

CONTACT

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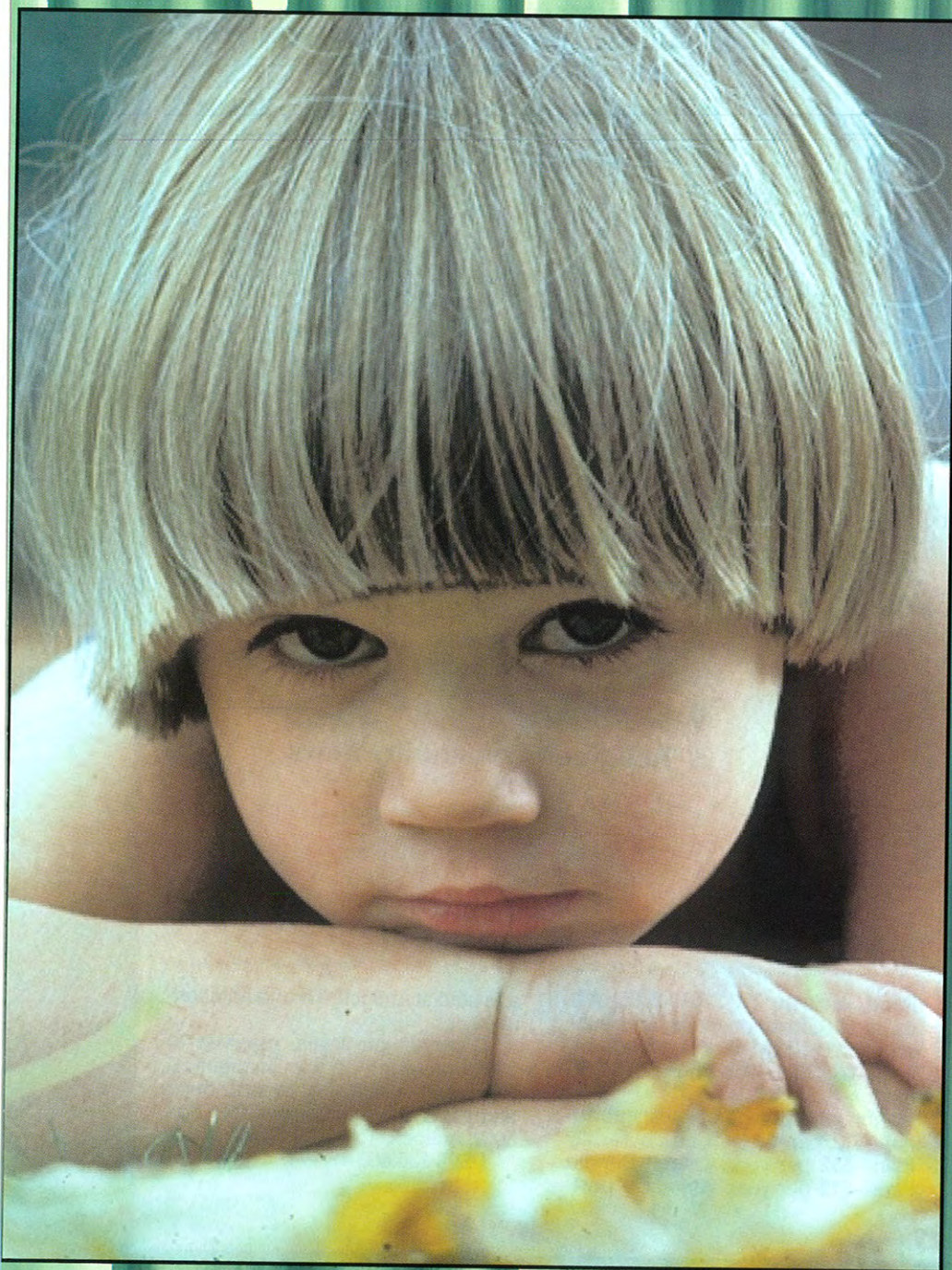


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Georgia on
My Mind
.....

.....
The God of
Surprises
.....

.....
Start a Christian
School
.....

.....
Dear Mom



INSIDE

MAY 1999

VOLUME 46, NO. 5

ARTICLES

4 Georgia On My Mind

Preview of the 1999 national convention.

8 Closet Concerns

What we choose to wear tells others who we are.

10 The God of Surprises

A series of events started on another continent to answer her prayer.

12 Convention Pre-Registration Form

13 Convention Housing Form

COLUMNS

3 The Secretary Speaks

Money Matters

22 The Department Pages

25 Green Tree Bible Study

A Healthy Dose of Commitment

26 Youth Update

27 Especially for Young Preachers

Should I Establish a Christian School?

28 Top Shelf

29 Our Readers Comment

31 Briefcase

Dear Mom . . .

NEWS

15 Free Will Baptist Newsfront

Media Commission Project

California Church Turns 50

Family Ministries Build

Meryl Erickson Dies

Beryl Blair Dies

Southeastern College Graduation

Georgia Church Centennial

Discount Convention Air Fares

Delegate Cards

Mass Choir Recording

Instrumental Ensemble to Perform

21 Currently

30 Religious Community News

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Money Matters

Church growth is one of the buzz words in the religious world today. This topic has been the thesis of many sermons and seminars. What has puzzled me as I have browsed the literature on this subject is that there seems to be no precise definition of church growth. What are the dimensions of church growth? Does church growth refer only to numerical growth?

