Bachelor of Science Degrees

James L. Beck
Norfolk, VA
Tonya Lyn Blanchard
Carlsbad, NM
Jason Paul Corn
Wabash, IN
Robert F. Edwards
Springdale, AR
Vickie Laraine Francis
Newport, TN
Julie Elizabeth Grindstaff
Elizabethton, TN
Shannon Gabriel Hale
Falkville, AL
Charity Yvonne Delene Humbles
Ayden, NC
Donald Wallace Jones
Mt. Juliet, TN
Kerri Leigh Maggart
Granite City, IL

Lora Johnson McClintock
Alma, GA
Stephanie Camille McElhaney
Bratt, FL
Eric E. Paugh
Nettie, WV
William J. Picklesimer, II
Wabash, IN
Don J. Price
Murfreesboro, TN
Tracy Lynn Sims
Olanta, SC
Laura Danielle Thompson
Chapmansboro, TN
Kristal Jolie Tidwell
Fairview, TN

Stephanie Uline Utley
Marion, IL
Tyra S. Utley
Marion, IL
Amber Darlene Whatley
Slocomb, AL

Bachelor of Arts Degrees

Jennifer Dawn Chamberlin
Wheelersburg, OH
Bryant Scott Harris
Ashland City, TN
John Britt Howell
Webb, AL
Sara Hope Humbles
Ayden, NC

Wesley Ryan McDougald
Blountstown, FL
Stephen Kent Nelson
Guin, AL
Lesa Geraye Parker
Hamilton, AL
Jeremy Damon Lee Raymer
Pleasant View, TN
L. Gail J. Rhodes
St. Louis, MO
Daniel Blaine Rogers
Nashville, TN
William Albert Rushing, II
Burnsville, MS
Pamela Shoemaker
Arthurette, N.B. Canada



Folks in **South Carolina** developed a new twist on fund raisers for the **FWB Home for Children in Turbeville**. They just concluded their third annual fox hunt at the Eastern Carolina Fox Hunters Paradise Pens. This year's hunt not only included dogs and a fox but a band as well. More than \$16,500 was raised for the Home.

Pastor **Randy Hill** printed a well-written article on the front page of the April issue of *Calvary News* detailing "Our Free Will Baptist Heritage." The 11-paragraph article traces Free Willers all the way back to England. Hill pastors **Calvary Chapel FWB Church in Hollywood, FL**.

Members of **Fellowship FWB Church in Bryan, TX**, completed a 4,000-square-foot metal building called the Fellowship Family Center. The building cost \$100,000 to erect. **Lynn Wood** pastors.

SouthPointe FWB Church in Arlington, TX, distributed 10,000 copies of a full-color mailer inviting area residents to church. **Brad Hanna** pastors.

More than \$220,000 in recent pledges moved Pastor **Will Harmon** to call for ground breaking on a new building at **Collin Creek FWB Church in Plano, TX**.

Pastor **John Hollis** reports 10 baptisms, six new members and a mid-week prayer meeting attendance of 81. Hollis leads **Crossroads FWB Church in Effingham, IL**.

Pastor **Raymond Capps** led members of **New Hope FWB Church in Ina, IL**, to give \$1,000 to Home Missionary David Potete for the Chicago property fund. The church also gave \$1,000 to Foreign Missionary Dennis Owen to build a church in Uruguay.

The youth at **Ina FWB Church in Ina, IL**, collected 310 pounds of coins for missions. The Woman's Auxiliary raised \$1,100 for missions by giving each person \$1 to use in making more money. One person spent the dollar for gas to go to work and work an extra shift. **David Shores** pastors.

Members of **First FWB Church in**

Ypsilanti, MI, witnessed 14 conversions one Sunday morning. Pastor **Rudy Shankle** called it a revival.

Free Will Baptists are returning to Hillsdale . . . **Michigan**, that is. Eighty-six years after the Randall movement merged with the Northern Baptist Convention carrying with it 600 churches and Hillsdale College, Pastor **Ray Wilson** started **Osseo FWB Mission** in the Hillsdale area. The group purchased four acres and plan to build. They reported 18 in attendance by April.

After 16 months at the new mission work (**Lake Hills FWB Church**) in **Hot Springs, AR**, Pastor **Don Guthrie** reports 29 baptisms and worship services averaging 100.

Calvary Fellowship FWB Church in Fenton, MO, voted to build a new family life center in 1993, but had to delay construction because of no money in the bank. Pastor **Jerry Norris** said the construction finally got under way four years later (April 1997). The church began the project with no debt and \$200,000 in the bank. That's worth the wait!

Friend Day at **Peace FWB Church in Wilson, NC**, was a real barn burner. Six hundred visitors showed up. Pastor **Gordon Sebastian** reports 11 conversions, 23 rededications and 33 other public commitments.

