

MARCH 1998

# CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
FREE WILL BAPTISTS

.....  
Pearl of  
Great Price

.....  
God in Huntsville

.....  
Conflict  
Resolution

.....  
Doorkeeper in the  
House of Death



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MARCH 1998

VOLUME 45, NO. 3

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Melvin Worthington

## The Spectrum of Stewardship (III)

**T**his third study in the spectrum of stewardship series deals with one of the most crucial facets of stewardship—truth. We have a responsibility to hear, heed, honor, hold and herald the truth. The word *truth* occurs over 224 times in the scriptures. Two main ideas can be found in reading and reflecting on those passages.

One idea deals with the composition/body of truth—the scriptures. The second idea deals with the Christian and his talk. Believers are exhorted to speak the truth. They are required to tell the truth in all their conversations. They must not lie and use deceitful speech.

### Author of Truth

Over 40 human writers penned the scriptures as the Holy Spirit moved upon them. The writing of the Bible covered a period of over 1,500 years. While human writers penned the scriptures, God is the divine Author of all the Bible.

Paul reminds us of this when he declares, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . ." (II Timothy 3:16).

Peter further confirms this when he says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," (II Peter 1:20-21).

### Acknowledgment of Truth

One of the keys to conversion is the acknowledgment of the truth, the fact that the Bible is God's holy Word. The refusal to acknowledge that the Bible is God's inspired, infallible and im-

mutable Word removes any basis upon which an individual can come to God.

When people reject the truth, God sends a strong delusion. Those who refuse to acknowledge the truth will not come to the Lord Jesus for salvation. Faith comes by hearing the Word.

### Authority of Truth

When the Bible speaks, it does so with divine authority. The Free Will Baptist *Treatise* states, "Since the Bible is the Word of God, it is without error in all matters upon which it speaks, whether history, geography, matters relating to science or any other subject."

The *Treatise* further states, "We believe the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant. The Bible is without error and trustworthy in all its teachings, including cosmogony, geology, astronomy, anthropology, history, chronology, etc., as well as in matters of faith and practice. Being the very Word of God, it is God's final revelation and our absolute authority."

### Acceptance of Truth

Having understood who authored the Bible, acknowledged that fact as well as the divine authority of the scripture, one's stewardship responsibility includes acceptance of the truth in a personal sense. Stewardship means that one accepts the scriptures as the rule for faith (what one believes) and

practice (the way one behaves).

Personal acceptance of the Bible as the instrument or compass which gives direction is an essential part of the stewardship responsibility. Faithful stewards readily accept the Bible as the compass which gives direction in all matters pertaining to life.

### Appropriation of Truth

Faithful stewards do not just accept the truth as the compass for their lives, they appropriate that truth in a practical, personal and powerful way. They take seriously their responsibilities to trust and obey every precept in the Bible.

They are not content with just hearing; they want to experience the truth in their daily lives. They want to experience victory in Christ, peace and joy and all that the Lord Jesus has provided for them. In every situation in life they take at face value the promises and provisions God has made to give them victory.

### Allegiance to Truth

Our responsibility as stewards of the truth includes standing firm on that truth in the midst of confusing, chaotic and corrupt times. Paul admonishes Timothy to know the times and to stand fast on the truth. The Bible abounds with those who gave allegiance to the truth.

In a society where traditional values are discounted, disregarded, despised, and distorted, we certainly need to give unswerving, undivided and unmoveable allegiance to the truth. We must hold fast. We must stand. We must not deviate from the truth.

The Bible repeats warnings of those who will subvert, shave and skew the truth. God's stewards are characterized as those who give unswerving allegiance to the truth. ■

### The Secretary's Schedule

March 1998

1-6 Lebanon FWB Church  
Effingham, South Carolina

8 Central FWB Church  
Royal Oak, Michigan

11-26 Russia

# Our Very Own . . . Pearl of Great Price

By Doug Lance



**"Again the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."  
(Matthew 13:45-46)**

**T**he Lord led me to her house that first time. I didn't know why then, but there is no doubt in my mind now. God knew that I had been searching for something that I really needed. He wanted me to find it, and He put it right along the path that I traveled most often.

It was early Saturday morning, and just like always, I was out on my church bus route. There was nothing unusual about the day, except that I was alone. My co-workers on the route were working overtime at their jobs, and I found myself driving up the two-lane road toward Stanley, North Carolina.

I passed the little house on Hickory Grove Road, just as I had every Saturday for seven years. As the van rolled

past the house, I noticed the rails on the steps in the front of the house. I had worked with the men in my Sunday School class to put those rails in place eight years ago. That was not long after I had gotten saved. The rails looked a little bent and in need of some paint, but I still felt good when I thought about my part in putting them up.

I thought to myself, "She holds on to those rails every Sunday when she gets in the seniors' church van."

That's when God spoke to my heart, "Go visit Pearl Eades." I was kind of shocked! It isn't that God was talking out loud to me, but it was the same inner "voice" that tells me "witness to this person, or speak to them about Me." I hear that "voice" all the time, but it usually means someone needs to hear about Jesus. That couldn't be the case here. Pearl Eades

is a saint, and I consider her the greatest prayer warrior in our church. She has been saved longer than I have been alive. As a young Christian, I had often marveled to hear her pray, and to see her faith in action.

"No," I said, "You didn't mean for me to visit Pearl Eades, Lord," (then a pause), "did You?"

I drove on to Stanley without stopping, visited the children on my route and arranged to pick them up for Sunday School the next day. Then I headed back down the road to visit the lower end of the route. As I approached the curve near Mrs. Eades' home, I heard it again, "Go visit Pearl Eades."

No mistake this time; that van pulled to a stop on the hill above the little house. "Is something wrong, Lord?" I thought to myself, "after all she is almost 90."

I went down to the door and knocked. No response, I waited. I rang the door bell and waited again. I saw a shadow inside the house, and Mrs. Eades pushed back the curtain and looked through the window. Her face broke into a smile when she recog-

nized me, and she opened the door.

"Well, hello, Doug," she said with a smile.

I smiled back and immediately said, "I don't know why, Mrs. Eades, but I believe the Lord spoke to me about you, and I just wanted to stop by and see if you were all right."

"Oh yes," she said, "I'm just fine."

I now felt embarrassed and a little confused, "It seemed like the Lord just laid you on my heart, and I wanted to be sure; is there anything you need?"

"Well, I do need some help, if you have time," she said. "I have a light bulb burned out in my kitchen, and I can't reach it." Then she added, "The Lord always knows what I need and then makes a way for me to get it done."

I didn't think too much about those words at the time, but I learned later, she said what she meant, and she believed what she said.

I changed the light bulb, she thanked me, and I asked if there was anything else. She said no, she just needed all the prayer she could get. I asked her, "Why don't we pray right now?"

She said, "Oh yes, I'm just a goin' on prayer." So we bowed our heads together on her front porch and we prayed.

I can't tell you what happened to me during that prayer; I was praying out loud asking God to bless her when suddenly it felt like God was standing right there with us. I thought to myself, "What a strange and wonderful feeling this is; I believe I can touch Him; He's so close." I had goose bumps big enough to hang a hat on, and when that prayer ended, they didn't go away.

Mrs. Eades smiled at me and said, "I sure do appreciate you stopping by and helping me. You be sure to always mind the Lord."

I smiled back and said, "I will."

I told my two best friends, Steve and Hub, what happened. They are my co-workers on the route. I guess they thought I was exaggerating, but the next Saturday, Steve was with me on the route. We went to Stanley, but on the way back I pulled over at Mrs. Eades' house.

Steve asked, "Why are we stopping here?"

"I just want to check on her, we won't be but a minute," I replied.

Mrs. Eades was on her front porch. She greeted us both with her sweet smile and "hello." I asked her if there was anything she needed done. She said, "No, I just need prayer today."

I said, "We can do that. Let's join hands and pray."

We began to pray and immediately, I felt God's power sweeping through me like electricity. I felt His presence again. The hair on my arms and neck was standing straight up.

I just had to stop and listen to her as she prayed, "God, will you bless these men and strengthen them today for what You need done?"

I noticed Steve was silent too. She praised God and gave Him glory; she asked for blessings for everyone in Jesus' name and for His sake. By the time she said, "Amen," Steve and I were both about to explode with what can only be described as the spirit of joy. We had been blessed by this little widow lady, and all she could do was tell us what a blessing we were to her.

As we walked back to the van, Steve nudged me and said, "Brother, did you feel that?"

"Uh-huh," I replied.

"That woman has got a main line right to the Throne," said Steve.

"Uh-huh," I replied. (I think I was beginning to realize that when God starts moving, the less you say, the better He gets.) I just knew I wanted to feel that way always. We stopped every Saturday after that.

As we got to know Mrs. Eades better, we discovered she is concerned more for others than for her own life. At 90 years, she still visits the nursing homes when she has a ride. She sends out tracts, letters and cards to the sick and dying almost daily. On a fixed income, she gives of her income to many of God's ministries and never forgets her tithe to the church.

More than anything else, she prays for others constantly. She is humble; she would never let on that she has spent her life caring for others. I believe that's what God wants us all to do.

Not long after I began to visit Pearl Eades, God began to point out a few things to me through her. Things like: He has the same blessings and power for everyone who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. I discovered that Mrs. Eades' relationship and connec-

tion with God comes from her prayer, praise and worship of Him; it is a constant on-going event for her.

She relies on God and believes He will meet her needs when she seeks His will first. I know she is right, because just like she said before, He always makes a way for her needs to be met. She has also taught me that even the smallest of our concerns must be brought to Him in prayer. It makes all the difference in our worship, our service and our lives.

Jesus told a parable in Matthew 13 about a merchant man who searched for a pearl of great price, and when he found it, he gave all that he had to buy it. I believe that Jesus is the merchant man. The pearl that He found is His Church. The Church was so valuable, that He gave up everything, even His own life to buy it.

We can never comprehend the love that He feels, nor the sacrifice that He has made for us, but we can demonstrate that love as we share Him with others who don't know Him. That is what Mrs. Eades does, she shares Jesus with others.

Over two years have passed since I first stopped by her house. Every Saturday since then, unless I am sick, I have been to that little house on Hickory Grove Road. All the bus workers on our route have gone to her house, and every one has felt God's presence and power, and gotten the same blessing I did that first day. We are still being blessed, and we are all still learning.

Mrs. Pearl Eades believes and tells everyone that God sent us to help her. She calls us her "angels." But I believe that God sent us "A Pearl of Great Price." ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Doug Lance is a member of Goshen Free Will Baptist Church in Mount Holly, North Carolina.

# What God Did in Huntsville

By Dennis Haygood



**T**he day of reckoning for me finally arrived. After 18 months on the road (the itinerate road), telling folks that God would work a miracle so we could have our first service in Huntsville, Alabama, as a new home missions work, my faith began to waiver.

I had preached the sermon, "What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do," and it sounded so good and preached so well. But when I had zero prospects for a place to meet, my fancy sermon outline sounded flat and empty.

I had arrived in Madison County, Alabama's fastest growing area, and there was no room at the inn. Everything was too large or too small or worse, too expensive.

What do you do when you have the absolute assurance that God wants you in a place, yet it seems impossible?

Beginning services in September or October 1997 seemed an unreachable goal. The Alabama Mission Board and I had discussed the alternatives. If I couldn't find a suitable location (one not costing \$5,000-\$6,000 per month), then I would have to continue my itinerate.

Raising money for land and building a church before having the first service didn't seem too appealing, especially after 18 months on the road.

I believe in putting feet on your prayers. So I contacted the commercial real estate broker who had been helping our search. I told him my situation and the deadline. He wasn't optimistic. He said, "I haven't been able to locate anything within your price range that would be available for church usage. But I will continue looking."

A week passed and he called me saying the prospects he had didn't pan out. "It doesn't look good, Preacher," he said.

Several more days passed before my telephone rang. "Is this Pastor Haygood? I understand you are looking for a place to have church services," a voice said.