Does it include stewardship, spiritual and service growth as well? A church or denomination may experience growth in more than one area at a time. Any definition of church growth must incorporate statistical, spiritual, service and stewardship growth.

It is difficult to measure *statistical growth* in our denomination due to the incomplete reporting practices in our churches and associations. *Spiritual growth* is even more difficult to measure because each individual tends to establish his own criteria for measuring it. *Service growth* remains an elusive concept because everything has been defined as a ministry in the evangelical world today. *Stewardship growth* is more easily measured when it comes to gift income because record keeping is better.

Our national agencies are held accountable for receipting and disbursing gift income. An accurate annual audit is made available to all attendees who register at the annual national convention where denominational business is conducted by official delegates.

Perhaps you think that growth in giving does not matter. Some make light of increased denominational giving, and yet one of the ways to measure spiritual development is to examine one's pattern, progress and participation in the stewardship of giving.

Contrary to what some say, *money does matter*. Without it, ministries are hindered and hampered and ultimately

will cease to exist. In the area of the stewardship of giving, the National Association has experienced steady and often spectacular growth.

The Growth

One example of growth in the stewardship of giving is total gifts for national agencies. Total gifts to national agencies in 1980 stood at \$3.5 million. By 1990 gifts had risen to \$6.9 million, and soared to \$11.2 million by 1998. This means that total gifts have more than tripled since 1980! Per capita giving in 1990 was \$33.91, and by 1998 it had risen to \$55.81. The gift totals in 1998 were the highest in history.

Another example of growth in the area of the stewardship of giving is the increased gifts *through* the Executive Office. Gifts through the Executive Office in 1980 totaled \$312,000. By 1990 gifts had risen to \$1.3 million and by 1998 reached \$3.6 million. This growth is a powerful indicator.

In 1980 designated gifts through the Executive Office totaled \$189,000 while cooperative gifts totaled \$123,000. By 1990 designated gifts had risen to \$1 million and cooperative gifts to \$330,000. By 1998 designated gifts had risen to \$3 million and cooperative gifts to \$608,000.

The Secretary's Schedule

May 1999

- 4/30-5/1 Mississippi All-Boards Conference
- 6-8 Florida State Association
- 13-15 California State Association
- 14-15 Northwest District Association
- 18-21 Convention Planning Trip
- 26-27 RCMA Board Meeting



Melvin Worthington

The Generosity

All Free Will Baptists may not be growing in the area of the stewardship of giving, but it is quite evident that some are. Some are giving far more than is required of them. Many are giving systematically and sacrificially. They respond to the repeated needs which are presented to them. They respond to *The Together Way Plan's* four special days with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Free Will Baptists are a generous people. In many cases their generosity is unsurpassed and unmatched.

The Gratitude

We are grateful for your *passion for His work*. Your faithfulness in systematically supporting national ministries indicates your passion for the Lord's work through Free Will Baptists.

We commend you for your *participation in His work*. By joining together we can always accomplish more than we can individually. We appreciate your participation in denominational life.

We commend you for your *provision for His work*. Growth in the area of stewardship in giving is evidenced by the continual rise in denominational income. This is a tangible way to measure stewardship growth.

When someone sounds an alarm that the Free Will Baptist denomination is not growing but is dying, please ask that individual what he means by growing and dying. A review of the financial records of the National Association of Free Will Baptists indicates that in the area of stewardship the denomination is growing. While we are not doing all that we could do or perhaps should do, we ought to rejoice and celebrate our growth in the area of the stewardship of giving. ■

Georgia On My Mind

By Jack Williams



The five-day, 150-event Free Will Baptist National Convention stops in downtown Atlanta this July. We plan to be better guests than the group that dropped in 135 years ago with William Tecumseh Sherman. The good general and 60,000 Federal troops carved a 40-mile-wide path through Georgia and left Atlanta in flames.

The city rose from its own ashes to become the transportation and business hub of the South. From ultra-modern Hartsfield International Airport with 800,000 annual flights to a dazzling array of convention hotels and 46 miles of MARTA rails (Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority), Atlanta muscled itself to the top of the heap as an economic and cultural juggernaut.

This marks the third time in 50 years that the National Association has met in Georgia—1949 (Columbus) and 1973 (Macon). Ten thousand Georgia Free Will Baptists in

120 churches have swept the front porch and cooked a whopping Sunday dinner for the expected 7,000 delegates and visitors from 40 states.

The July 18-22 convention meets at the Atlanta Civic Center, two blocks from the largest hotel in town, the Marriott Marquis which boasts 1,671 rooms. The Marriott Marquis has been designated headquarters hotel. Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington said he blocked 900 rooms at the Marriott Marquis and 200 rooms across the street at Hilton Atlanta and Towers (overflow).

Takin' Care of Business

People attend the annual convention for different reasons. Some come for the fellowship, others for the preaching, many focus on youth activities, and the rest show up because it's July and that's what Free Will Baptists do in July.

But the fine print on convention-going leaves no doubt about its primary purpose—denominational business. Atlanta should be no different.

National convention delegates will gear up to examine denominational budgets exceeding \$17 million as Moderator Carl Cheshier (President of Hillsdale FWB College) gavels the voting body through electing 39 board and commission members. He will help delegates navigate motions, consider resolutions and adopt reports on Wednesday and Thursday.