Home Missionary **Danny Keen** baptized 11 and received four new members at **Landmark FWB Church in Anderson, SC**.

Thirty years ago, members of **First FWB Church in Inman, SC**, called **Earl Hendrix** as pastor. Three decades later he's still there. The church found a unique way to say "thank you." They bought Pastor Hendrix a 1997 Cadillac Deville. By the way, this makes the sixth car those thoughtful folks have provided for their pastor. Way to go, church! Drive carefully, Preacher.

During the week of March 10-14, Pastor **Stanley Konopinski** of **Trinity FWB Church in Oklahoma City, OK**, served as chaplain for the Oklahoma

State Senate. Konopinski began the daily Senate sessions with prayer, and on Thursday delivered a 10-minute presentation. His topic for the week was, "Remembering the principles which made America great." He said the highlight of the week came Wednesday when he led a joint session of the state Congress in prayer.

Pastor **Cliff Donoho** reports 26 first-time visitors, five conversions, 14 new members and six baptisms at **Heritage Temple FWB Church in Davenport, IA**.

Oregon Trail FWB Church in Oregon City, OR, reports 27 conversions and 30 baptisms. **Darrell Smith** pastors.

Possums in the attic, drug dealers on the corner and cactus as high as a tall Okie. That's how **Bud and Ruth Bivens** described events as they worked to pour the footing at **Word of Life FWB Church**. The Bivens operate out of **Reynosa** near the **Texas/Mexico** border.

Pastor **Homer Young** reports a record \$47,000 income at **El Reno FWB Church in El Reno, OK**, for 1996. The group now has a new building with a paved parking lot on five acres. The mission work has more than 200 families on a prospect list.

Forest Hill FWB Church in Adel, GA, added two Sunday School rooms as well as a new heat and air system. **Mitchell Deems** pastors.

Pastor **Bruce Beal** reports 19 baptisms and 15 new members at **First FWB Church in Austintown, OH**.

First FWB Church in Chillicothe, OH, airs a television program on Thursday afternoons. Pastor **Lawrence Barnes** baptized four converts.

Pastor **Ronnie Drake** reports 11 conversions, 14 baptisms and 26 new members at **First FWB Church in Eufaula, OK**. ■



FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

A Gift of a Lifetime

By Frank Giunta

I hung up the phone and reached for my city map of Oakland, California. It was just as I suspected. My caller, Ms. Julie, was living in the heart of a city experiencing problems with a motorcycle gang. I was glad my appointment with her was for Tuesday afternoon instead of Friday evening.

I discovered when checking the history of this dear lady that she had contributed a large sum of money designated to her favorite ministry.

A field man filled me in on her story. She had felt the Lord's leadership to make a special gift. She sold her home and attempted to give all the money to the ministry, but the field man felt that she should retain enough money to provide for her own personal needs, then give the rest to the Lord's work.

Ms. Julie agreed hesitantly, and the field man took her check and returned to the main office. He hadn't been home but a couple of days when he received a phone call from her, "I want you to come back," she said, "I have been having an awful time since you left. God told me to give the entire amount of the sale of my home to His work and because of your insistence I only gave a part." Needless to say the field man returned and took the rest of the money.

God doesn't always call on us to make such sacrificial gifts as He did with Ms. Julie. He does require us to obey Him in whatever He asks of us.

Perhaps you have felt the Lord's leadership to make a special gift. You're willing but you just don't see how you can in light of your family's and your own personal needs.

Here are some possibilities. If you have investments such as stocks, bonds, property or other increased-in-value assets, you could make a gift of these to the ministry to fund a *trust*. The *trust* would provide you with income for a stated period of time or for a lifetime if needed, and then it would pass to the ministry to finance its outreach.

Here are four possible benefits: (1) you would have a part in the ministry that God has burdened your heart with; (2) if you give the right kind of gift, you could eliminate the capital gains tax you would normally pay if you sold the asset yourself; (3) you will be providing dependable lifetime income for you and your

family; (4) depending on the kind of gift you give and the arrangement you make, you could get a nice tax credit as well as partially sheltered income. All nice pluses.

If you are considering a special gift to the Lord's work and would like to know the best possible way of making that gift, contact me at my home office 573/335-6240 or you may contact me through the Free Will Baptist Foundation, P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, Tennessee 37011-5002. ■



A Christian Education is your best investment!

Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205

1-800-76-FWBBC
www.fwbcc.edu



HOME MISSIONS

Roll Call Sunday

By Richard Adams

Big days don't just happen! For weeks, even months before March 30, our churches set goals for individuals, classes, departments and an overall goal for their special day. Planning sessions are conducted to challenge teachers and leaders and strategies are put into action.