I confirmed that I was looking for a place to start a mission church; he then told me he had a building that he would like to rent us and he would like to show the building immediately. It was only 1½ miles away, and within 15 minutes I was inside, sure that this was what God had in store for us.

Six months previous to our occu-

pancy, the building had been used by a Baptist group which had split from a large church. They had partitioned off classrooms, painted walls, set up a worship area and installed carpet. The building was clean, fresh, in a good location and ready for us to occupy.

The owner negotiated the rent much lower than his normal price. During our discussion, he asked me how many people we would have to start. I told him that, including my family, we had five. Puzzled, he asked the next question, "How do you intend to pay the rent?"

My answer puzzled him even more, "I don't know!"

Once he regained his composure, I explained that this was a venture of faith. We were trusting God to supply our needs. I told him that initially the money would come from my salary account, but that couldn't last long. We would have to build a congregation that would be expected to pay the rent.

He responded with, "That isn't going to be easy in the beginning."

After about 30 minutes of this type conversation, he said, "I believe that God would have me help you by giving you the first month's rent free. I

thanked him and told him what a help that would be.

Shortly he said, "I believe I will go ahead and give you two months free. That will enable you to have a few services and offerings before having to pay rent."

When we met to discuss the lease agreement, he said that God wanted him to give us three months free rent, and he also lowered the rent an additional \$100 a month.

The building is visible to traffic on Memorial Parkway which averages 46,000 cars daily passing this location. We were able to purchase a 3' x 15' lighted sign which boldly advertises Southpark Free Will Baptist Church. Oh, the landlord made a generous contribution toward the sign.

We are so thankful for God's goodness in opening the door to this great location. Our auditorium will comfortably seat 80 people. In addition to the auditorium, there are nine classrooms and a 20' x 35' room which we use as a kitchen/fellowship hall and a children's church—a total of 3,840 square feet.

The Lord also blessed through the gift of approximately 140 chairs, nursery furniture, pulpit, kitchen sink and counters, used piano for children's church and a new electric piano.

Surely God wants to build His Church in this growing city of approximately 200,000 people. Help me pray that we will stay out of His way and simply be used of Him to reach many souls for Christ. God is not through with His miracles yet!

By the way, we had 53 present with an offering of \$8,720 at our first service. ■



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Dennis Haygood is home missionary to Huntsville, Alabama. He pastors Southpark Free Will Baptist Church.

# THE TOGETHER WAY

December 1997

Receipts:				Year To Date	Year To Date	Year To Date
State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Designated	CO-OP	Total
Alabama	\$ 127.34	\$ .00	\$ 127.34	\$ 5,809.18	\$ .00	\$ 5,809.18
Arizona	872.30	125.80	998.10	4,649.25	497.70	5,146.95
Arkansas	13,135.31	7,405.54	20,540.85	159,233.09	154,953.83	314,186.92
California	.00	1,148.04	1,148.04	205.00	11,845.33	12,050.33
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	50.00	8,091.72	8,141.72	433.19	24,241.72	24,674.91
Georgia	34,807.33	3,516.89	38,324.22	227,145.06	33,260.75	260,405.81
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	374.00	274.00	648.00
Illinois	9,803.25	2,651.07	12,454.32	125,926.54	28,088.69	154,015.23
Indiana	895.84	.00	895.84	11,640.37	1,571.66	13,212.03
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	310.00	2,439.37	2,749.37
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Kentucky	1,459.34	404.11	1,863.45	14,215.92	5,541.10	19,757.02
Louisiana	10.00	.00	10.00	140.00	.00	140.00
Maryland	.00	225.00	225.00	.00	3,243.84	3,243.84
Michigan	48,133.24	5,097.70	53,230.94	186,509.29	34,287.56	220,796.85
Mississippi	2,074.79	216.39	2,291.18	5,075.38	4,078.65	9,154.03
Missouri	51,854.66	.00	51,854.66	538,372.48	.00	538,372.48
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	1,301.66	49.34	1,351.00	11,683.45	598.32	12,281.77
North Carolina	122.60	362.69	485.29	14,438.78	12,555.15	26,993.93
Ohio	34,839.71	3,767.27	38,606.98	174,248.89	40,276.72	214,525.61
Oklahoma	64,194.40	10,093.69	74,288.09	640,594.98	56,030.34	696,625.32
South Carolina	47,684.49	115.60	47,800.09	382,124.10	1,342.31	383,466.41
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	3,733.13	1,271.82	5,004.95	128,687.70	20,919.39	149,607.09
Texas	6,512.41	696.15	7,208.56	76,231.67	5,130.05	81,361.72
Virginia	29.90	.00	29.90	9,072.21	275.00	9,347.21
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	10,865.71	300.27	11,165.98	56,098.69	919.92	57,018.61
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	189.99	6.80	196.79	1,588.07	66.69	1,654.76
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	95.02	15.00	110.02
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(0.09)	(0.09)	390.00	.08	390.08
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$332,697.40</b>	<b>\$45,545.80</b>	<b>\$378,243.20</b>	<b>\$2,775,292.31</b>	<b>\$442,453.17</b>	<b>\$3,217,745.48</b>

## Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 6,517.92	\$22,772.99	\$ 29,290.91	\$ 100,925.33	\$ 221,226.99	\$ 322,152.32
Foreign Missions	191,732.64	5,237.76	196,970.40	1,652,641.05	50,882.05	1,703,523.10
FWBBC	12,396.43	5,237.76	17,634.19	157,522.68	50,882.05	208,404.73
Home Missions	105,905.57	4,099.09	110,004.66	723,293.97	39,820.70	763,114.67
Retirement & Insurance	988.89	3,188.22	4,177.11	13,634.99	30,971.63	44,606.62
Master's Men	1,256.70	3,188.22	4,444.92	20,526.60	30,971.63	51,498.23
Com. for Theo. Integrity	53.09	113.85	166.94	1,077.90	1,106.14	2,184.04
FWB Foundation	496.77	1,366.36	1,863.13	13,162.31	13,273.56	26,435.87
Historical Commission	48.14	113.85	161.99	867.70	1,106.14	1,973.84
Music Commission	43.28	113.85	157.13	808.02	1,106.14	1,914.16
Media Commission	38.33	113.85	152.18	885.05	1,106.14	1,991.19
Hillsdale FWB College	1,316.08	.00	1,316.08	15,065.51	.00	15,065.51
Other	11,903.56	.00	11,903.56	74,881.20	.00	74,881.20
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$332,697.40</b>	<b>\$45,545.80</b>	<b>\$378,243.20</b>	<b>\$2,775,292.31</b>	<b>\$442,453.17</b>	<b>\$3,217,745.48</b>

Don't walk out . . . talk it out!

# Conflict Resolution

By Richard T. Hendrix



**N**o one enjoys conflict, but it is not always bad. In fact, conflict can be an important way to strengthen relationships and solve problems. That is, it can if the parties involved understand how to manage conflict in a caring and beneficial manner.

Conflict can also be painful, because it often brings out fear, anger and anxiety-emotions that most of us try to avoid. But some positive results can emerge when conflict is managed in a healthy way. As someone said, "I believe in getting into hot water. I think it keeps you clean."

When conflict is managed properly, we find people who are fully engaged with each other, vigorously taking a stand for his or her convictions, wanting to be heard, people communicating and connecting with each other.

## Thoroughbreds vs. Donkeys

We are faced with conflict. We usually have two choices: We can ig-

nore the problem or we can confront it. When conflict is managed properly, it can produce good results, whereas if it is mismanaged, the results can be disastrous.

This is like the thoroughbred horses and the donkeys. I've read that when thoroughbreds are faced with an attack from an enemy, they form a circle facing each other, and with their hind legs, kick at the enemy. Donkeys do just the opposite: they face the enemy and kick each other.

Thoroughbred congregations are those that confront conflict constructively. They experience themselves not as helpless victims of external circumstance but as creative, resourceful people who have learned the skills and insights necessary to handle conflict and to be a healthy congregation.

Congregations that suppress conflict are like pressure cookers that build and build heat, until finally the lid blows. The issues that lead up to the explosion might seem trivial but the results are not.

A thoroughbred congregation is an open, active church that allows for a release of pressure and conflict and is less likely to self-destruct.

For most congregations, the real danger of conflict is the fear of it. Most people mistakenly believe that all conflict is wrong or unchristian and must be avoided at any cost. But when we deal openly with conflict, we make a statement that there are issues worth debating and that we are able to resolve differences without destroying one another. Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress.



Conflict also forces us to draw upon the resources of our faith to confront the issues at hand. During these times, we may deep down question that we have such resources. But remember, even in the darkest times, the Christian faith provides the necessary resources for solving conflicts and surviving them.

### **Learn Conflict Skills**

To be thoroughbred congregations, we must learn the skills necessary to manage conflict. When these skills are acquired, then we can grow, benefit from it and not self-destruct. Consider the following suggestions that can help us manage conflict and benefit from it.

#### *Get the Facts.*

Gather as many facts as you can about the problem. Most conflicts arise from misinformation or poor communication. This will be a non-threatening step toward both parties of the conflict, where you're only trying to gain a better understanding of the situation.

#### *Avoid Snap Decisions.*

Whenever people are pressed to make hasty judgements, there is little chance of working out differences and finding alternative solutions. There must be ample time given for prayer and reflection in order for the Lord to speak to all involved.

#### *Study the People.*

Take a close look at the individuals involved in the conflict. Ask yourself, how mature are these people, is the situation the work of persistent, isolated troublemakers attempting to stir up trouble in the church?

However, at this point we must take account of our own motives as we analyze the parties of the conflict. The temptation is to label some people as troublemakers in order to avoid facing legitimate differences they have with us.

#### *Determine Major and Minor Issues.*

Conflict sometimes gets out of control because people major on the mi-

nors. Determine if there is a hidden issue that the group fails to recognize. Is there an issue that everyone knows about, but fears to talk about?

#### *Stay on Target.*

Stick to the subject at hand. In times of conflict, people often want their case to be as big and convincing as possible. They gather all the ammunition they can think of, digging up side issues, past issues, character issues, any kind of issue to hammer the point home.

#### *Be Specific.*

Avoid generalizing. When we generalize, people have a hard time understanding what it is that we want them to change in their behavior. But if we are specific, we give them something concrete to deal with. Whether the person agrees with us or not, we can help to focus and manage the level of conflict by being specific.

#### *Avoid Insults.*

Avoid character assassination and personal insults. Keep the conflict focused on the issues, not on personalities. Avoid behavior or comments that put the other person on the defensive. No matter how intense the conflict, the other person should never leave that conflict feeling he is not valued by us.

#### *Confront Privately.*

Affirm publicly, confront privately. Avoid raising difficult issues with your spouse, children, employees, friends or fellow church members in front of other people. Rebuking and confronting people in public brings humiliation, embarrassment and shame. It destroys relationships and self-esteem.

#### *Beware of Emotions.*

Recognize the emotional level of the conflict. When the anger level is high, have a cooling down period. Emotions must be held in check at a manageable level in order to resolve conflict in a constructive manner.

#### *Heal, Don't Destroy.*

Confront in order to heal, not de-

stroy. Don't go for a slam-dunk, one-sided victory. If at all possible, try to have peace and understanding in your relationship; because you can win an argument and lose a relationship. Try to find a solution where both sides come out winners. Our attitude should be to learn, change and grow from the conflict as much or more than we expect the other side to learn, change and grow.

#### *Avoid Grudges.*

Disagreements do not have to make us enemies. Don't hold grudges because someone differs on an issue.

Before Andrew Jackson became the seventh president of the United States, he served as a major general in the Tennessee militia. During the War of 1812, his troops reached an all-time low in morale and began arguing, bickering and fighting among themselves. General Jackson called them all together and said, "Gentlemen! Let's remember that the enemy is over there."

Conflict is a natural part of life in an imperfect world. Search the Bible to find examples of constructive conflict, as well as instances of strife and division. Some of Paul's letters were written to churches dealing with conflict. Without the conflict, these letters may have never been written. Remember that the only real thoroughbreds are those who learn how to manage conflict to bring about positive, constructive resolution. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Richard T. Hendrix pastors Madison Free Will Baptist Church in Madison, Alabama. He plans to pursue the Doctor of Ministry degree at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham.