It's called accountability. Every national agency is required to give an annual written report to delegates who evaluate the reports, vote on proposed budgets and elect members to direct each agency's work. The most democratic gathering in the country is the two-day business meeting at the Free Will Baptist National Convention. Every delegate gets to speak his mind and vote his preference.

Meet the Speakers

The 1999 convention theme, "All in Accord," will be developed by five pastors; a sixth pastor will teach the adult Sunday School class.

Sunday School—Tim Thompson

Forty-seven-year-old Arizona pastor Tim Thompson will be first in the pulpit at Atlanta Civic Center when he teaches the adult Sunday School class on July 18. Tim pastors Heritage FWB Church in Gilbert, a Phoenix suburb. His father (Paul Thompson) serves as senior pastor.

Raised in Columbus, Ohio, Tim was ordained in 1975. He worked six years as an associate at Heritage Temple FWB Church in Columbus. Sixteen years ago he moved to Arizona to help his father plant a Free Will Baptist church in the Phoenix Metro area.

He joined the church staff full-time in October 1998, after supporting himself 15 years as a human resources professional in the computer and semiconductor industry.

Sunday Morning Worship—Clifford Donoho

He referees college basketball in his spare time; he's a song writer and was named "Young Man of the Year" by city officials in 1986. But Reverend Clifford D. Donoho's all-the-time, full-time job for 20 years has been pastoring or starting churches.

Donoho (45) pastored three churches in his home state of Illinois from 1979 to 1991 before becoming a national home missionary to Davenport, Iowa. After seven tough years, he led Heritage FWB Church to self-supporting status in January 1999.

Cliff is secretary for the Master's Men Board. He served six years on Illinois' State Missions Board (1978-84), three years as chairman. His son, Chad, graduates from Free Will Baptist Bible College this month; daughter, Janice, graduates next May.

Sunday Evening—Danny Williams

A preacher's kid by birth and a preacher by second birth, Daniel J. (Danny) Williams has known little but churches and parsonages for 38



Clifford Donoho



Danny Williams



Kent Barwick



Roger Hogan



Robert Morgan

years. His father, Jerry Williams, rocked him in a Free Will Baptist cradle in Nashville, Tennessee.

Danny pastors First FWB Church in Winfield, Alabama. His other hats include assistant moderator of the Alabama State Association and member of the state Home Mission Board. For three years (1996-98) he moderated the Jasper Association.

After graduating from Free Will Baptist Bible College as "Most Outstanding Student" in 1983, Williams was ordained to preach and served as associate pastor at Victory FWB Church in Columbus, Mississippi, and principal at Victory Christian Academy (1983-1992).

Monday Evening—Kent Barwick

One of the youngest men to address the national convention, Pastor Kent Barwick (36) was converted in a Georgia revival meeting under the preaching of Free Will Baptist historian Damon Dodd. For the past seven years, he pastored Homerville FWB Church in Homerville, Georgia, where Dr. Dodd (now retired) is a member.

Ordained in 1985, Kent preached at Goodlettsville FWB Church in Tennessee while a student at Free Will Baptist Bible College (1987-90). He pastored Travelers Rest FWB Church in Newton, Georgia, before his Homerville pastorate.

He has served on Georgia's C.E. Board, as clerk of Little River Association, and on Little River's C.E. and Camp Boards. He moved to Columbia, Tennessee, in February where he pastors Loyal Chapel FWB Church. Active foster parents, the Barwicks care for two children ages nine and eight whom they hope to adopt.

Tuesday Evening—Roger Hogan

When he was 29 years old, Reverend Roger L. Hogan was converted at First FWB Church in Farmington, Missouri. Thirteen years later, the church called him as pastor. Since 1989, he has led the congregation where he found Christ as Savior, and where he once served three years as bus director (1979-82).

Now they call him "Brother Moderator," because he holds the gavel at St. Francois District Association. Ordained in 1981, for 12 years he has

served on Missouri's C.E. Board. He pastored seven years at First FWB Church in Cape Girardeau (1982-89).

Roger has invested his entire 20-year ministry in one state. His wife, Carolyn, teaches kindergarten in Farmington's public school system.

Wednesday Evening—Robert Morgan

The most prolific Free Will Baptist writer of the decade, Reverend Robert J. Morgan has published five books since 1996, with more scheduled. Thomas Nelson markets two of his daily devotional works, *From This Verse* and *On This Day*, as well as his *Children's Daily Devotional Bible*. Lifeway published Morgan's *Empowered Parenting*, and the Evangelical Training Association printed his *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*.

For the past 19 years, the articulate 47-year-old Nashville pastor has led Donelson FWB Church. During that time, the church grew until Rob was preaching three morning services each Sunday. Two building programs later, the church can seat 700-plus in its multi-purpose auditorium, and the pastor only preaches once before Sunday lunch.

Morgan is a widely-used speaker throughout the United States and around the world. He writes regularly for *Leadership* journal. After completing his master's degree at Wheaton Graduate School, he returned to Tennessee and pastored Harris Memorial FWB Church in Greeneville (1978). He earned the master of divinity degree (1992) from Luther Rice Seminary. He has served 12 years on the Board of Retirement.