Prayer is one of the main ingredients used to successfully reach the established goals. Cottage prayer meetings are scheduled. Each church service is saturated with prayer to reach the attendance goal and unchurched people with the gospel.

Many methods are used to help attain these goals. Having a *Friend Day* has proven to be very successful. Other special days have been used such as *Family Day*, *Old Fashioned Day* and *Law Enforcement Day*.

On March 29 all the workers meet at church for last-minute instructions and for special prayer asking God's help in reaching goals in attendance and souls saved. Early March 30, the pastor and workers meet for preparations for the great day. About 9:00 in the morning, folks start pulling into the parking area. Designated greeters meet visitors on the parking lot and at the door; ushers are busy seating people.

You can feel the excitement as the building starts filling. Church members move around the auditorium shaking hands and welcoming visitors. Then, you begin to notice among the arrivals are unsaved visitors for whom you have been praying! In children's church the workers warmly greet the children and anticipate a great

service with them.

In the main auditorium every seat is filled. An S.O.S. announcement is made (Scoot Over Some). The excitement of the large crowd is contagious. Musicians play a heart-warming prelude. At 11:00 a.m. sharp the choir enters and the service begins with a familiar hymn. The choir sings songs that touch the heart, special music is presented, and the pastor stands to proclaim the good news. The invitation is given and precious souls come forward to be saved. The many weeks of prayer and planning have now paid off.

Our 1997 Roll Call Sunday on March 30, was a great day for Free Will Baptists. Our church attendance totaled 271,457 and 1,410 souls saved! Many of our churches worked hard and successfully to reach their goal. Whether your goal was 50 or 500, if your church did all it could to achieve success, then it was a great day.

Our Home Missions churches had 5,025 people present (not including Mexico) with 74 people saved. The mission churches averaged 109 per church in attendance. Three home missionaries—Ron Dail, Russell Wright, and Jim Fairchild had over 300 in attendance at their respective churches. Thirty people were saved in Jim's church in Maryland. The big day enjoyed by our missionaries is proof that big days don't just happen. They require much prayer, planning, and work.

Here are the top ten churches in attendance for Roll Call Sunday, March 30, 1997. ■

Church	Pastor	City/State	Attendance	Saved
Cornerstone FWB Church	Curtis Linton	Tulsa, OK	3,116	393
Gateway FWB Church	Karl Sexton	Virginia Beach, VA	1,898	63
Faith FWB Church	David Archer	Glenpool, OK	1,656	31
Bethel FWB Church	Archie Ratliff	Kinston, NC	1,357	9
Lighthouse FWB Church	Mickey Kirkland	Montgomery, AL	1,265	22
Faith FWB Church	Dann Patrick	Goldsboro, NC	1,215	54
Peace FWB Church	Gordon Sebastian	Wilson, NC	1,143	20
First FWB Church	Claudie Hames	Bakersfield, CA	1,127	5
First FWB Church	Roger Duncan	Seffner, FL	1,113	1
Woodhaven FWB Church	Loyd Locklear	Woodhaven, MI	1,102	4

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

A Christ-Centered Approach to Psychology

By Dr. Bradley Thomas, FWBBC Faculty

"You won't eat the food of the king?"

I can imagine that this reaction is probably not far from what actually occurred when Daniel refused the king's rich food. The king's stewards were likely astonished that Daniel and his four companions chose to eat vegetables and water instead of the best the Babylonians had to offer. Daniel and many young men of Israel were in captivity in order to be reeducated. They were given the best Babylonian education consisting of Chaldean language and literature. Daniel took full advantage of the education but refused to defile himself with the king's food. That which was inconsistent with his religious beliefs he refused.

Today a tension exists between psychology and Christianity. Some people believe that psychology and counseling have no place in the Church. These people believe that to use any psychological principle is equal to eating the king's rich food. Many in psychological circles think that belief in God is unhealthy. These people argue that such a belief is irrational or neurotic. Still others believe that a point of integration can be delineated between the two disciplines. These individuals seek to define a commonality within the purpose of psychology and Christianity.

In my education I have devoted much time reading and thinking about this issue. As an ordained minister, teacher, and marriage and family therapist, it is important for me to have a system of belief and thought about this issue which is consistent with my Christian beliefs. Yet, I am not satisfied with any of the integrational models I have read.

Daniel gives us a model for the correct way to deal with the question of how psychology and Christianity relate. Daniel took the best education the Babylonians had to offer and made it his. Later the Bible tells us that Daniel continued to worship God despite the threat of being thrown into the lion's den.