## A call for National Convention ushers.

# We Want You!

By Don Wagner



## Tulsa is the place — July 1998 is the time.

This July we will gather in Tulsa for an important event—the Free Will Baptist National Convention. We Free Will Baptists meet once each year to promote the necessary cooperation that will accomplish the objectives that really matter to God and our denomination.

If this year's national convention in Tulsa is a success, what must happen? First, we need a convention where God can have His way in our preaching, teaching, singing and fellowship. A convention that is warm, friendly and orderly stands the best chance for God to motivate us to do better preaching, teaching, singing and have quality fellowship.

Creating a welcome, warm and orderly convention environment initially falls on a small group of people who are referred to as *ushers*.

### What Makes a Good Convention Usher?

The greeting and ushering ministry has no small influence in creating a welcome and warm feeling to the general body of church delegates and visitors. These delegates, after all, are present to bring about a consensus of feelings and opinions that will ultimately become decisions for our denomination to abide by.

A good usher is like . . . salt which makes everything more palatable and which serves as a general preservative against deterioration (Matthew 5:13). The ministry of salt is silent, inconspicuous, and sometimes unnoticed. But it is there in a powerful and useful way. A good greeter/usher adds a tang of joy to a national convention experience that can be inspiring.

### Attitudes and Actions of a Convention Usher

#### Love

The New Testament love that Paul wrote about was an outgoing spirit of consideration and respect which did not depend on the attitudes or behavior of the other person. As one man put it, "The Holy Spirit can even help you love the person you do not like."

This kind of love is not dependent on the other person's actions or reactions, but on the inner strength of a Christian's heart. This is the gift of a good usher/greeter.

#### Joy

Cold, aloof, mechanical greeting and ushering is depressing to delegates and visitors. But the sight of a good man who radiates joy and simple love is a heartwarming experience for any worshiper attending the national convention.

#### Peace

The presence of a good usher adds to the peace and calm of situations that require concentration. Peace and calm tend to minimize problems and provide assurance that we are being effective. It is reassuring to feel we are on target regarding convention matters.

#### Patience

Patience is one of the great qualities of a good greeter/usher. The environment around the convention floor needs to be orderly to divert confusion and distractions. Impa-

tience breeds disorder which usually affects the quality of convention decisions in a negative fashion.

#### Kindness

This spirit makes the greeter/usher approachable and available. The spirit of kindness gives confidence to others.

#### Gentleness

The greeter/usher never throws around his authority. While he concentrates on the needs of the delegates, he forgets about himself and humbly goes about his assignment, always attentive to the issues at hand. Not paying attention to what is happening will defeat effectiveness.

#### Self-Control

It will be impossible to control a crowd if we cannot control ourselves. Emergencies will occur and must be dealt with calmly and deliberately.

#### Goodness

The Lord in His Word does not admonish man to be intelligent, clever or rich. But He does in many places indicate that the Spirit-filled person will reflect human goodness. This reflection causes the greeter/usher to seek the good for those he cares for and make every effort to keep the delegates and visitors informed and

properly focused.

### Faithfulness

Fulfilling responsibilities and being a good team member are essential to the greeter/usher. Being at your place of duty is a signal to all that faithfulness is essential to doing a good job.

These attitudes and actions don't always come naturally. Those of us who are in this usher/greeting ministry know very well that we have to struggle to achieve and maintain these attributes. There are specific duties to be performed in the spirit of love, peace, gentleness, etc. These duties are listed as follows:

### 10 Duties for the '98 Convention

- ◆ Be 45 minutes early for every service.
- ◆ Wear identification badge (provided).
- ◆ Welcome people at the door; deliver hand-outs.
- ◆ Assist in taking offerings.
- ◆ Attend orientation meeting Sunday afternoon at 5:00 p.m. (Raymond Lee will lead orientation meeting.)
- ◆ Distribute reports, resolutions, ballots, newsletters, etc.
- ◆ Count votes.
- ◆ Provide security.
- ◆ Relay messages.
- ◆ Handle emergency situations.

Dress Code: Ushers should wear shirts and ties, suit or sport coat, dress pants and dress shoes.

### How Can I Join the Tulsa Team?

We need a few good men to join this effort. The following chart reflects the manpower needs, the day and date, the time and the event involved:

Free Will Baptist 62nd National Convention July 12-16, 1998 Tulsa, Oklahoma Greeting/Usher Staff Needs				
Number Needed	July	Day	Time	Event
8	12	Sunday	10:00 a.m. - Noon	Sunday School/A.M. Worship
40	12	Sunday	6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Convention Assembly
4	13	Monday	8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	General Board
12	13	Monday	3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Home Missions Rally
40	13	Monday	6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Convention Assembly
6	14	Tuesday	8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	WNAC Business Session
8	14	Tuesday	11:00 a.m. - noon	WNAC Missionary Service
6	14	Tuesday	1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	WNAC Business Session
40	14	Tuesday	6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Convention Assembly
10	15	Wednesday	8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Convention Business Session
40	15	Wednesday	6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Convention Assembly
10	16	Thursday	8:30 a.m. - noon	Convention Business Session

### How Can I Help in This Ministry?

We need to know who our team is so that we can print our security badges in advance. We can also do better planning when we have advance registration. Please complete the form at the end of this article.

Let's do all we can do to make the national convention a success. Much effort is going into prayer and preparation for the meeting. We want the 1998 convention to promote a sense of denominational unity. We have short- and long-term gospel goals to accomplish, and God is holding us responsible for the achievement of these goals.

The ushering theme for this year's convention comes from the Book of all books: "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another," (John 13:34).

We all know the importance of this commandment—Let's just do it! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Don Wagner chairs the Ushering Committee for the 1998 national convention in Tulsa. He serves as a deacon in Bethany Free Will Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

### Free Will Baptist National Convention

July 12-16, 1998  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

I will serve as a Greeter/Usher.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

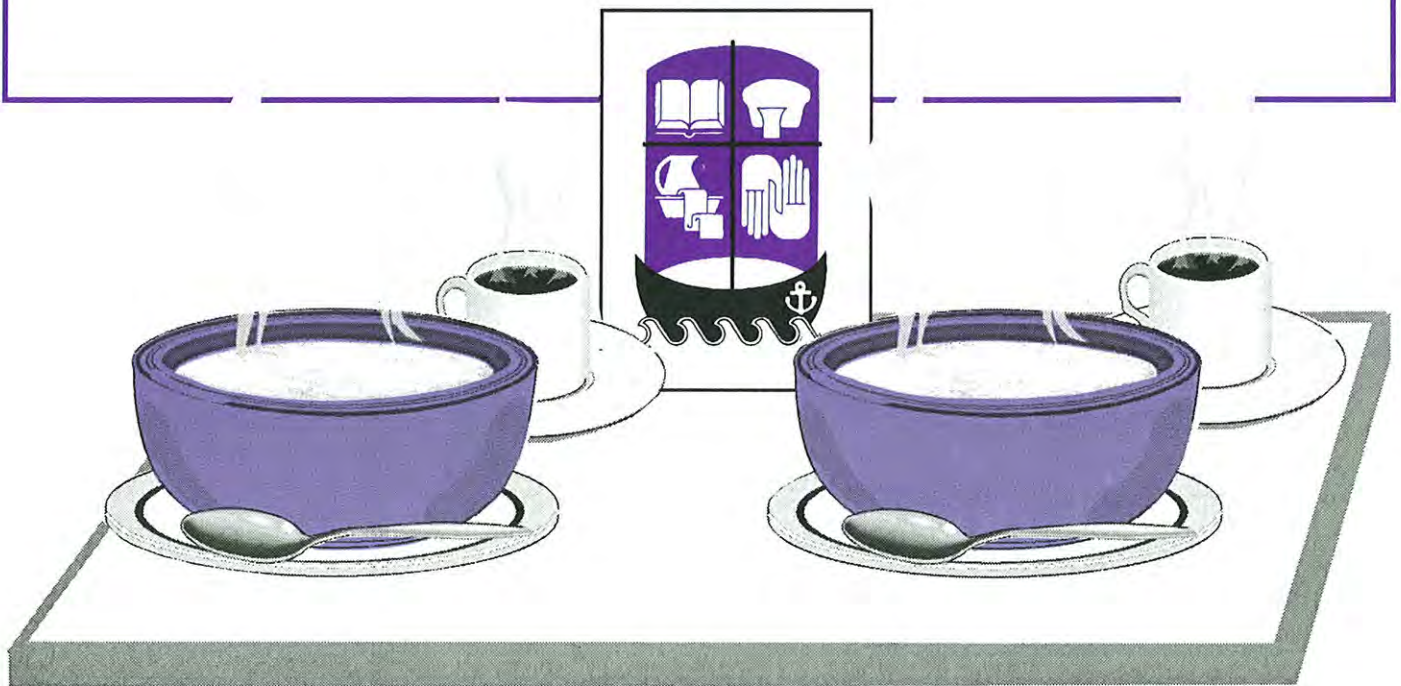
Mail to:

**Free Will Baptist National Convention**  
Attn: Ushering Committee  
P. O. Box 5002  
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

We can learn from yesterday's conflicts.

# Coffee and Grits

By Kevin Riggs



Recently, over a cup of coffee and bowl of grits, a friend and I discussed our beloved Free Will Baptist denomination. In 45 minutes we solved all problems—if only everyone would see things the way we saw them. At different times both of us had heard rumors that our denomination was headed for a possible split. We had even heard people say it would be better if we did. A few years ago I would have agreed. But things change.

Driving from the restaurant to my office, I reflected on the morning's conversation. What are the issues that threaten to separate us? How important are they compared to the big picture of growing the Kingdom? Are they worth splitting over?

As I drove, pondering the past and thinking about the future, another question came to mind: *As a denomination, are we better off today because of our divisions in the past?* The more I thought about that question, the more I realized the impact my answer would have on the rest of my ministry.

The older I get the more appreciation I have for my heritage. Herbert Hoover said, "The supreme purpose of history is a better world." I didn't have to look far into my denomination's history to realize we have had our share of struggles.

Thus another question: Is there something to be learned from Free Will Baptists of yesterday to make for a better denomination today?

## Early Conflicts

What does our past teach us?

Conflict was the soil out of which the Free Will Baptist movement took root. Our heritage is linked to the General Baptists in England through men like Paul Palmer, Robert Norden and Thomas Helwys. The very reason English settlers came to America in the first place was to *escape* religious persecution—this included our forefathers.

The General Baptists in England suffered because of their dissension with the Anglican Church. Thomas Helwys, who established the first Baptist church on English soil in 1612, died in an English prison as a result of this persecution.

In Colonial America, Free Will Baptists struggled to survive because of their Arminian beliefs and slowness in organizing, especially in the South. No sooner would a General (or Arminian) Baptist church form than they would be proselytized and "reorganized" into a Particular (Calvinistic) Baptist congregation. Through the 1700s and 1800s many "free will" churches and ministers were lost this way.

In 1911 our northern churches merged with the Northern Baptist convention, taking with them most of our missions work—both home and foreign, six colleges, two seminaries, more than 1,000 churches, and over 100,000 members. The sting of this loss reminded the remaining Free Will Baptists of the dangers of fragmentation and isolation. An important, but expensive, lesson to be learned.

### More Recent Conflicts

In 1935, recognizing that isolation and divisiveness spell disaster, several Free Will Baptist associations met at Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, and reorganized into the National Association of Free Will Baptists. The future looked bright.

But within 25 years conflict reared its ugly head. By 1962, we once again lost thousands of members, hundreds of churches, a college, a children's home and a publishing house.

In our early history the conflicts and struggles we went through helped forge and shape who we are. It took courage to stand against the established Church of England, and to swim against the tide of hyper-Calvinism in early America. These struggles brought us together and made us stronger.