Pastors/Laymen Conference

Atlanta-based motivational speaker John C. Maxwell will lead Monday's Pastors/Laymen Conference at Atlanta Civic Center, 3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Dr. Maxwell founded INJOY in 1985 to help pastors and to develop leaders of excellence and integrity.

Maxwell has written more than 20 books, one of his latest is *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. He speaks to more than 250,000 people each year. He pastored 25 years in California, Indiana and Ohio.

Dr. Maxwell began preaching at

age 17. He is a personal soul winner and is committed to Christian stewardship.

Seminars and More

Seminars brighten national convention Tuesdays. This year the Marriott Marquis hotel will house all seminars.

The Foreign Missions/Home Missions Rally kicks off Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. with speaker Ron Owens. The two-hour gathering meets in the Imperial Ballroom.

Tuesday afternoon at 1:30 p.m., the Theological Trends Seminar focuses on the subject, "Why We Practice Believer's Baptism." Georgia pastor Matt Pinson and Tennessee pastor Paul Harrison will both speak.

Dr. Alton Loveless, Sunday School Department director, will speak at the 1:30 p.m. Sunday School Workshop. His subject: "Trends in the American Community That Can Affect the American Church."

Other meetings were being final-

ized at press time.

WNAC Overview

The annual WNAC Convention brings more than 1,000 women together for two days of business and fellowship. The 1999 theme is "Leadership: Passing the Torch."

Nashville writer Genny Waddell headlines a Monday afternoon seminar at the Marriott Marquis on coping with depression.

The business side of WNAC moves to Atlanta Civic Center Tuesday morning. Missionary to Côte d'Ivoire Lynette Morgan starts the day with a 15-minute devotional. President Everyl Getz will lead business activities. This marks newly-elected WNAC executive secretary-treasurer Marjorie Workman's first report to delegates.

Missionary to Brazil Shirley Combs speaks at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. After lunch, Florida's Diana Bryant will present WNAC's special feature, "Passing the Torch."

Did You Know That Atlanta Has . . .

- the No. 1 rated airport in North America—Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport.
- 130 retail centers.
- 41 public golf courses.
- 54 public parks.
- 32 streets with the name *Peachtree*.
- the largest mall in the Southeast—Lenox Square.
- the world's largest bas-relief sculpture—Georgia's Stone Mountain Park.
- the largest 10k race in the world—the annual Peachtree Road Race, with 50,000 runners.
- the longest escalator in the Southeast—at MARTA's Peachtree Center station, 192 feet.
- the largest hotel in the Southeast—the Atlanta Marriott Marquis with 1,671 rooms.
- the tallest hotel in the Western Hemisphere—Westin Peachtree Plaza, 73 stories.
- the second-largest convention center in the world—the Georgia World Congress Center.

The WNAC Fellowship Dinner starts Tuesday at 4:45 p.m. in the Marriott Marquis. Guest speaker is Brenda Vaughn, a 50-year old South Carolina pastor's wife and mother of five. After a 1978 fire left their daughter burned over 95 percent of her body, the Vaughns founded Hidden Treasure Christian School which ministers to children with physical, learning and mental disabilities.

NYC Notes

National Youth Conference director Dean Jones expects more than 2,500 participants at Marriott Marquis during NYC's four days of non-stop activities which rally around the theme, "No Wall Too High."

With more than 15 worship services scheduled for attendees in addition to numerous tutorials and workshops, NYC officials plan to start early and go late every day. All NYC functions meet at the Marriott Marquis.

More than 900 entries will crowd the annual Music and Arts Festival and the Bible competition. Several hundred teens will participate in service projects within the Atlanta community.

Behind the Scenes

Georgia Free Will Baptists began preparing for the 1999 convention 10 years ago. Their first challenge was to raise \$30,000. Under then executive secretary Herbert Waid's leadership, funds were set aside each month until \$30,000 was in the bank.

Then came the hard part—assembling an eight-person Steering Committee to handle convention details as the countdown moved toward July 1999. That included locating enough volunteers to handle registration, volunteers to staff hospitality tables, volunteers to usher, volunteers to drive courtesy vehicles, volunteers to volunteer for the thousand and one details that somebody must do.

Each Steering Committee member took responsibility for specific areas:

Chairman: William Smith
Registration Committee: Herbert Waid
Hospitality Committee: Terry Pierce
Prayer Committee: Charles Barnard
Ushering Committee: Jack Daniel
State Moderator: Paul Smith
GWAC President: Gail Smith
NYC Advisor: Rodney Goodman

What's New This Year?

Performing Arts Center

The convention will meet in a performing arts center instead of a convention center. The Atlanta Civic Center has plush, theater-style permanent seating and a large permanent stage. Best seats in 30 years!

Registration and Exhibits Relocated

Registration and exhibits move to the headquarters hotel, the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. There's no room at the Civic Center to set up these activities. Let us know how you like it.

Pastors/Laymen Conference

The Pastors/Laymen Conference meets on Monday afternoon, instead of its usual Tuesday slot. Speaker John Maxwell will conduct the conference. Time is 3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Access the Internet

Download Pre-Registration and Housing Forms from the Internet. Click on our web page at www.nafwb.org.

Easy Hotel Reservations

Make housing reservations directly with the hotel by phone, by FAX or by mail. Pick up the phone and get instant confirmation about your hotel preference. No middle man this year.