In the same way I believe that we should learn what psychology as a discipline has to offer. This is what I encourage students to do in my classes. However, psychology has some elements that we, as Christians, oppose. An appropriate model of integration holds God and His revelation to us as the central tenant. All other teachings come under subjection to God and the Bible. The

revelation that our God gave us through the Bible should be a filter through which we determine which elements are consistent with our beliefs. As Christians we keep those principles of psychology which are consistent with the Scriptures and reject the principles inconsistent with our beliefs. What remains is a *Christ-centered psychology*.

Is this not what Daniel did when he took the education of the Babylonians but refused to compromise himself with the rich food of the king? The Bible tells us that after three years of education, Daniel and his companions proved to be ten times wiser and more intelligent than the best Babylonian magicians and sorcerers. They had taken the education without the rich food, yet exceeded the expectations of the king.

Using a Christ-centered approach, we can take psychology, filter the contents through the Holy Spirit, and exceed anything secular mental health professionals offer. Christ-centered psychologists and counselors can point people to a right relationship with the Living God through right relationships with his or her fellow man. This means holding people accountable for their actions by encouraging them to take responsibility for what they do.

I believe that God can do great things through men and women who are willing to take the challenge of the Christ-centered approach. Anyone willing to take the challenge must realize it is not an easy path to tread. One must be willing to learn and to stand up for that which is consistent with Biblical principles. That is the challenge, and that is what I encourage my students to do. ■



Dr. Thomas earned his doctorate in Psychology and Counseling in 1995 from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy.

He joined the FWBBC faculty in 1996 and teaches psychology and counseling courses.



Dennis Wiggs

Major On Witnessing

If anyone should faithfully witness, it ought to be the preacher. Your efforts should center around telling the unconverted about Jesus Christ. Focus your ministry around evangelism.

Witness kindly and wisely to the convenience store clerk, barber, delivery person. Community citizens expect a preacher to speak about spiritual things.

Gospel Literature

Leave tracts with proper tips at restaurants. Deposit a tract in every restroom. Place tracts in doctors' offices, beauty/barber shops, train stations, airports, etc. Randall House stocks several excellent tracts written by Free Will Baptists. Call 1-800-877-7030 for a catalog.

Tracts should be neat, not torn or wrinkled. Don't write on them. Handle them with prayer. For years, I have used a church brochure that includes an invitation to attend services, map to the church, statements about the pastor and a gospel message. My E-mail address where you may request a sample is—dwiggs@juno.com.

Gospel Calendars

Good News Publishers (Wheaton, IL) produces a colorful, pocket calendar. It includes church name and address on the calendar side and gospel message on the opposite side. It can also be used as a calling card. This effective tool advertises your church as well as presenting the gospel.

Postal Service

Witness via mail. Almost every company sends advertising literature with the bill. Pay the bill on time and include a tract in the return envelope. Only God knows the number of con-

versions through this type witnessing.

Church Bulletin

Bulletins are expensive pieces of paper unless your congregation takes them home. Remove the order of service (that most people ignore) and include a gospel message. Many people who refuse to attend church services read your bulletin. Every week the bulletin should present the gospel in an interesting, challenging way.

Pass out the bulletin when you visit shut-ins, hospitals, rest homes, prisoners. Make the plan of salvation clear. Use the printed page to invite sinners to Christ, explain church membership and the meaning of baptism.

Schedule Visitation

In this fast-paced society, many church members will not participate in a night of visiting the unchurched. If even one or two show up, thank the Lord for those faithful few. Use them as productively as possible. Distribute tracts from house to house. Place gospel literature in the hands of each participant to leave in homes they visit.

Personal Soul Winning

Get out of that study. Be known as a visiting pastor. Develop a list of unsaved in your community. Pray for them daily by name. Seek them out periodically. Ask the Lord to use you to win people to Christ.

The citizens in your community should know that if they have spiritual problems, your church is the place to go. You are the preacher to contact. News travels fast when you're known as an avid witness for Christ. Rewards are not available for spending time in front of the computer monitor.

Ministry of Witnessing

Gear the entire church program around presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ to the community. Women's meetings, men's fellowships, church school and day care, choir specials, Christmas/Easter specials—every program should be a ministry to reach the lost for Christ.

Major on evangelism. Don't neglect prayer, Bible study, counseling, administration and other pastoral responsibilities. But keep the driving determination to win people to Christ at the top.

Preaching

Preaching expository messages is splendid. That type of heart/mind preparation produces excellent sermons. Well-balanced, pulpit messages, however, must include the gospel that points to a saving knowledge of Christ. Realize that in every congregation someone has a needy heart.

Produce Soul-Winners

"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples," the scriptures declare. Once a sinner trusts Christ as personal Savior, get that new convert in a Bible study (E-mail, write or call me; I will give you a sample of one I wrote). Train the new Christian to witness. Explain verses to use to win a sinner to Christ. Encourage evangelistic outreach on the job and in the community.