But what about today? Have the conflicts and struggles of this century in general, and the past two decades in particular, united or divided us? Have they made us weaker or stronger? *Are we better off today because of our divisions in the past?*

Two of my great-grandfathers, a grandfather, and my father have all been Free Will Baptist ministers. By God's grace I plan on being a Free Will Baptist minister well into the 21st century.

As our denomination moves into the future, several issues threaten to

fragment and divide us. Will we learn from our past? Are we headed for a repeat of 1911 or 1962? Would we be better dividing into like camps and going our separate ways?

If so, how many splinter groups would it take to accommodate all our differing factions? Should we not somehow learn from our past and move into the future in love, unity and sensitivity?

### What the Bible Says

Jesus Christ, the Head of the National Association of Free Will Baptists (as well as other Christians), said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another," (John 13:34-35).

In His intercessory prayer, Jesus said, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be as one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent me," (John 17:20-21).

Sensitivity is the word that best summarizes the Apostle Paul's attitude in dealing with differences among Christians.

He wrote, "Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil . . . let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food," (Romans 14:15-16, 19-20).

### A New Start

The conversation that morning over coffee and grits changed my entire outlook. I don't know if I can make a difference. I do know I want to learn from history. I do know I desire to contribute to my denomination, making it better.

Where do I start? I think my first step will be to stop writing this article, and start writing a few letters to some Free Will Baptists with whom I have had differences. I need to let them know how much I love and ap-

preciate their lives and ministries. I need to let them know that our denomination is better because of their contributions. I would like to treat them to breakfast. But distance and time stand in the way. Maybe I'll enclose a coupon for a free cup of coffee and bowl of grits instead.

What should your first step be? ■



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

### Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign December 1997 Update

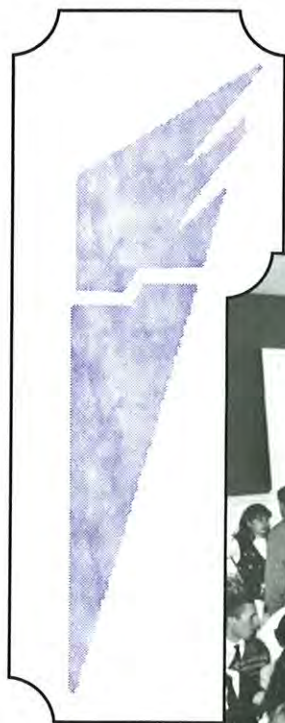
State	Goal	Gifts	Balance
Alabama	\$ 76,397.63	\$ 5,156.15	\$ 71,241.48
Arizona	1,228.93	2,883.71	(1,654.78)
Arkansas	76,860.94	43,422.13	33,438.81
Atlantic Canada	1,570.51	897.00	673.51
California	17,216.76	1,444.20	15,772.56
Colorado	789.18	1,165.00	(375.82)
Florida	20,703.30	6,397.42	14,305.88
Georgia	38,179.19	38,379.19	(200.00)
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	6,224.29	29,230.05
Louisiana	94.23	1,925.00	(1,830.77)
Maryland	6,812.10	1,539.38	5,272.72
Michigan	15,116.19	16,009.22	(893.03)
Mississippi	15,559.86	3,843.23	11,716.63
Missouri	60,484.40	33,934.91	26,549.49
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	8,136.40	50,981.66
Northeast Assoc.	883.41	270.00	613.41
Northwest Assoc.	1,087.58	201.00	886.58
Ohio	40,923.66	20,488.10	20,435.56
Oklahoma	92,271.60	10,612.08	81,659.52
South Carolina	18,335.75	3,102.00	15,233.75
South Dakota		175.00	(175.00)
Tennessee	78,557.09	81,433.44*	(2,876.35)
Texas	11,547.20	7,866.52	3,680.68
Virginia	24,323.33	2,027.93	22,295.40
Virgin Islands		200.00	(200.00)
West Virginia	46,204.51	1,148.00	45,056.51
Wisconsin		61.00	(61.00)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 766,583.39</b>	<b>\$307,620.33</b>	<b>\$ 458,963.06</b>

\*Includes Pledges

## Bible College Welcome Days

# See for Yourself!

By Kenny Simpson



President Tom Malone addresses visiting seniors at a reception.

**Y**ou're 42 years old and browsing through college catalogs. Many memories, some good and some bad, parade through your mind as you reflect on your college experience. You thought it was all over when you shook hands with the college president and smiled as the photographer took a picture of you receiving your diploma. Now it's time to do it all over again—but this time, it's for your child.

Parents play an important role in helping their children select a college. You answer the phone and are greeted by another college recruiter. You attend the college fairs and bring home another box of literature. It is all very appealing.

Frustration builds, however, because your child becomes more indecisive and scholarship deadlines are quickly approaching. You find yourselves wondering, "How will we ever make a decision?"

Three words of advice—*visit the campus*.

Free Will Baptist Bible College is always pleased to welcome prospective students and their parents to our campus. It's a profitable time where both the student and the parents can be informed about the college. According to a survey administered last fall to our new students, 48% of the respondents said they first learned about FWBBC from their parents, and 76% indicated that a visit to the campus had an important influence in their decision to enroll.

Here's a short checklist to consider as you make plans to visit:

### When Should We Visit?

Wise parents will begin preparing for their children's education early. It is important that our recruitment office has your child's name and address so that they can receive infor-

mation about the Bible College and especially about Welcome Days.

Welcome Days are the best time for you to make an initial visit to our campus. This event is scheduled twice a year and is for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. (Freshman are also welcomed but are asked to stay off campus due to limited dorm space). During this event students have the opportunity to visit classes, meet college professors and spend two nights in the dormitory with Bible College students. Although pastors and youth workers are usually responsible for bringing the youth, parents should consider attending also.

If the dates of Welcome Days present a conflict, give us a call and we'll schedule a more convenient time for you to visit. If your son or daughter is a senior, you may want to consider planning a trip other than Welcome Days. Since Welcome Days are so busy for both our guests and the col-

lege staff, you may want to schedule another time where you can receive more personal attention. Planning to visit one day during the week will be worth the time and money spent.

### What Should We Bring?

An open mind. All of us have preconceived ideas about places we have heard about but have never visited. It is important to hear the opinions of your friends, alumni and pastors about the college, but remember, you're visiting the college to see it for yourself. Preconceived ideas of what the college will be like or past memories of when you were a student may hinder you from seeing the way the college is today.

Another thing you need to bring is a lot of questions. Before you begin your trip, sit down with your son/daughter and develop a list of questions you want answered. The more questions you ask, the better informed you will be. Organizing your thoughts and questions will make your visit more profitable and enjoyable.

Finally, if you plan to visit during your teen's senior year, bring a completed application for admission. It is important to apply early so that adequate time can be given towards completing the admissions file and for you to apply for financial aid. The \$25 application fee is worth spending even if a final decision hasn't been made about enrolling.

### What Should We Do?

Whether you intend to visit during Welcome Days or plan a personal visit, there are several things you should plan to do while you are on campus.

### Tour the Campus.

Schedule a tour of the campus. The Bible College is located in a residential area of Nashville in a beautiful and safe community. Although some of the buildings are old, they reflect much character.

You need to see our academic building which houses the majority of our classes, and one of our two computer labs. The tour will take you through our library that contains over 60,000 volumes and our auditorium that seats over 700.

Browsing through the job bank in the student services building will ease your mind about your son/daughter finding a job. If you have some extra time, you may want to shoot some hoops in the gym or work out in our weight room.

By the time you finish your tour, you will have worked up an appetite and will enjoy our cafeteria. The wide variety of entrées, sandwiches, fruits and vegetables, and of course, desserts will give you a well-balanced meal.

### Attend Chapel.

You will want to attend chapel. Chapel services play a vital role in accomplishing our purpose. You will sense God's presence as the college family is led in worship and God's Word is preached. You will leave chapel knowing your son or daughter is being educated in such a way that does not contradict God's Word or the way you raised them.

### Meet the Staff.

Speak with admissions officers and/or a faculty representative about the educational program your son/daughter is interested in pursuing. The Bible College is stronger academically today than ever before. Our faculty has worked hard to prepare themselves so that they can prepare their students for a successful career. They will gladly sit down with you and explain the curriculum and courses involved in a particular academic program.

You may want to request a tentative class schedule or graduation checklist to be informed about the requirements for completing a degree. If a degree has not been determined yet, don't worry. Enrolling in general education classes will help any college student.

### Discuss Financial Aid.

Finally, you definitely want to visit the financial aid office. Our proficient staff will instruct you on how you can apply for Federal Aid. Stopping by this office may save you a lot of money. The key is to apply early. Remember that applicants must be approved for admission before they can receive any federal aid.

### We Visited, Now What?

Let go! Put the decision in God's hands. You've visited and have been well informed. Weigh out the advantages and disadvantages with your son or daughter, but let God be your guide. The best choice may or may not be the one with the lowest tuition rate or the one closest to home.

It's hard for an 18-year-old to leave home and go to Bible College. It's even harder when they are confident that it's God's will, but Mom and Dad may not be supportive in their decision.

What's the answer? Visit the campus. See for yourself! ■

For scheduling a campus visit other than Welcome Days, please contact:

Mr. Kenny Simpson  
Director of Recruitment  
3606 West End Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37205  
Phone: 1-800/76-FWBBC



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Kenny Simpson serves as director of recruitment at Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee.

### Directory Update

#### MICHIGAN

Milford Byrd to Community Church, Ypsilanti

#### NORTH CAROLINA

James Pittman III to Cardinal Village Church, Jacksonville from Linneus Church, Houlton, ME

Larry Ball to Wildwood Church, Wilson from Southside Church, Hickory

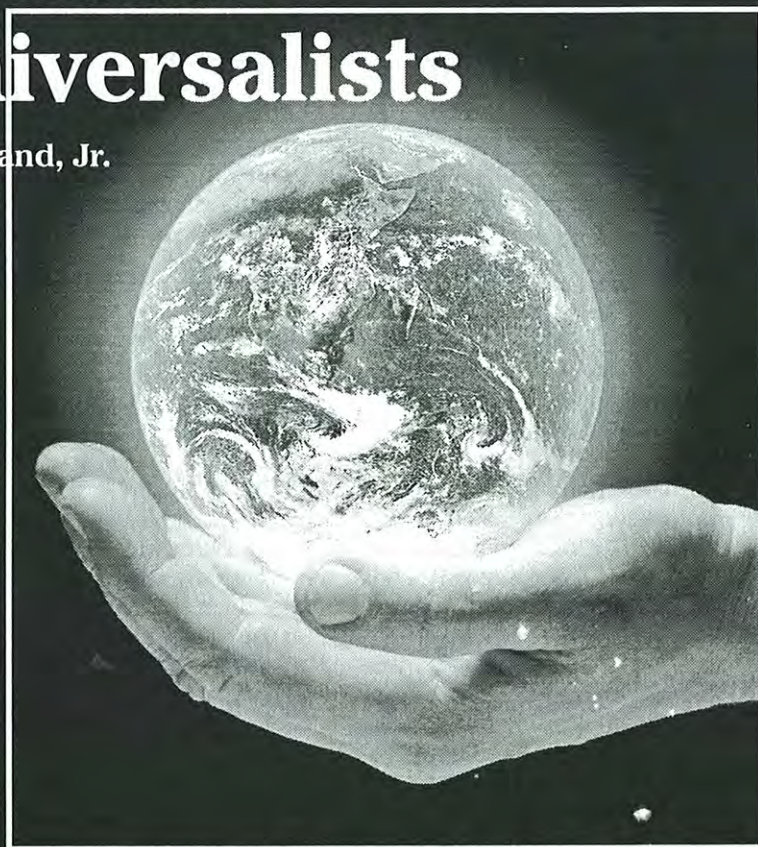
#### TENNESSEE

Billy Walker to Smyrna Church, Smyrna from First Church, Wilburton, OK

Part three of an 11-part series on aberrant-Christian groups in America.

## The Counterfeit Jesus of Unitarian/Universalists

By Tom Forehand, Jr.