Fewer Catered Events

Attendees will be on their own for more meals this year. The WNAC Fellowship Dinner is the only large catered function scheduled in Atlanta. The smaller, non-ticketed meals remain in place. Not to worry. There's a large shopping mall with a dozen fast food outlets attached to the headquarters hotel, Marriott Marquis.

In addition to taking charge of their allocated duties, the Georgia Steering Committee attended three half-day planning sessions that resulted in a large red notebook filled with deadlines, charts, handy facts and set-up arrangements.

See Ya'll in Atlanta

Need a vacation? Take it with us in Atlanta this July. Want to hear 6,000 Free Will Baptists sing "Amazing Grace"? Hear it in Atlanta. Hungry for some good preaching? We'll dish it up in Atlanta. Got a sweet tooth that can't be satisfied? Folks don't call Georgia "The Peach State" for nothing.

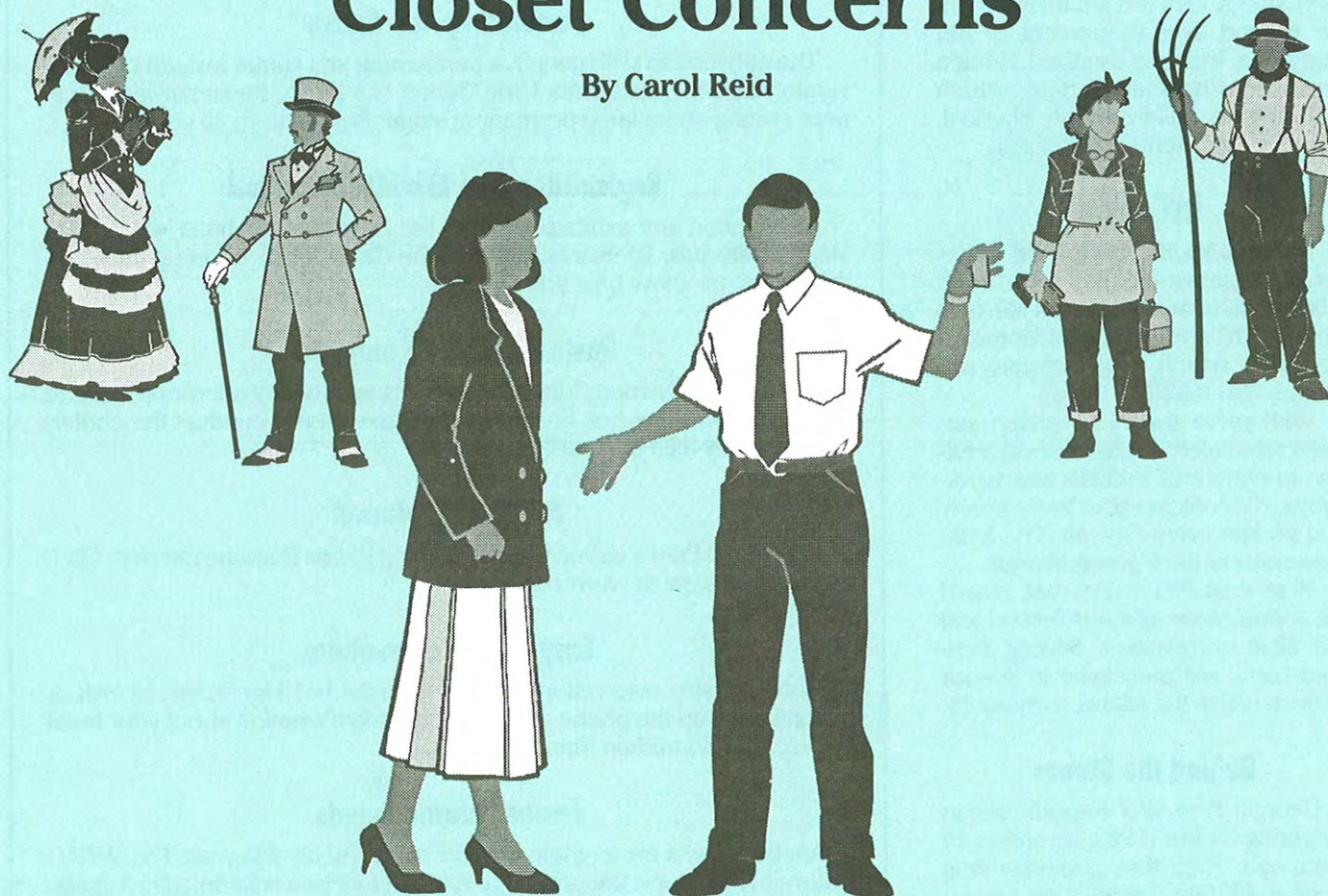
Get a haircut and polish your shoes. Scrub the kids, pack your suitcase, load the car and meet us in Atlanta. Oh . . . and one final word. Remember those l-o-o-n-g registration lines in Tulsa? Ya'll be sure to pre-register now! ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Jack Williams has served 22 years as convention coordinator for the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

Can what you wear tell a lot about who you are?

Closet Concerns

By Carol Reid



God cares about what you wear. God's Word has numerous references to clothing. The scripture tells us about Jesus' seamless robe, about John the Baptist's camel hair clothing, about Samuel's coat and Joseph's coat, about the Proverbs woman's purple and tapestry clothes, about Dorcas' sewing and an entire very detailed chapter in Exodus about the priest's garments.