Most Important

Be careful, preacher-friend. You can easily get involved in everything else that seems to be so important. Major on soul-winning. To win a sinner to Christ is "like being saved all over again." There is nothing more exciting. Let witnessing to the unconverted be the driving force behind your day-by-day activities. ■



Robert E. Picirilli

Matthew—The Tax Collector

Even today a tax collector isn't very much appreciated, and it was worse among the Jews of Jesus' day. They were in subjection to the Gentile Romans, and tax collectors ("publicans" in the King James), who collected money for the hated overlords, were considered traitors.

Matthew was such a man. His name appears in all four lists (Mt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15; Acts 1:13), always in this form and usually next to Thomas. But the only incident involving him by name, described in the gospels, is his call.

This appears in all three synoptics (Mt. 9:9ff; Mk. 2:14ff; Lu. 5:27ff), in two of which (Mark, Luke) the name used is Levi instead of Matthew. That the two names refer to the same person is beyond doubt.

Perhaps the fact that the name is Matthew in what was apparently his own version of the Gospel means that he preferred to be known thus. Levi and Matthew are both honored Hebrew names—Levi tracing all the way back to one of Jacob's sons, Matthew meaning "gift of God."

Some think Levi was the name his parents gave him, Matthew a new name assigned by Jesus, but we can't be sure of that. Since Mark 2:14 calls him "son of Alphaeus," and the second James was also a son of Alphaeus, many think these two were brothers. If they were, that makes at least three pairs of brothers among the twelve.

Luke's account of his call (5:27-32) is most detailed, and we can be sure of what we learn there. He was a tax collector in Capernaum, busily engaged at his work at the tax-booth, when Jesus came by and invited him to become one of his followers.

We may assume (without knowing details) that there had already been

some contact between the two men, and that Jesus knew the time was right to extend this call. We know this to have been the case with Andrew, Peter, and John, for example.

Furthermore we know that such crisis decisions as Matthew made on this occasion are usually preceded by a time of soul-searching and evaluation. No reason to think Matthew was any different.

"Follow me," Jesus said, and Matthew proceeded to obey without any further hesitation—if there ever was any. Luke adds what the others do not say: "Leaving all." By this we understand that Matthew gave up his old life entirely, forsaking the way he had made his living.

I would not be surprised if he had already made some tentative arrangements against this very possibility. The truth is, following Jesus requires that we leave everything—and whether we get to keep any of it or not is entirely up to Him.

In Matthew's case, tax collecting was forever a thing of the past, and the assured living he earned thereby was replaced by following and serving a man who did not have a certain place to lay His head.

All three gospel accounts make clear that Matthew did one thing more as he set out on his new way of life. He made a great banquet for Jesus at his home. We soon learn who the guests were: "a great number of tax collectors" (Luke), "many tax collectors and sinners" (Mark and Matthew).

No doubt Matthew deliberately prepared this meal for the very purpose of introducing his friends and associates to his new Master. Isn't that one mark of a genuine experience with Christ? The one who comes to know Him, in joy, wants others to know Him too.

Indeed, Matthew already understood what the Pharisees and their scribes, learned teachers of the law they, did not understand. On observing the goings-on at Matthew's house, they responded as always: "How is it that He dines with tax collectors and sinners!"—much more a barbed exclamation than a question.

Jesus' response contained every bit as sharp a barb, although one calculated to pierce their self-righteous shells if they would but open their eyes. "It isn't well people who need a physician. Nor have I come to call those who are righteous to repent, but sinners who understand their need and will respond."

Only those who first acknowledge their sin can be delivered from it by the Savior. Only those who sense their need are finally drawn to Him. Matthew was such a one.

We know nothing further about his activities except for one very important thing: namely, that he is credited with the authorship of the first of the four Gospels, and that seems a certain tradition. And since it has the focus of a gospel written for Jews, we may assume it likely that his ministry was primarily among Jews.

The other traditions are not so certain: that he remained in Palestine for 15 years and subsequently labored among the Jews of the Diaspora, had a ministry to many high government officials, and was ultimately martyred (perhaps in Egypt) and buried in Salerno.

Whatever his precise places of ministry and manner of death, it is clear that he wanted to influence people for Christ, and that his Gospel has played a role in doing that very thing for millions. He obviously loved his Lord and wanted us to love Him too. Such is the way of a true disciple of Christ. ■

Reaching the World Next Door

Thom and Marcia Hopley

(Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993, 245 pp., paperback, \$11.99).



Thomas Marberry

In recent years Free Will Baptists have developed an interest in cross-cultural ministries both at home and abroad. This month's Top Shelf will examine a book which is making a significant contribution to the field of cross-cultural missions.