### "The efforts of the nineteenth-century

Unitarians and Universalists were directed to the discovery and expression of what they called the 'religion of Jesus' rather than the 'religion about Jesus,' which they conceived conventional Christianity . . . ." Unitarian Universalist leaders have preached and written a lot about "Jesus" but is it a counterfeit Jesus?

### Liberal Peas in a Liberal Pod

What do members of this combination sect believe? In 1960 one Unitarian minister expressed his belief this way: "I am willing to call myself a Christian only if in the next breath I am permitted to say in varying degrees I am also a Jew, a Hindu, a Moslem, a Buddhist, a Stoic, and an admirer of Akhenaten, Zoroaster, Confucius, Lao-Tse and Socrates."<sup>2</sup>

In 1961 The American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged into the Unitarian/Universalist Association (UUA). Soon a survey of 12,000 UUA adherents revealed: ". . . 28.0 percent saw God as an 'irrelevant concept' . . . 56.9 percent . . . would not define their religion as 'Christian' . . . 79.4 percent . . . indicated a belief that modern science 'strengthens liberal religion.'"<sup>3</sup>

Though these two sects had theological differences, they shared a common religious heritage.

### Doctrinal Identity

For centuries, Unitarians identified with the question "Who is God?" The Bible teaches the Trinity doctrine (One God who is three equal Persons). Yet, Unitarians reject the Trinity concept.

According to William Irvine, Unitarians believe that "the Trinity proclaims three Gods, and not One. There is only one Uni-personal God, they say, and He is not Christ, nor the Holy Spirit."<sup>4</sup>

Universalists have identified with the question "Who Will Be Saved?" The Bible teaches that all human beings will *not* be saved (II Peter 2:9-17; Jude 13). Yet, Universalists believe in a universal salvation of all mankind (thus, "no eternal damnation").<sup>5</sup>

Unitarians and Universalists (UUs) have a common religious ancestor in Faustus Socinus. This 16th-century heretic taught a false doctrine about Christ's atonement; this appealed to the Universalist belief that all would be saved. Socinus also taught a false doctrine about Christ's nature; this appealed to the Unitarians' denial of Jesus' full deity.<sup>6</sup>

By 1785, the first Unitarian Congregation in America had sprung from the seeds of "an English Episcopal Church" at "King's Chapel, Boston . . . [Within a few decades Unitarianism, at least for a while,] became the faith of many . . . leading citizens and thinkers of New England."<sup>7</sup>

John Murray's preaching during the 1770s plowed



America's universalist movement that soon seeded "largely among rural and small-town populations of middling economic status."<sup>8</sup>

### Exaltation of Man

Both sects viewed man as having "a spark of the divine in [his] nature."<sup>9</sup> For one leading Unitarian, "[t]he divine in Jesus was . . . a revelation of the divine in man. Jesus was . . . a revelation of God *in* man."<sup>10</sup>

One Unitarian clique revolved around "New England poet . . . Ralph Waldo Emerson [who] believed that everything in nature, even man, was part of a great Oversoul."<sup>11</sup>

This particular exaltation of man "has come to be called humanism . . . popularized with the publication in 1933 of *A Humanist Manifesto*. The authors were thirty-three well-known men who were Unitarians, liberal churchmen, and atheists."<sup>12</sup>

### Devaluation of the Bible

This exaltation of man seems to have led to an undermining of biblical authority. According to English Unitarian Henry Gow, "[n]o one can understand modern Unitarianism who does not realize this [19th century] change of authority from the Bible to conscience and reason."<sup>13</sup>

One group of Unitarians became "interested in the writings of German theologians who tried to prove that the Bible is not the Word of God."<sup>14</sup> Scripture claims to be "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21). Yet, by 1960 one Boston Unitarian minister woefully affirmed ". . . Bibles . . . are the creations of men . . . [The Bible] is replete, with inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and errors."<sup>15</sup>

### Social Activism

This undermining of biblical authority seems to have led to a de-emphasis of doctrine. In 1928 Henry Gow claimed that ". . . old discussions [among Unitarians] about the Trinity or Unity, the Incarnation or Atonement, mean nothing . . . [Unitarians] have a work to do . . ."<sup>16</sup>

That work seems to be part of a strong desire to affect social justice. Examples of this heritage last century were the Unitarians' opposition to slavery and their support of women's suffrage. One such Unitarian mover and shaker was Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."<sup>17</sup>

### "Another Jesus"

*The True Jesus . . . Going*—Some trace the Unitarian heresy about the nature of Jesus to Arius a fourth-century professing Christian in Egypt. Arius incited a major controversy by claiming: "the Father is the only divine being absolutely without beginning; the Son [was] . . . created . . ."<sup>18</sup> In 325 A.D., Arius was checked by Christian leaders at the Council of Nicea. There a large majority affirmed, what the Bible taught, that Christ was an un-created being (see Colossians 1:16; John 1:1-3, 14). Christ, they proclaimed, was "begotten" but "not made" by the Father.<sup>19</sup>

In the 16th century, an echo of Arianism was heard near the Alps. At that time, Italian Faustus Socinus, who later moved to Poland, wrongly taught that Jesus "was in

Himself and by nature a mere man."<sup>20</sup>

*The True Jesus . . . Going*—Socinus' speculations about the nature of Jesus spread through parts of Europe. By the 17th century when Socinus' heresy had finally reached England, his followers branded themselves "Unitarians."<sup>21</sup>

As Socinus' faulty doctrine became more influential, it robbed Jesus of more and more of His glory. How? Whereas Arius and Socinus had both worshipped Jesus Christ, English Unitarians now refused to do so!<sup>22</sup> Modern-day Unitarians see Jesus as "no more or less divine than any man."<sup>23</sup>

*The True Jesus . . . Gone*—Shortly before the Unitarians and the Universalists merged, their leaders debated "one portion of a statement of Purposes and Objectives."<sup>24</sup> According to author David Robinson, part of the debate concerned whether or not to include a reference to Jesus in the following statement: "by Jesus and other great teachers of humanity" (After lots o' politikin' this reference to "Jesus" was omitted).<sup>25</sup> ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Tom Forehand, Jr., is the Tennessee Director of Watchman Fellowship. If you have questions about aberrant-Christian sects in America, contact Tom at P. O. Box 3035, Clarksville, TN 37043 or e-mail tafj@juno.com.

### Endnotes

(Recommended reading materials in bold face)

1. Harry C. Meserve, "We Compile Our Own Bible." *Unitarian Universalist Views of the Bible* (USA: UUA Pamphlet Commission Publication, n.d.), n.p.
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4. William C. Irvine, *Heresies Exposed* (Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1973), p. 196.
5. Robinson, pp. 3-4, 47f.
6. Henry Gow, *The Unitarians* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1928), pp. 17-19).
7. Gow, pp. 147, 149.
8. Robinson, pp. 3-4. According to Von Baolen, "It was Unitarian Boston that became the nursery of Eddyism [Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science movement]"—Jon Von Baolen, *The Chaos of the Cuts* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1938), p. 294.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 172; also see Gow, p. 174.
10. Gow, p. 113.
11. Fritz Ridenour, *So What's The Difference?* (Glendale, Cal.: Regal Books, 1979), p. 121; also see Robinson, p. 5.
12. Ridenour, p. 124.
13. Gow, pp. 118, 119-130; also see Von Baolen, p. 323. Charles W. Eliot, late president of Harvard, "We no longer depend for salvation upon either a man or a book . . . back of it all stands our divine reason" (Von Baolen, p. 323).
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19. Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*. 2nd Ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 25.
20. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*. V. II (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 418-419.
21. Pierre Allix, *The Judgement of the Ancient Jewish Church* (London: n.p., 1699), p. xiv.
22. Strong, p. 328.
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25. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

## Struggles of the "Large City-Small Church"

By Stanley Konopinski

**T**he local church is one of the greatest gifts that Jesus gave us. One of the purposes of the church is to bring unity among the people of God. This body of believers working together has two main responsibilities: (1) to provide strength, security and comfort to its members and (2) to stimulate them to good works and growth. God has gifted each member so that we all can have a part in the Church's success.

The U. S. Marine Corps has a popular saying, "We are looking for a few good men." The small church pastor has a similar saying, "We are looking for a few good workers."

One of the greatest discouragements for the small church pastor is the lack of qualified workers and the ability to gain them. It is always interesting to visit a family who has visited your church and pose the familiar question, "Were you satisfied with our church?"

Pastors usually hear a familiar reply, "Well, we were disappointed that you did not have a better graded Sunday School for our children, and we were disappointed that you did not have a children's church for our daughter, and we were surprised that you did not have an active teen program for our son, etc."

Pastors wonder where to get qualified workers for those programs when 90% of their congregation is elderly or ill or non-motivated.

Sometimes I hear my fellow pastors speak of the overabundance of workers in their churches and I ask myself, *Why can't some of those excess workers see the needs at our church?* But I do not receive an answer.

Recently, I overheard a local pastor speak about his music ministry. He said that he had eight piano players in his church and only three were ministering. At our church we do not have any members who play the piano. We have to hire someone from another denomination!

My heart breaks when I think that there are qualified workers in our large churches who are not ministering in their area of expertise. God has given every believer the equipment to serve effectively. He calls this a "gift."

Paul said that Christians have "gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us," (Rom. 12:6). As Paul itemized these gifts, he said in effect, "If you have it, use it."

Effectiveness in ministry means finding out what our equipment is and then using it in the appropriate place. I believe to find that appropriate place is to fall to our knees and ask this question, "God, am I where You want me to be and am I doing what You want me to do?"

Being where God can truly use you (even if it is in a small church) is much more important than being a part of a large ministry. Distributing all these wonderful talents and gifts which God has given each believer will result in more souls being born into the Kingdom of God. And that is exactly what God expects of us! ■

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Stanley Konopinski pastors Trinity Free Will Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

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# FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

## Don Sexton, Former Missionary, Dies

ELIZABETHTON, TN—Reverend Donald Ray Sexton, 67, died December 17, 1997. He and his wife Billie were missionaries to France in 1971, and served until 1979 when Don was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

During his ministry in France, Sexton started the first Free Will Baptist church in Nantes. He was elected field director in 1976. After he returned to the States, Brother Sexton was asked by the Foreign Missions Board to promote foreign missions in the United States.

For the next 13 years, the Sextons traveled, informed and motivated Free Will Baptists for missions. When Don's health no longer permitted him to perform his duties, he resigned in 1990.



Through his efforts, the "Don and Billie Sexton Walk-a-Thon" in Tennessee became the most successful such effort in the denomination, raising nearly \$1 million for missionary support.

Brother Sexton was licensed

to preach in 1950 and ordained in 1951. He was a native of Jenkins, Kentucky. He graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1960. He also attended language school in Switzerland and France.

He served as Tennessee's first state missionary in 1963 and moderated the Tennessee State Association (1967-1971). He pastored six churches, four in Tennessee and two in Kentucky.

Funeral services were conducted December 20 at Valley Forge FWB Church in Elizabethton. Reverends Eugene Waddell and Rolla Smith officiated.

Reverend Sexton is survived by his wife, Billie of Elizabethton; one son, Kyle of Elizabethton; and one daughter, Donna Clark of Winston-Salem, N.C.

## FWBBC Seniors Chosen for *Who's Who*

NASHVILLE, TN—Thirteen Free Will Baptist Bible College seniors will be honored by being included in the 1997-98 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*. Members of the FWBBC faculty made the nominations. *Who's Who* associate director Beakie Powell confirmed that all 13 were accepted.

In making the nominations, the faculty considered such criteria as spiritual maturity, academic achievement, social development, and potential for future service.

The FWBBC seniors will join an elite group of students from more than 1,900 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several foreign countries.