Yes, God definitely sees the heart, but He sees what you have on as well. And the truth of the matter is that your dress reflects your heart. Whether or not you can state your philosophy about dress, you demonstrate it every day as you make choices standing at your closet door.

So are there some principles that stand the test of time to help you to make decisions about what you wear?

Principle of Modesty

First, consider the principle of modesty. Paul instructs the women in I Timothy 2:9 to "adorn themselves in modest apparel." The principle applies to men as well. The differences in the way men and women respond to visual stimuli may explain why women generally must take more care in this area. There is not a tidy, concrete definition of modesty, however.

Modesty in Africa is different from modesty in the United States. Missionary Tammy Gentuso emphasized that married women in Côte d'Ivoire must wear a double covering over their hips to be modest. But you know from *National Geographic* pictures that they are free to discard other items of apparel. And their children often wear nothing at all.

During her summer in Central

Asia, Charity VanWinkle covered her hair with a large scarf, wore long sleeves and long skirts to be considered modest. She could wear no makeup and grew her hair long to fit in with the culture. In other countries like Iran, women must cover their faces with a veil as well.

Even in various geographic areas of the United States, modesty is defined differently. Ask someone from North Carolina and someone from California what a modest outfit is, and you may get two different answers.

More than the geographic constraints, modesty's interpretation may change over time. The Victorian high collars, long sleeves and covered ankles of a century ago would be extreme in today's culture.

Modesty may also change with the occasion. Certainly, what may seem quite modest in the gym or horse-

back riding may not be modest at church or in the office. Modesty has a subjective definition.

We all agree, though, that the more skin you see, the less modest an outfit is. The more tightly that clothes fit, outlining the body's physique, the less modest they are. The more sheer or shiny a fabric is, the less modest it is because of the attention it calls to itself and what it covers. The more slits and openings a garment has, the less modest it is.

We must answer this question: in this culture, in this time, in this activity, is this outfit modest? Does it cover my body without drawing sexual attention to my body? Does it reflect my commitment to purity in thought and in deed? Does it show my concern for the pure thoughts of others?

We should take seriously the responsibility that Jesus indicated in the Sermon on the Mount when He said that whoever looked on a woman in lust committed adultery with her in his heart. Doesn't committing adultery take two? What is the woman's responsibility in that area?

If a woman can keep her dress from being provocative, enticing or sexually inviting, she honors the men with whom she works, the men she passes on the street, those whom she counts as friends. Modesty and moderation should mark the Christian's appearance. Quit judging by the fashion magazines and the models and movie stars and rock stars.

Ask yourself, can I move around people of the opposite sex in this outfit without calling attention to my sexuality? Can I work with others as I am wearing these clothes and still let them see Jesus living in me? Do the clothes I wear honor the Lord?

Principle of Cleanliness

Next consider the rule of cleanliness. You may not have a wide variety of outfits and the newest styles, but you can be clean and well-groomed no matter what. Your hair, your skin, your teeth, your hands and nails, your shoes and your apparel should be clean. At least some brands of detergent and soap are still relatively inexpensive.

You can afford to be clean—and you can't afford not to be.

Principle of Appropriateness

A third principle is that of appropriateness. It seems that our society doesn't know or doesn't care anymore what is appropriate. People are operating on the principle of the time of the Judges, where every man does what is right in his own eyes. What you wear does affect your behavior.

Have you already learned that wearing your favorite clothes on a day you have a big test will help you be more relaxed and productive for the test? Have you learned that when you have a speech or presentation to make, you wear something you feel looks good on you so that you are less self-conscious and nervous?

Some days my friend Missy Cook would come to work dressed to the nines—high heels, nice suit, hair done up, the whole shebang. When I would comment, Missy would say, "Well, I felt bad when I got up this morning, so I dressed up." She had learned that your appearance can dictate your attitude about the task before you.

You also need to dress appropriately for the activity, appropriately for the season, appropriately for the occasion, appropriately for the place, appropriately for the company you're in. If you plan to maximize your ministry, you must learn sensitivity in what is or is not appropriate.

If you make a mistake, it is better to be on the safe side. Make the mistake, women, of wearing the skirt instead of wearing pants if you're not sure which is better.

Make the mistake, men, of wearing khakis instead of jeans if you're not sure which is appropriate.

Principle of Submission

And finally, consider the principle of submission. Submission? What does that have to do with dress? There are biblical grounds for this principle as well. Do you remember Paul's instruction to women in I Corinthians 11 about wearing a veil? Though the whole explanation about this socially significant item of clothing may be confusing, Paul's use of submission as part of his argument is clear.

"Keep the ordinance," the scripture states in verses 2 and 3, because "the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man

and the head of Christ is God."

In today's culture, people don't like this idea of submission. But we know that ultimately the devil is at the root of this dislike of and resistance to authority. The scripture is plain about *the requirement* for submission—to parents, to a husband, to authorities and to God. Romans 13 doesn't leave any doubts about that.

In the matter of dress, submit to your parents, your employer, your church because "whoever resists these authorities" that God has appointed, in essence, refuses to obey God.

The scripture is also plain, especially in Philippians 2, about *the model* for submission, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who—though He was God and equal with God—put on the form of a servant and dressed Himself like a man, humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.

Romans 13:14 states: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ modeled submission when He put on flesh. You can model submission when you "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," like this verse instructs.