The Hopleys worked as missionaries in Kenya for a number of years where they gained their first experience in ministering to people of a different language and culture. After their return to the states, Thom began doing serious research and writing in the field of missions.

The original edition was largely completed when he died of a heart attack on June 12, 1978. Marcia did the final editorial work and published it in 1981. It quickly became an important book in the field.

Since Thom's death, Marcia has continued her involvement in cross-cultural evangelism. She has worked with African-American evangelical

congregations in several large cities in the United States. The current edition is her careful revision and updating of the original work.

According to Thom and Marcia, cross-cultural evangelism is not important; it is essential. Six chapters of the text are devoted to an analysis of biblical materials on the subject of cross-cultural ministry.

They empathize that many biblical characters, both Old and New Testament, were commissioned by God to carry His message to men and women of a culture different from their own. This is especially true of the Book of Acts where preachers of Jewish background such as Peter and Paul were commissioned to preach the gospel to Gentiles.

Christians today must also be cross-cultural missionaries. They must be able to share the gospel both at home and abroad with people of different cultures. They must be able to bridge the barriers of race, color,

language, economic status and culture in the name of Christ.

The authors also emphasize the importance of urban evangelism. They note that in 1990 some 45% of the world's population lived in urban areas, and this percentage will increase in the future.

In order to minister effectively, Christians must understand and appreciate the unique dynamics of city life. In particular, they must understand the cultural patterns of the many ethnic groups found in large urban areas.

Some parts of this book may be a little unsettling. It talks openly about racism and other issues which Bible-believing Christians might be tempted to avoid. It discusses the special concerns of African-American Christians in our country. I am not sure that I agree with the authors on every detail, but this is a book I needed to read. Perhaps you need to read it too.



BEYOND BELIEF



YOUTH UPDATE

THE 1997 TRUTH & PEACE STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Zack Archer Glenpool, OK	Matt Duvall Greeley, CO	Joshua Harris Rowlett, TX	Jeff Mathews Cushing, OK	Amanda Sass Nashville, TN	Matthew Tumbough Madrid, Spain
Ladawna Bagwell Springdale, AR	Jennifer Dycus Bonnie, IL	Kiley Hawkins Greenville, NC	Jacob Matthews Garner, NC	Josh Smith Woodhaven, MI	Beth Wade Colquitt, GA
Mary Baldridge Eastern, KY	Hope Eaton Moore, OK	Jonathan Humbles Maury, NC	Jason Maxwell Bellevue, TX	Josh Spears Moore, OK	Lesli Waltrip Sapulpa, OK
Bonnie Balthrop Chapmansboro, TN	Kimberly Elder Bixby, OK	Jason Johnson Cord, AR	Stephanie McVay Joelton, TN	Mandi Springs Lake City, SC	Holli Watson Springdale, AR
Shannon Bazen Pamplico, SC	Craig Ellis Dover, AR	Rebecca Joiner Savannah, GA	April Millsaps Russellville, AR	Christina Sundhausen Park Hills, MO	Kylie Watts Ina, IL
Holly Beeler Greeneville, TN	Rhonda Faherty Newport News, VA	Riley Kern Locust Grove, OK	Daniel Morgan Norman, OK	Michelle Tapia Imperial Beach, CA	Brett Weaver Locust Grove, OK

Misti Beem
Joelton, TN

Dustin Bilbrey
Smyrna, TN

Roy Biswell
Cushing, OK

Steven Booker
Monticello, AR

Stuart Brooks
Damascus, GA

Kirsten Caison
Moore, OK

Eddie Colf
Mims, FL

Scott Collins
Hutchinson, KS

Mitch Cooper
Oklahoma City, OK

Russell Cooper
Oklahoma City, OK

Bethany Crowson
Nashville, TN

Angela Funderburk
Golden, MS

Lori Gaw
Cookeville, TN

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Pleasant Plains, AR

Jason Harbeck
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Amy Thompson
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Emily White
Van Buren, AR

Kayla Williams
Martinez, GA

Chip Wilson
Danville, AR

Christi Wilson
Russellville, AL

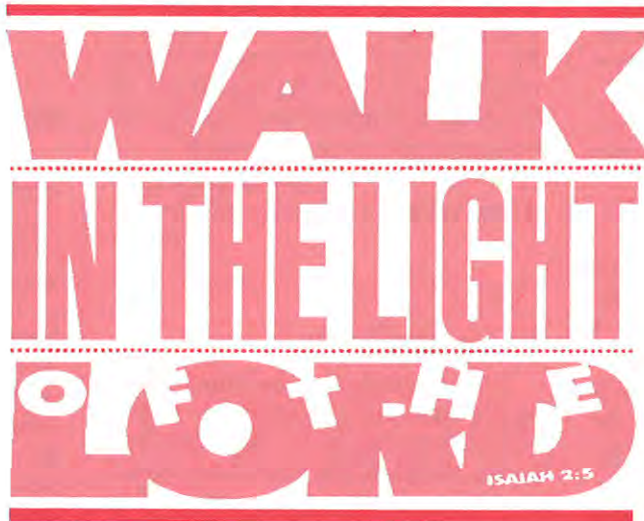
Regina Wilson
Pinson, AL

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Campbell, CA

Emily Wood
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Shawna Wykes
Norman, OK