These are the students from Free Will Baptist

Bible College chosen for this distinct honor:

- Rachel Callaway, Madrid, Spain—*English/Missions*
- Mark Cowart, Knoxville, Tennessee—*Missions*
- Heather Daniel, Wabash, Indiana—*Elementary Education*
- Kristy Douglas, Bradley, Illinois—*Secondary Education*
- Kenneth Fitzpatrick, Groveport, Ohio—*Music Education*
- Heather Hasty, Ridgetop, Tennessee—*English/Missions*
- Nicole Hurlburt, Stickney, NB, Canada—*Psychology*
- Liz Rasar Kohn, Decatur, Illinois—*Missions*
- Michael Lytle, El Dorado, Panama—*Business Management*
- Matt Price, Belmont, North Carolina—*Youth Ministry*
- Jennifer Blanks Ryan, West Plains, Missouri—*Elementary Education*
- Brian Sargent, Nashville, Tennessee—*Music*
- Michael Smith, Richmond, Virginia—*Youth Ministry*

## Reverend L. D. Payne, 61, Dies

LAKE VILLAGE, AR—The Reverend L. D. Payne, pastor of Oak Grove FWB Church in Lake Village, died October 17, 1997, after 36 years in the ministry.

He spent his entire 36-year ministry in Louisiana and Arkansas. He pastored 12 churches, organized four churches and served 10 years as moderator of

two associations.

Brother Payne began a live radio broadcast on station KVSA in Dermott, Arkansas, in 1968. The broadcast still continues 30 years later. He had been a farmer, brick mason and a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War.

Funeral services were conducted October 29 at Oak Grove

FWB Church where Reverend Payne pastored at the time of his death.

He is survived by his wife JoAnn; three sons, Phillip and Tommy of Lake Village, John Mark of El Dorado; one daughter, Sarah Zeno of Lake Village; five grandchildren, five brothers and three sisters.

## Church Honors 50-Year Pastor

SPROTT, AL—Members of Mount Pleasant FWB Church in Sprott, Alabama, celebrated 50 years with the same pastor in 1997. Reverend Maxwell Harper and his wife Jeannette first came to the community in 1947.

Church officials said that the congregation worshiped in a frame building in 1947 and were forced to build a wire cage around the piano to keep the squirrels out.

Like many rural churches, the congregation only met once a month during those early years. That gradually changed, and now the Harpers make the 40-mile drive to the Mount Pleasant Church every



Maxwell and Jeanette Harper

Sunday and Wednesday.

Pastor Harper also led the church to build a brick structure in which to worship. Two of the churches original members still attend regularly—Mrs. Blannie Dunkin and Mrs. Vera Jones. Four generations of Mrs. Jones' family attend with her.

The congregation sponsored a special Pastor Appreciation Day to honor Pastor and Mrs. Harper for 50 years of faithful service. The Mount Pleasant FWB Church is a member of Alabama's Cahaba River Association.

## Instrumental Ensemble to Perform at Convention

ANTIOCH, TN—The all-volunteer instrumental ensemble will perform in July at the 62nd annual Free Will Baptist National Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma, according to instrumental director Chris Truett.

The ensemble will accompany congregational singing each night (except Sunday) in the arena at Tulsa Convention Center, Mr. Truett said. Ensemble participants will practice Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 7:00 a.m. The rehearsals will be conducted in the convention center arena.

Truett said, "We are inviting anyone from ninth grade up to participate in the instrumental

ensemble. We would like to have more adults in the group. Last year was a success, and we want to expand the group this year."

Those who wish to participate in the ensemble must notify Mr. Truett by June 1. Musicians should send names, addresses, phone numbers, church names, types of instruments played and number of years' experience with the instruments to:

Bethel FWB Church  
Attention: Chris Truett  
1936 Banks School Road  
Kinston, NC 28504  
919/522-2451

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

## Southeastern Sets 'Get Acquainted Days'

WENDELL, NC—Southeastern FWB College will host its spring "Get Acquainted Days" April 24, according to President Billy Bevan. The event is open to high school sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Students interested in attending the three-day activities must finalize registration procedures by March 26, according to college officials. The cost is \$20 per student.

Students may secure more information and registration forms by calling the college's toll-free number: 1-888/847-3922.

## 19 Bible College Students Appointed

NASHVILLE, TN—The Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Board has approved 19 FWBBC students for summer ministries abroad, according to Mr. Tom McCullough, the college's missions teacher.

Ten will serve as overseas apprentices, working with missionaries on six fields. They are:

Bethany Crowson . . .Spain . . . . .Nashville, TN  
 Kimberlee Scott . . .Japan . . . . .Johnsonville, SC  
 Jon Turnbough . . . .Russia . . . . .Greenville, NC  
 John Hayes . . . . .Russia . . . . .Lake City, SC  
 Kelly Guyton . . . . .Uruguay . . .Green Rock, IL  
 Trudie Skelley . . . . .Uruguay . . .Oakley, IL  
 Allysa Hampton . . .Brazil . . . . .Nashville, TN  
 Wendy Skelley . . . .Brazil . . . . .Oakley, IL  
 Katrina Smith . . . . .Brazil . . . . .Greeneville, TN  
 Becky Hale . . . . .France . . . . .Taylor Ridge, IL

Each of these will have to raise \$3,000, half of it by March 1.

Nine others will be on the *1998 Go & Be Team*, spending several weeks in Ivory Coast and learning about missions through direct contact with Free Will Baptist missionaries and nationals. The members of the team are:

Timothy Keener . . . . .Westerville, OH  
 Jerrod Pilgrim . . . . .Tulsa, OK  
 Robert Younce . . . . .Stambaugh, KY  
 Joy Taylor . . . . .Cisne, IL  
 Angie Young . . . . .Westerville, OH  
 Amy Thompson . . . . .Batesville, AR  
 Brenda Wendlandt . . . .Stigler, OK  
 Jennifer Harter . . . . .Nashville, TN  
 Tori Lindsey . . . . .Chester, GA

Both missionary apprentices and *Go & Be Team* members receive college credit for their work abroad.

## Trustees Appoint Bible College Relocation Director

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College's trustees asked Roy Harris, the college's stewardship development director, to direct a capital campaign to finance the college's relocation to a new campus, according to President Tom Malone.

The trustees met on campus in early December 1997 and asked Mr. Harris to assume the responsibility of raising \$5-\$6 million in cash and commitments in a three-year drive to move the Bible College to a 123-acre site outside of Nashville. As Director of Advancement, Mr. Harris will supervise all fund raising for the college, but will have the specific responsibility of raising money to build the new campus.

Trustees also asked Tim Campbell, the college's di-



Harris



Campbell

rector of alumni affairs, to replace Mr. Harris in the stewardship development office. He will work under the direction of Mr. Harris and is charged with raising the college's \$1.1 million annual operating fund.

The relocation campaign will be formally launched in March during the college's spring Bible Conference. The college already owns the property to which it plans to move. The property has been underwritten by gifts and commitments to the "Claim the Land" campaign, which Mr. Harris directed.

Due to Mr. Campbell's move, the college is presently searching for a new director of alumni affairs.

## 213 Attend FWBBC Welcome Days

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College welcomed 213 students and 78 sponsors to its fall Welcome Days, November 13-14, says Kenny Simpson, recruitment director. Of these, 59 were high school seniors.

Visitors came from 20 states and represented 77 churches. The largest state groups came from Tennessee (28), Illinois (26) and North Carolina (25). The

largest group registered from one church was 11 from Emmanuel FWB Church in Wabash, Indiana.

Mr. Simpson said, "We were able to do a lot of personal recruiting among some of the finest young people in our denomination."

The spring Welcome Days is scheduled for March 26-28. Write or call for details.

Pastor **Glenn Murray** and members of **United FWB Church in West Plains, MO**, planned a big day and set a goal for 500 people. They missed their goal by 60—by 60 *more*, that is. During the weeks leading up to the record attendance, the church witnessed 10 conversions (one was an 87-year-old man), 10 new members, six baptisms and several rededications. A Saturday night gospel concert preceded Sunday's activities.

During homecoming services at **First FWB Church in Greenville, SC**, members burned a \$105,000 mortgage on their family life center which was constructed in 1994. **Bobby Bowers** pastors.

Pastor **Joe Haas** celebrated 50 years in the ministry on November 1, 1997. Members of **Emmanuel FWB Church in Jacksonville, NC**, surprised him with an evening of singing, gifts, old friends, and letters from around the world.

After 40 years in the ministry, Reverend **Randy Cox** retired. His last pastorate was **First FWB Church in Raleigh, NC**, where he served 24 years. He was the first president of Southeastern FWB College.

**Charles Wilkerson**, director of fund raising at **California Christian College in Fresno, CA**, led a \$60,000 project for a new parking lot at the school. Through his efforts, the local Coca-Cola Company presented a \$6,850 check for the school's sports program.

Although he is officially retired, former Home Missions Department director **Roy Thomas** reports that he conducted 24 revivals in 1997 and has already scheduled 15 for 1998. He now resides in Greeley, CO, not far from good elk hunting country.

**Arkansas'** state book store, the **Christian Supply Store**, relocated to new 6,000-square-foot facilities in **Conway**. Officials report brisk walk-in trade since the grand opening in mid-October 1997 with sales up 35%. **Keith**

**Johnson** serves as manager for the book store.

**New Home FWB Church in Berryhill, OK**, notched 70 years of service, according to Pastor **Roy Dale Smith**. Member **Betty Ray** read the church's history to attendees. Former pastor **J. B. Chism** preached.

Members of **First FWB Church in Lawton, OK**, gave pastor **Myrl Kellett** the day off and brought in Oklahoma executive secretary **Jack Richey** to help direct pastor appreciation activities. When the day ended, the well-rested pastor wore a new suit, tie and shoes.

Some 726 people attended the 50th anniversary celebration at **West Tulsa FWB Church in Tulsa, OK**. The church's first pastor, **Orvil Thurman**, gave greetings. Pastor **Connie Cariker** led the two-hour jubilee service.

Members of **White Savannah FWB Church in Conway, SC**, honored **Gladys Collins** for 35 years of service as church clerk. She received a special appreciation plaque and flowers. **Melissa Collins**, a granddaughter of Gladys Collins, was elected to succeed her as clerk. **Buddy Seay** pastors.

**First FWB Church in Simpsonville, SC**, dedicated their new sanctuary, according to Pastor **Robert Travis**. About 150 people attended. Organized in 1974, the church purchased a five-acre site on which to build. Their first sanctuary was a mobile home in 1978. They then erected a wooden structure in 1979. The third sanctuary project was led by Pastor Travis.

The growing need for child care among working families in their community prompted **Southside FWB Church in Darlington, SC**, to open a kindergarten/child care ministry outreach. The new ministry was scheduled to begin in January, according to Pastor **Leroy Lowery**.

Members of **Sand Hill FWB Church in Coward, SC**, raised \$12,000 to build a church in India. **Sherwood Lee** pastors.

Pastor **David Baker** reports 10 baptisms at **Waltonville FWB Church in Waltonville, IL**.

**Alabama** promotional director **Richard Cordell** resigned to enter evangelism. He planned to complete his promotional duties by February and then move more into the evangelism area.

Home missionary **Jim Fairchild** reports 17 conversions and four rededications at **Waldorf FWB Church in Waldorf, MD**.

Members of **Parkview FWB Church in Desloge, MO**, dedicated their new renovation and addition, as well as celebrated 69 years of service to the community. Pastor **Charlie Miller** praised members who did the renovation work which was designed by another member, **Bob Gilliland**.

The jubilee homecoming at **First FWB Church in Cabool, MO**, reminded members of their humble beginnings in 1947 with 23 people. **Ruby Montgomery**, the oldest living charter member, presented a history of the past 50 years and compiled a booklet for attendees. **Russell McDavis** pastors.

Members of **First FWB Church in Lebanon, MO**, rounded up a lot of help to celebrate their 50th anniversary. State Senator John Russell, Mayor Bud Allen and Executive Secretary **Nathan Ruble** joined the jubilee activities. The church organized with 19 charter members in 1947. **Ken Haney** pastors.

A plaque of appreciation hangs on the wall at the **Wendell Sevits'** home. Members of **Hazel Creek FWB Church in Kirksville, MO**, gave him the award for his 50 years of faithful service as a deacon. **Ken Reiter** pastors.