Please take these principles of modesty, cleanliness, appropriateness and submission into account when you choose what to wear tomorrow morning and every morning. But no matter what else you wear, please put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The other details will work out if you put Him on first. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Carol Reid is librarian at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Carol serves as organist at Cross Timbers Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, where she is a member.

The God of Surprises

By Mary R. Wisheart

*For the Lord takes
pleasure in his
people*
(Psalm 149:4 NKJV)

Then surely He must delight in giving His children special surprises, gentle and unexpected touches of His love. Let me tell you about one of those surprises.

Once in a factory, an outfit was designed and sewed, medium size, a long black skirt and a red and black top. The outfit was sent to a store in Kansas City, Missouri. It hung temptingly on the rack until one day Jo saw the outfit, liked it and tried it on. It was a good fit. She bought it and took it with her to Nashville, Tennessee. She enjoyed wearing it several times.

Then one day she cleaned out her closet and made a pile of clothes to give away. Since I was going to Uruguay and some of our Christians there would appreciate the clothes, she said, "Take all these clothes you can. What you don't take, I'll give to the Rescue Mission."

I was taking an extra suitcase to leave with my friend, Molly, a missionary there. I stuffed the bag full of clothes, including the black and red outfit.

As I packed it, I thought, "Hey that's a nice outfit. She must have outgrown it."

The clothes arrived in Montevideo, Uruguay, September 30.

Meanwhile in the town of Rivera, on the border of Uruguay and Brazil, Rosalia worked hard to help her husband support a family of six. She had refused to go to high school and the only work she could find was cleaning other people's houses. It was hard work and it didn't pay much, but it helped a little.

One day she heard about a course being offered at the local hospital for training professionals to clean hospitals, schools, restaurants and other businesses. She decided to enroll in



Rosalia (L) in her new outfit.

the four-month course.

Taking the course demanded great sacrifice for Rosalia. She had to take the classes, do practical work in the hospital and do other cleaning to help pay for the course. She worked hard, passed all her tests and was ready to receive the certificate on November 18.

Naturally Rosalia wanted to look nice for the ceremony. She needed a new outfit, but that would be impossible. She barely had enough money to pay for the course. At least with the certificate in hand, she could find a better job, earning more money for her family. Was a new outfit really all that important?

One evening Rosalia and her mother, Edilia, were window-shopping. They looked at clothes they knew they could not possibly buy.

Suddenly, Rosalia spotted an outfit she simply fell in love with. She was so delighted with it that she had to tell her mother how much she wanted it. The outfit consisted of a long black skirt and

a red and black top. But of course, they walked away without it.

On the Tuesday before Rosalia's ceremony, Molly finally got around to opening the suitcase and parceling out the clothes for different families that she knew could use and appreciate them.

One bag she gave to Edilia for her daughter, Rosalia. On Wednesday evening Rosalia returned from work, tired, but looking forward to receiving that certificate. Imagine her surprise when her mother handed her the black and red outfit.

Thrilled, Rosalia put it on. No need for alterations. It was an exact fit. Somewhere in some distant place thousands of miles from her town and without her measurements, someone made a black and red outfit just for Rosalia. She marched forward to receive her certificate, looking like Miss Universe with a winning smile. In fact, Molly says Rosalia was the best dressed of any person attending.

Just recently Rosalia renewed her commitment to the Lord after straying away for awhile. God seemed to be saying, "Welcome home, daughter. Here's your robe."

And can't you imagine His delight as He watched His child march down to receive that certificate, wearing an outfit He had especially designed for her and delivered at just the right time.

Rosalia's faith was strengthened. Now she has a better paying job, and she is thinking of going to school at night so that she can earn her high school diploma.

That outfit must have been especially intended for her. When I told Jo this story, she said, "I looked for that outfit last weekend. I wanted to wear it to church last Sunday. I couldn't find it."

Of course she couldn't find it. God had other plans for it, and He gave me the privilege of delivering it. ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Mary R. Wisheart is a member of Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. She retired in 1998 after 13 years as WNAC executive secretary.

Pre-Register by June 18 and Pick up Your Convention Packet on Saturday!

*Early pick-up available at
Atlanta Marriott Marquis
for those who pre-register.*

*Saturday, July 17
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*

*Sunday, July 18
1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.*

Pre-Registration ends June 18, 1999.

News Flash!

Just in time for the convention . . .

— Step onto the Information Super Highway —

Check our web page at www.nafwb.org

for a pre-registration form, housing form and
delegate cards that can be printed from your computer.
Fill them out and send them in.

While you're there, check out links to
other denominational agencies.
You might be surprised at what you find.

Check out the changes. It's as easy
as A-B-C:

- A** ltered pre-registration form.
- B** adges that are attractive.
- C** onfirmation letter.

See Page 14 for the new pre-registra-
tion form. Check out the new badge
design on this page.

(The real badge will be prettier;
it will be in full color!)

National Association of Free Will Baptists

Atlanta, Georgia

July 18-22, 1999

Johnny

John Doe

Anytown, ST

Ord. Min./WNAC/Visitor

Pre-Registration Form

for

National Association of Free Will Baptists
Women Nationally Active for Christ
National Youth Conference
Atlanta, Georgia / July 18-22, 1999

DEADLINE:
Must be postmarked
on or before
June 18, 1999

Please Print: (Only one person per form—make copies if needed.)