Tonya Yocom
Russellville, AL



PLEASE UPHOLD THESE 72 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN YOUR PRAYERS AS THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE 14TH ANNUAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, CONDUCTED BY THE YOUTH MINISTRIES DIVISION.

OUR READERS COMMENT

Better Than Chocolate Cake

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoyed the May issue of *Contact* . . . being an amateur student of Free Will Baptist history, doctrine and lore.

My wife was serving me a piece of chocolate cake as I started reading Raymond Riggs' article on the "Big Meeting." I was half through the article before I remembered to start on the cake.

Yes, I remember those days when private homes were the Conrad Hilton. Raymond Riggs is right as rain in pointing out the fallacy of such a go-it-alone policy that we got into in the 1960s. I think this was reflective of the turbulence in our general culture of the day.

Nelson Markham
Visalia, California

Subscribes For Pastor

I want to send a gift subscription to my pastor, Reverend Dave Baccus. I enjoy *Contact* very much, and I know he will too.

Pastor Dave and wife Debbie are such a blessing to our church. We are seeing people saved and coming into our church fellowship.

Mary Melton
Concord, California

A Masterpiece

One word will suffice to convey both our thoughts and feelings about the May issue article, "My Little Brother, Billy." It's a masterpiece.

Wade and Nettie Jernigan
Lexington, Oklahoma

Praises the 'Big Meeting'

I just read the March issue and particularly enjoyed Brother Raymond Riggs' article, "Big Meeting." It was a delightfully nostalgic look back over the years at our national convention, and it also paid tribute to many men and women who by God's grace helped make our denomination what it is today.

Since we're on the mission field, we only get to attend one national out of four, so those are special to us. How wonderful that someone has attended over 50 of them!

I also appreciate Brother Riggs' wisdom, keen insight and candor in analyzing our history over the past 50 years. My heart was stirred in reading of many "Big Meetings" of the past, and of the "Big Meeting" all believers will some day attend.

Reverend Steve Lytle
Free Will Baptist Foreign Missionary
Panama

Articles More Timely

I just want to let you know that I appreciate the progress our publication has made in the past few years. Articles are now more timely and relevant than ever. This takes courage and I commend the staff for displaying it.

Rick E. Dablemont, Pastor
Cuba Free Will Baptist Church
Cuba, Missouri

New Subscriber Likes 'Young Preachers'

One of my members purchased a gift subscription to *Contact* for me. I look forward to the articles each month, and truly enjoy the NewsFront as well.

There is a rather new feature, new to me anyway, that I think is great. The column by Dennis Wiggs, "Especially for Young Preachers," is a must read for the young minister who is filled with zeal, but not so filled with experience.

I have met Brother Wiggs and I think he is a perfect choice for this column. His suggestions are helpful, to the point and simple. Yet, when employed, they can prove extremely valuable to the young pastor.

Thanks for a great publication!

Pastor Mike Dankson
First Free Will Baptist Church
Vernon, Alabama

March Issue The Best

I just wanted to drop you a note and let you know that the March issue was one of the best I've read—and I've been a subscriber for 10+ years.

Thank you for highlighting the history and distinctives of our denomination, and drawing upon a wide cross-section of men from Free Will Baptist church life to do so. It is a great encouragement to see people who may have different philosophies, but who can come together from a common history and share common distinctives.

Thank you for the excellence and professionalism displayed in the March issue. God bless you, and keep up the great work!

Reverend J. Dale Weaver
Irmo, South Carolina

The American Dream

Listen up, Kid. I hear you kicking the dog about how tough life is and what you're doing without. Make up your mind, Sport. Do you want a free ride or a chance to make it on your own?

You say you want to be treated like an adult. That's fine. But if you play on the adult team, bring your own bat and glove to the game. We can't schedule life for your convenience. It's the same for everybody. Show up when you're supposed to, ready for business. And bring a smile.

What if it's raining? Then don't forget your umbrella, because life happens, rain or shine. If you don't feel good? Take an aspirin.

Your car won't start? Catch the bus. Call a friend. Get up earlier and walk. No excuses. Just be there when it's your turn. Punch in like the rest of us and take your place in line.