Pastor **Lucian Baker** reports 68 new members and 100 baptisms at **Pleasant Hill FWB Church in Delaware, OH**. Attendance has doubled in less than three years and members plan to start a new building program. ■



## FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

### *Keeping Good Records*

By Frank Giunta

Most people have experienced the feeling of panic as they near the dreaded April 15 deadline. This is especially true if they haven't kept good records.

There are about as many ideas on the subject of good records as there are attorneys, accountants and ordinary folks like you and me.

Ask an attorney or accountant about this matter and chances are good that you will come up with a very accurate and sophisticated set of books to maintain. Now that isn't bad, it's just time-consuming and could be costly.

If you are in business, or are the cautious type who needs the security of perfectly-maintained records, that's definitely the route to go. But if you're like most of us, you can't afford an accountant to keep books for you. What you really want is a simple, inexpensive plan to deal with this need. Here are three practical suggestions.

- If you are in the category of those who are allowed a deduction for travel expenses, you can purchase an inexpensive mileage record book for about two dollars. Keep it in your car and determine not to start the engine until you have recorded your start-up mileage, what your business will be on that trip, and then record the mileage when you return home.

Most of these little books will have a place for business miles and who the driver was. All this information would be vital if there happens to be an audit.

- Purchase a packet of 9 x 12 or 6 x 9 manila envelopes at an office supply store. These envelopes come in various quantities up to 100 in a package. You

may not want that many but they are handy to have around for other uses.

Set aside 12, one for each month. Every day as you make purchases, be diligent to get receipts. If the purchase is tax-deductible, write on the back of the receipt what the purchase is for and place it in your envelope for that month.

- At the close of the month, you can quickly total and list the deductible items.

You will achieve three major accomplishments:

- ◆ You have an accurate record of all your deductible purchases. Uncle Sam requires it when you fill out your income tax forms.
- ◆ If you place items on your charge card, you can validate your monthly statement—not a tax thing, but desirable.
- ◆ If you ever need to return an item, you have your purchase receipt. Many stores require this for a return.

Now as you face April 15, you will have less panic knowing that your task is an easy one. Simply list and total your 12 envelopes and complete your income tax return.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation is your partner in ministries. If you need additional information on this subject or any subject in this area, contact us at: P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Or you may call me direct at 573/335-6240. ■





## HOME MISSIONS

### *The President Goes to Mexico*

By Carl Cheshier

On December 29, 1997, Dr. Thomas Marberry and I from Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, and Rev. Bill Jones, Oklahoma State Missions Director, flew into the Valley International Airport at Harlingen, Texas. We were on our way to Mexico to participate in a planning meeting for the 1998 Hispanic Ministry Conference which will be conducted on the campus of our seminary in Reynosa. Mitzi Munsey met us at the airport and took us to our motel. We then crossed the border and drove on rough, dusty roads to the campus of El Seminario Biblico La Cruz.

As soon as we crossed the Rio Grande we noticed a difference. The streets were narrow, dusty and crowded with vehicles and people. We were immediately confronted with masses of people who do not know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Before long we arrived at the seminary campus and were surprised by the size and beauty of the facility. God has blessed Free Will Baptists with a 25-acre campus located next door to the Reynosa airport. When we purchased the property it had only one building on it, a large hog barn made of concrete blocks. It had no electricity and the only source of water was a well with a windmill. That building has been renovated. It now contains classrooms, the library, offices, dormitory rooms for women students, a cafeteria and kitchen. Electricity has been brought to the campus and a second well drilled.

Both a men's dormitory and home for the president and his family are nearing completion. A large tabernacle has been finished and is used for a variety of activities and meetings.

Immediately upon our arrival, President Ramon Zuniga and his staff gave us a tour of the campus and we began planning for the Hispanic Ministry Conference. This is a one-week training conference for men and women who have an interest in winning and discipling Hispanic people. The conference is jointly sponsored each year by the Home Missions Department, The Seminary of the Cross Bible Institute in

Reynosa, and Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College.

Most of those who participate minister to Hispanics here in the United States, but some Mexican Free Will Baptists participate as well. This Hispanic population is the largest ethnic group with which our denomination is currently working, and this conference provides the training, fellowship and encouragement to those who are involved in this important ministry.



Most of our time was devoted to

planning the upcoming conference, expertly led by Dr. Marberry, the conference chairman. We were able to make brief visits to two new Free Will Baptist churches. We were also able to spend time in the home of one family and talk with several Mexican Free Will Baptists about their lives and ministries.

God used this trip to open my eyes both to the great need in Mexico and to what God is doing there. I am convinced that the seminary in Mexico is the seed bed of our denomination's ministry to Spanish-speaking people around the world. We want to water that seed and help it grow. ■

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Carl Cheshier is president of Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College in Moore, Oklahoma.

Many calls come to Home Missions from churches requesting information and help with Hispanic ministries in areas throughout the United States. We can help. The Second Annual Hispanic Ministry Conference will be June 1-7. Make plans now to attend. It is necessary that attendance be limited to 50. If more apply, participants will be selected at the discretion of the conference planning committee. The cost is \$250 and includes everything except travel arrangements to and from Harlingen, Texas.

See firsthand our Mexico Ministry . . . train along with our Mexican people in and out of the classroom setting . . . enjoy fellowship with God's people . . . and go home with a new commitment and ideas for working with the Hispanic population in your community. For more information contact the Home Missions Department.



## RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

# What Do We Intend to Do Now?

By Alton Loveless

Many may say that America is over-evangelized. This is an oversimplification and clearly misses the point. The fact is, America is not nearly as evangelized as it may first appear.

Let me adapt information from *Missions USA* which has a wealth of knowledge for those wanting to know more about mission needs in America. They suggest there are 130 million citizens attending 343,000 churches. Note the following breakdown:

- ◆ 70 million are Protestants, attending 300,000 churches.
- ◆ 49.7 million are Catholics, attending 23,500 churches.
- ◆ 6 million are Jews, attending 5,000 synagogues.
- ◆ 2.8 million are Mormons, attending 6,900 wards.
- ◆ 1 million are Orthodox, attending 1,600 churches.
- ◆ 5,000 are Jehovah's Witnesses, attending 6,000 halls.

Perhaps 60 percent of Americans are religious, but notice that all but the 70 million Protestants (32% of the populace) are a mission field of 60 million. If that 28 percent is added to the 40 percent unchurched, then 68 percent of Americans are a mission field.

This is assuming that all Protestants are saved, which few will accept. Even George Gallup, the noted pollster, indicates that the evangelical church includes only about 20 percent of Americans. He notes that only 68% of these attend church regularly. Therefore, active evangelicals number only about 35 million or 15% of the population. That would indicate the mission field has now mushroomed to 85% or around 210 million souls.

Divide the Protestant church and we find that from the 70 million:

- ◆ 42 million belong to the National Council of Churches.
- ◆ 14 million are Southern Baptists.
- ◆ 3 million belong to the National Association of Evangelicals.
- ◆ 2.5 million, American Council of Churches.
- ◆ 120,000, Independent Fundamental Council of Churches.
- ◆ 9.4 million are unaffiliated with any association.

According to the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, there are nearly 490,000 clergy in the United States. Of this number, 271,000 are pastoring our 343,000 churches. That means 62,000 churches are either without a pastor or are part time. And it is obvious that

many of the 271,000 have clergy who supplement their ministry with an additional job. Just how many preach the gospel is left to one's opinion. Be that as it may, if every American attended church, there would be an average of nearly 1,000 members per church. The average is less than 75 per church at present.

Many church growth specialists have forecasted a lack of trained workers and leaders in the church. Church, we must not give up the ship of Zion while the world gains ground in our lives, our homes and places of worship. There is light at the end of the tunnel. He is the Light of the world and the Way and Truth. We are making every dollar and minute a pledge to help everyone we can reach His goal.

Your Future, Our Focus. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Alton Loveless is general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Board.

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

*When I'm scared, I think of you!*

By Tim Campbell, Director of Stewardship Development

"One-point-one million dollars."  
 "One-point-one million dollars."  
 "It will be *his* responsibility to raise *one-point-one million dollars* for the general fund budget!"

The words of President Malone's announcement of my new position to the college family kept echoing in my ears and, strangely, his voice began to sound like Carl Sagan's.

I was in the transition period of becoming the Director of Stewardship Development and assuming my first responsibility, the Paul Ketteman Memorial Christmas Drive. Brother Roy Harris and his secretary, Mrs. Wanda Perry, had kicked off the campaign and things were going very well, but now things were being handed to me. Yes, me!

I had always participated in the Christmas Drive in years past, but it was another matter to be responsible for the actual campaign. Firmly in my memory were the statistics of just how much this project means to the college. The drive supplies almost one-third of the total general fund annual budget. And of course there was the most sobering thought of all: Students, present and future, are depending on the success of this drive. The old saying, "the buck stops here," took on a whole new meaning. The truth was, I was hoping that the bucks *would* stop here . . . 300,000 of them.

The demon of doubt began to raise his ugly head. What if people did not send their money this year? What would we do and how would I explain this to the President? How would we finish the year?

Then I started getting the reports: donations coming in, from Kokomo to Cleveland to Bainbridge to Durham to Tupelo to Grand Junction, and points between. A fact began to surface in my mind that I really was aware of all the time in my heart: Support for Free Will Baptist Bible College does not rest in the hands of one man. The college's needs are not sustained by my or anyone else's ingenuity. This is God's college and it is by His hand that we are sustained. I know that as long as we are faithful to the mission that He has given us, He will be with us. I also realize that there are people who believe in the mission that God has conferred upon the college, faithful people, who do not just give to an institution or a personality, but to a ministry.

The freshness of this realization soothed my fears. I felt better deep down inside. I knew our people would come through because they believe in the ministry of the college. I was not disappointed.

About the first of May we will begin the annual end-of-the-year appeal. To tell you the truth, when I think about it, I get a little bit scared again. (Hey, I am still new at this!) However, I am sure that when I make our appeal and the support starts coming in I will again be reminded that the ministry of Free Will Baptist Bible College will be upheld by people who love God and believe in supporting the ministries upon which His hands are laid.

Those kind of people always make me feel better. ■

- Crossville, TN
- Star City, AR
- Kinston, NC
- Terrell, TX
- Glasgow, KY
- Cleveland, OH
- Baltimore, MD
- Jacksonville, FL
- Ina, IL
- Red Bay, AL
- Albany, GA
- New Castle, DE
- Alum Creek, WV
- Glendale, AZ
- Pinetown, NC
- Calhoun, GA
- Peoria, IL
- Muskogee, OK
- Tampa, FL
- Richmond, VA
- Clyde, NC
- Seattle, WA
- Houston, TX
- Jœlton, TN
- Little Rock, AR
- Kokomo, IN
- McEwen, TN
- Savannah, GA
- Pamplico, SC
- Chipley, FL
- Pantego, NC
- Glenwood, AR
- Cleveland, OH
- Geff, IL
- Bainbridge, GA
- Bryan, TX
- Chattanooga, TN
- Bethel, NC



Mr. Campbell replaced Roy Harris as Director of Stewardship Development. He formerly served as Alumni Affairs Director and also scheduled student group tours.

The college is looking for a new Alumni Affairs Director to take Mr. Campbell's place.



**Free Will Baptist Bible College  
 is still  
 your best investment!**



Dennis Wiggs

## When You Preach at Another Church

**I**f another pastor asks you to conduct a revival meeting or preaching conference, consider this an honor. But it is also an awesome responsibility. The young preacher should turn down this opportunity unless the following can be executed.

### *Pray*

Seek the Lord's guidance in the messages you should deliver as the visiting preacher. Proclaiming sermons previously preached may be appropriate, however, that congregation deserves your best. Anoint the messages in prayer. Type or write the sermons again. Prepare your heart, mind and soul for this great challenge.

### *Prepare Well*

Leaving town for a few days demands preparation. Make a list of everything that must be done before departing. Check off the items as they are accomplished. Who will teach your Sunday School class, preach in your absence and prepare the bulletin? Who will be given the telephone number so that members will know where to call in case of an emergency? Stop the mail and newspaper, if your wife is going with you.

### *Prevent Misunderstandings*

A few days before the meeting is scheduled, call the pastor to confirm the date. (How many preachers have shown up a week early or arrived too late?) Write down the exact hour the pastor expects you for the first service. Are you expected to eat a meal before the first service? Write down the time. (You may be young, but even young preachers forget.)

Get exact directions to the church, parsonage or restaurant. Plan ahead.

Leave in plenty of time, considering heavy traffic or auto trouble. (That pastor is somewhat nervous anyway, knowing that you may not show up on time for the first service.) Better to be early for this important engagement.

### *Pave the Way*

Visit with the congregation before and after the services. Shake hands. Learn names. Be friendly. Smile.

### *Preach with Wisdom*

Use old-fashioned common sense. Preaching to a new congregation is difficult for them and for their preacher. Preach the Word. Refrain from making statements, telling jokes or giving illustrations that may offend someone in the congregation. Remember, you have been called to that church to edify the saints, evangelize the sinners and encourage the weak. Do just that.

### *Promote the Pastor*

Some well-meaning sister or brother may approach the visiting preacher about a church problem or a dissatisfaction with the pastor. Refuse to get involved. Brag on the pastor (in a reasonable way, of course). Defend him, if necessary. Speak well of him. Never make any statements that may cast a reflection upon the shepherd of that flock.

Be willing to visit with the pastor. Be at his beckoning. Be a servant to his plans for the day.

### *Practice Ethics*

Refuse to sit up late and talk with the pastor about denominational problems. Refrain from being a "Mr. Know-It-All." Get a good night's sleep so you can face the next day with alertness. Don't sit up late and watch

television. Spend time in the room provided for you in prayer and sermon preparation.

Don't flirt with the pastor's wife or daughter. Hang up your clothes in the closet. Make your bed. Bathe or shower daily. Take out small portions of food, begin to eat last, eat slowly and refuse to be a glutton.

### *Pray with the Pastor*

Maybe the pastor will not mention praying together, but somehow encourage prayer at the church altar sometime during the day. Bathe the services in prayer. If the pastor does not encourage such actions, be sure to meet with the Lord in privacy on behalf of the services and spiritual fruit.

### *Preach for Decisions*

Preaching God's Word as a guest preacher gives you the opportunity of ministering to people who have problems. Bible preaching reveals sin. Anointed sermons produce spiritual fruit. Therefore, give invitations. Trust the Holy Spirit to bring conviction. Don't try to do the work of the Holy Spirit, but pray and believe in commitments that produce changed lives.

### *Praise the Lord*

Preaching at other churches may prove to be spiritually fruitful. Praise the Lord for the results. Refuse to praise self. The preacher is just a tool, a vessel, a channel. Rejoice in the Lord's blessings. Reject pride. Return home exalting the Lord for the privilege and honor of preaching God's Word to another congregation.

# YOUTH UPDATE

## Here's Your Chance To Be Involved In World Missions

In 1958 (probably before you were born) Free Will Baptists entered Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa. These pioneer missionaries focused on rural villages and small towns in the northeast corner of the country. Now, almost 40 years later their work is nearing completion. The Lord has blessed and most of the ministries have been given to African pastors and leaders. However, in 1994, another pioneer work began in the capital city of Abidjan. The population of Abidjan is over 3 million people, which is about one-fourth of the whole country. Less than 5% of these people call themselves evangelical Christians. The harvest truly is plenteous in this progressive Ivorian city.

The Free Will Baptist church in Abidjan is growing. The facility in which they currently worship is a very small room. Because of limited space, it is almost impossible to have a Sunday School program. In short, the Free Will Baptist Church of Abidjan needs a new building. We want to help build that building!

With our goal of \$100,000 we will be able to build a new pavilion, a wall surrounding the property, and a parsonage for the pastor and his family.



*Typical thatch-roofed pavilion.*

Will you help us with the Abidjan Project? If your group raises the most money, you may be part of a team who travels to Abidjan to help construct the new facilities.

**For more information and a color brochure, call the Youth Ministries Division at 1-800-877-7030.**



*Abidjan church members.*

## Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes

Justo L. Gonzalez

(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996, 123 pp., paperback, \$12.95).

**J**usto L. Gonzalez is a Methodist theologian, biblical interpreter, preacher and writer. He was raised in a Protestant family in Cuba. He taught several years in a seminary in Costa Rica and now lives and teaches in the United States. He is the author of many books and articles on different subjects.

His most famous work is his three-volume, *A History of Christian Thought*, which he published both in Spanish and English. He also wrote a 10-volume *Illustrated History of Christianity* which was published in Spanish in the 70s and 80s.

In more recent years he has focused a great deal of attention on the field of biblical studies. He is the author of the volume on Acts in the *Comentario Biblico Hispanoamericano* series.

Dr. Gonzalez chose as the title for this small book the Spanish phrase, "Santa Biblia," which means, "Holy Bible." This work is a series of reflections on how Hispanic people view the Bible.

The author reminds us that the Bible is important to Hispanics both in this country and abroad. Hispanics have a great trust in and reliance on

the Scriptures. Several times in the book, Gonzalez repeats the testimony of many Hispanics, "Ha sido tan bueno la Biblia con nosotros," (the Bible has been so good to us).

Hispanics have a deep love and affection for the Bible, but that does not mean that they always interpret the Bible the same way that the majority Anglo population interprets it. Gonzalez points out, for example, that Hispanics often see the marginality in biblical accounts.

The Hebrews were often outside the mainstream of society; they were a small nation that often had to live under the heel of foreign oppressors. They were often at the margins of society. During His earthly ministry, Jesus ministered to the poor, women, sinners and others on the fringes of society.

Poverty is another biblical theme with which Hispanic readers readily identify. In both the Old and New Testaments the people of God were often poor. Yet, most biblical interpreters come from comfortable middle-class backgrounds who may overlook this emphasis. Gonzalez writes concerning Jesus' parables,



Thomas Marberry

Scholars have noted that the parables of Jesus speak mostly of two social classes, the rich landowner, and the poor peasant, servant, or day laborer. Yet most interpretation of the parables is done from a middle-class perspective that has little understanding of either of those two classes, or of the struggles that the parables reflect.

This is a most interesting book to read. The author does interpret some passages of scripture in non-traditional ways, but he always shows great respect for the Bible and its teachings. He shares important social and cultural information which traditional middle-class interpreters may well have overlooked.

This book's greatest contribution is not, however, what it says about the Bible but what it says about the Hispanic community. It helps us understand how Hispanics view themselves and their relationship to the majority Anglo population in the United States.

There is much interest in our denomination in ministering to the Hispanic population. This book can help us better understand that important part of our population. ■

### BEYOND BELIEF



## Doorkeeper in the House of Death



Jack Williams

**T**hree years ago I flew to Washington, D.C., and spent Tuesday afternoon with the memory of six million Jews who died before free men finally said, "No," to tyranny. The U.S. Holocaust Museum, a harsh structure designed to create discomfort and a sense of horror, lived up to its name.

With hallways too narrow to accommodate the large crowds, stark architecture, naked evil depicted without apology, subdued lighting that heightens the sense of dread—the museum forces visitors to confront the results of unchecked anti-Semitism, a nightmare that refuses to go away.

For three hours I walked through that house of tears with Nazi propaganda films blaring, past the heart-wrenching pile of shoes, and the despair of man's inhumanity to man. On a third floor crosswalk, I stopped beside a museum security guard who stood alone looking down on the people.

**I quietly asked** how he kept his emotional and mental balance when confronted daily with the great sorrow in the building.

As he turned to walk away, he spoke in a voice numb with hopelessness, "I never think about it. You can't think about it or it would drive a man crazy."

I didn't have to come back the next day. He did.

**The point of all this?** No matter how bad a situation gets, there are times when we can't walk away from it. We must find ways to cope, to adapt, to face what we cannot change and move on with life.

Those who learn to handle personal tragedy, poor health, financial disaster or whatever circumstance comes their way seem to raise the rest of us to a higher level by their ex-

ample. Their courage not only allows them to conquer their own fears, but it also causes us to square our shoulders and reach beyond ourselves.

**For instance, 15 months ago** after a near-fatal fire burned pastor Mark Elliott over 70% of his body, he spent 78 agonizing days in a Greenville, Mississippi, burn center. Physically, he can never again do what he did before the fire.

Mark, now 38, can not walk away from what happened. He will live with the scars, the pain, the "what ifs" for the rest of his life. But in a phone conversation the Saturday before Christmas, he demonstrated that he already sees beyond that fire to a deeper purpose.

"While I was in a shopping mall recently," Mark related, "a dozen people approached me asking about my hands. They could tell that I'd been in some sort of accident. One by one I told them the story of the fire and witnessed to them about God's saving power.

"The amazing part is that they all felt comfortable talking with me. I would never have had the opportunity to witness to those people if I had not been through the fire. If that's what it takes to get a chance to witness, I'm willing."

**Tim Hansel**, in his short article titled, "What's Your Handicap?" tells how one person came to terms with a debilitating disease. The story began with an unexpected phone call.

The voice on the other end of the phone inquired with enthusiasm, "What does it mean for a horse to be handicapped!?" It was Leigh, a special friend who suffers from severe cerebral palsy.

"Well, Leigh, they usually handicap the strongest horse by adding a little extra weight to make the race more fair."

"Yeah, I know! Then what does it mean if you

handicap a golfer?"

"The better the golfer, the larger the handicap."

"Yeah, I know. And what does it mean . . . ?" We explored a number of sports with the same conclusion. There was long pause.

"That's it!"

"That's what, Leigh?"

"That's it! That's why God gave me such a big handicap . . . because I'm so special!"

**The plan of God** for our lives does not require good health, a genius I.Q. or a high-profile job. What it does require is faithfulness (1 Cor. 4:2) wherever we serve, regardless of circumstances, health or personal resources.

God can and will use the strong, the swift, the wise and the wealthy. More often than not, however, He uses the "are-nots" because the wise are confounded by foolish things and the mighty are befuddled by weak things (1 Cor. 1:27).

**One final word** about the Holocaust Museum. When I started out the front door, I met another security guard. This one was different. He wore the only smile I had seen in three hours.

I could not resist. I put the same question to him that I did his unhappy colleague on the third floor. He looked down at me from six and a half feet of dignity. Then he asked me a question.

"Have you ever heard of a man called Jesus Christ?"

The tall guard then said, "The only way a man can keep a smile on his face in this place is to walk in with Jesus and hold on tight."

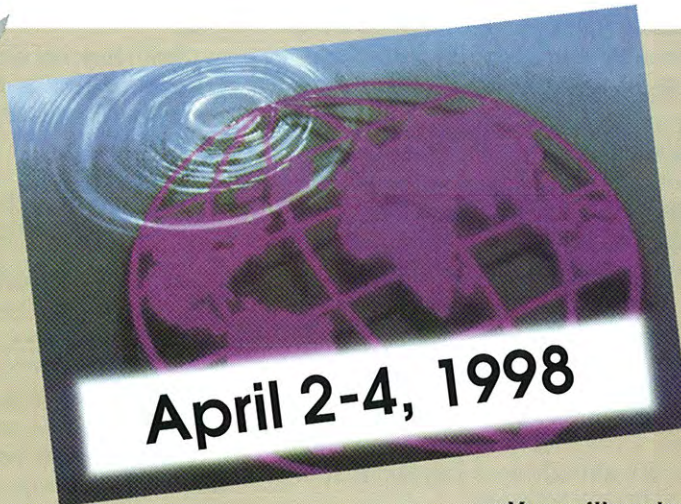
**Two men. Same job.** One saw only a house of death. The other saw the Deliverer.

I left the Holocaust Museum knowing that I'd met a man who makes a difference at his post in life, even as a doorkeeper at the house of death. ■

# CONTACT

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