You say you don't have what your parents do? Neither did they at your age. Put a sock in it, Junior. When you turn 18, the rules change. Everybody starts at "Go."

Now you can pay taxes and go to work while the kids play. It's called responsibility. There's a wonderful world out here, but somebody has to pull the weeds.

You thought it was all parties and fast cars? Sorry, that's only in beer commercials. In real life, working men know they can't punch in at 7:00 if they boogie till dawn. You'll get used to it.

This isn't fair? Of course it isn't fair. Weren't you awake in civics class? "Fair" in the adult world means doing your own job and then picking up the slack for a buddy with a real problem so he can make it to the hospital for his wife's surgery. You can send a get-well card.

You thought you were finished with homework after squeaking through geometry? Here's a little get-ahead principle. When the boss down at the plant gives you a briefcase full of papers to read, do yourself a favor and read them.

If you don't, the boss may slip something extra in your pay envelope. He may hand you a pink slip and let you take it home and explain it to your wife and kids.

That's cold, you say? Tell it to the guys waiting for a chance at that job you just threw away. While you were staring at the goof tube, they were trying to get ahead.

Can the criticism. Everybody has all he can carry. If you've just got to say something, find a way to put a positive spin on it. Unless you're an art critic, nobody wants to hear that you're unhappy with the office decor.

Stop looking around for somebody to blame. If you broke it, fix it. If you lost it, find it. If you dropped it, pick it up. If you borrowed it, return it.

You're probably not looking for advice, but here's your first lesson in America 101. You see that old man behind the cash register at the diner across the street? Yeah, the one who walks with a cane.

Fifty years ago that old man was a scared teenager a long way from home. He and his buddies were spending the day in France dodging machine gun bullets on a sandy strip of hell called Omaha Beach. The machine guns stitched a souvenir up his left side.

By the time he turned 20, he had a purple heart, a unit citation for bravery under fire, six operations and an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army. He doesn't think he's anything special, but I sure do.

The next time the American flag



Jack Williams

passes by in a parade, salute it. If you can't do it for the old man, then do it for his buddies who never came home from that June day at the beach.

Go to church, Junior. It's still the biggest event in the nation every Sunday. There's a reason why America gets up every Sunday morning and drives to a house of worship. It's a reality check.

Life is not built on advertising slogans. That's why the man behind the pulpit is so important. He delivers a clear message in a complicated society. For a few hours each week, the entire nation lifts its collective eyes to something noble and good and holy. Listen to the preacher, Kid, he knows something you need to hear.

You can have the American dream. The price is the same for everybody. Some Americans paid that price one cold winter at Valley Forge. The Blue and the Gray paid full measure at Gettysburg. Your grandfather, your father and your uncle signed their names in blood across Europe, the Korean peninsula and the jungles of Vietnam.

Now it's your turn, your country, your piece of the dream. Finish school, Kid. Get a job. Raise a son. Build a home. Honor God. Love your wife. Leave it all better than you found it. We're counting on you. ■

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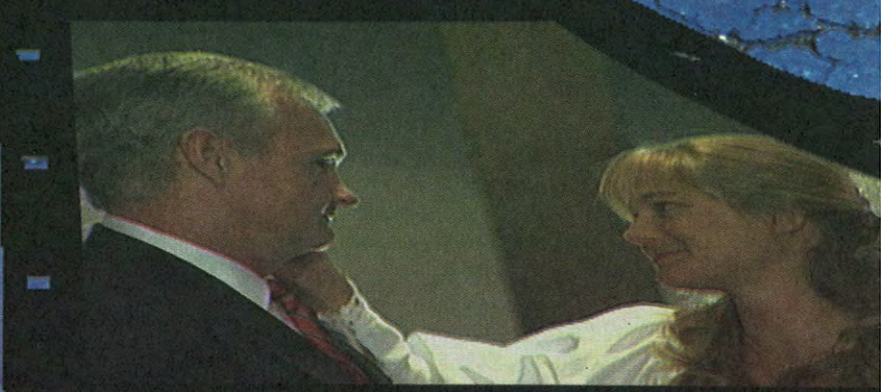
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

On Target With Your Media Needs

When you take aim there is a target in your sight. A target that makes you steady your hold and smoothly release the arrow into its path of flight. At that moment all you can do is watch and pray the arrow finds its mark. It is with that intensity and precision that the Florida State Association of Free Will Baptists and the National Radio & Television Commission realized that Free Will Baptists needed a new arrow in our quiver.



We have a great opportunity to enhance our image, spread the gospel, and build confidence in our people. As we release this commercial from our conceptual bow, please allow it to hit the mark by utilizing it in your associations and churches. Do not leave it in the quiver, take this weapon out and send it to its target. Contact our commission at 615-731-6812 for more information.



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