Name: _____
First or Name desired on badge Last

Home Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone #: (____) _____ - _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Church Name: _____ City _____ State _____

Pastor's Name: _____

Note: You may register for all three conventions on this form.

National Association Registration

Voting Delegates:

All voting delegates must be members in good standing of a Free Will Baptist church.

- ☐ National Officer
- ☐ National Board Member
- ☐ State Delegate
- ☐ Local Church Delegate (\$25)
- ☐ Foreign Missionary
- ☐ Home Missionary
- ☐ Ordained Deacon
- ☐ Ordained Minister

Non-Voting Attendees:

- ☐ Licensed Minister
- ☐ Visitor

WNAC Registration

Voting Delegates:

- ☐ National Officer
- ☐ State President
- ☐ State Field Worker
- ☐ State Delegate
- ☐ Local WAC Delegate (\$5)

Non-Voting Attendees:

- ☐ Visitor

National Youth Conference Registration

Pre-Registration Fee: \$20*

◆ Grades 1-12 *must* register to attend NYC events.

◆ Ages 2-6 *must* register if attending Pre-school Worship.

Birthdate: ____/____/____ Age: ____

Grade completed Spring 1999: ____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Youth Leader's name: _____

Payment must accompany this form for:

Tickets:

Youth Workers Reception (\$15)	Quantity _____ x \$15\$ _____
WNAC Fellowship Dinner (\$28)	Quantity _____ x \$28\$ _____

Delegate Fees:

Local Church Delegate (\$25)	(Must enclose a signed delegate card; see <i>Contact</i> , page 19.)**\$ _____
Local WAC Delegate (\$5)	(Must enclose a signed WNAC delegate card; see <i>Contact</i> , page 19.)**\$ _____

Youth Registration Fee:

Pre-Registration Fee (\$20)\$ _____
*On-Site Registration Fee: \$25	Total\$ _____

Send one check for total amount — payable to FWB Convention.

**Delegate cards available on website: www.nafwb.org

Mail to:

Convention Registration
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002
12 *Contact*, May 1999

**Confirmation letter will be mailed to
all those pre-registering.**

For Office Use Only

Date Rcv'd _____
Ck/MO# _____ Amt _____
From _____

Housing Form

National Association of Free Will Baptists / National Convention

Atlanta, Georgia • July 18-22, 1999

Print or type all information requested and phone, mail or FAX form to the hotel of your choice by **June 18, 1999**. If form is faxed, keep your transaction report as proof of transmittal. You will receive acknowledgment of your hotel assignment by mail within two weeks of the time the form is received by the hotel. All reservations, changes and cancellations should be made directly with the hotels.

DEPOSIT REQUIRED: An advance deposit of **\$135 per room** is required. Your deposit will be charged to your credit card by providing the information requested below. Deposits being made by check should be for **\$135 per room** payable to the hotel of your choice and mailed to the address below. Forms received without credit card information or a check for the deposit will be returned and reservations will not be processed. Hotel refund policies vary. The hotels *prefer* credit cards rather than checks.

Changes or cancellations should be made directly with the hotel. Check your hotel confirmation for instructions regarding cancellation policies and check-in times. Reservations received after June 18, 1999, (or once block is full) will be on a space and rate available basis.

If you mail or FAX the housing form, number hotels in numerical order of preference. If your preferred hotel is sold out, your form will be sent to the other hotel listed on this form.

◆ ◆ CIRCLE ROOM TYPE REQUESTED BELOW ◆ ◆

(Rooms with two beds are limited. Please utilize rooms with one bed whenever possible.)

Number Hotel choices in order of preference ↓	HOTELS	SINGLE 1 bed / 1 person	DOUBLE 1 bed / 2 persons	DBL/DBL 2 beds / 2 persons	TRIPLE 2 beds / 3 persons	QUAD 2 beds / 4 persons	PARKING
	Marriott Marquis (Headquarters)	\$109	\$109	\$109	\$119	\$119	\$10/day valet
	Hilton Atlanta & Towers (Overflow)	N/A	N/A	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$12/day valet

Rates do not include tax which is currently 14% in Georgia.

Indicate Special Requests:

- ☐ Wheelchair Accessible ☐ Non-Smoking ☐ Crib Other _____
☐ Rollaway (Upon availability at an additional charge.)
 [By Fire Marshall Law, a rollaway cannot be placed in a room with 2 beds.]

Three ways to make hotel reservations:	By Phone	By FAX	By Mail
<i>Marriott Marquis: (Headquarters)</i>	404/521-0000	404/586-6247	Attn: Reservations 265 Peachtree Center Ave. Atlanta, GA 30303
<i>Hilton Atlanta and Towers (Overflow)</i>	404/221-6300	404/221-6301	Attn: Reservations 255 Courtland Street N.E. Atlanta, GA 30303

ARRIVAL DATE / / TIME DEPARTURE DATE / /

APPLY DEPOSIT TO: MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER <input type="checkbox"/> AMEx <input type="checkbox"/>	
CARD NUMBER _____	EXP. DATE _____
NAME ON CARD: _____	SIGNATURE _____

☐ CHECK ENCLOSED. CHECK # _____

ROOMMATES: (LIST ALL OCCUPANTS OF ROOM)

(1) _____	(3) _____
(2) _____	(4) _____

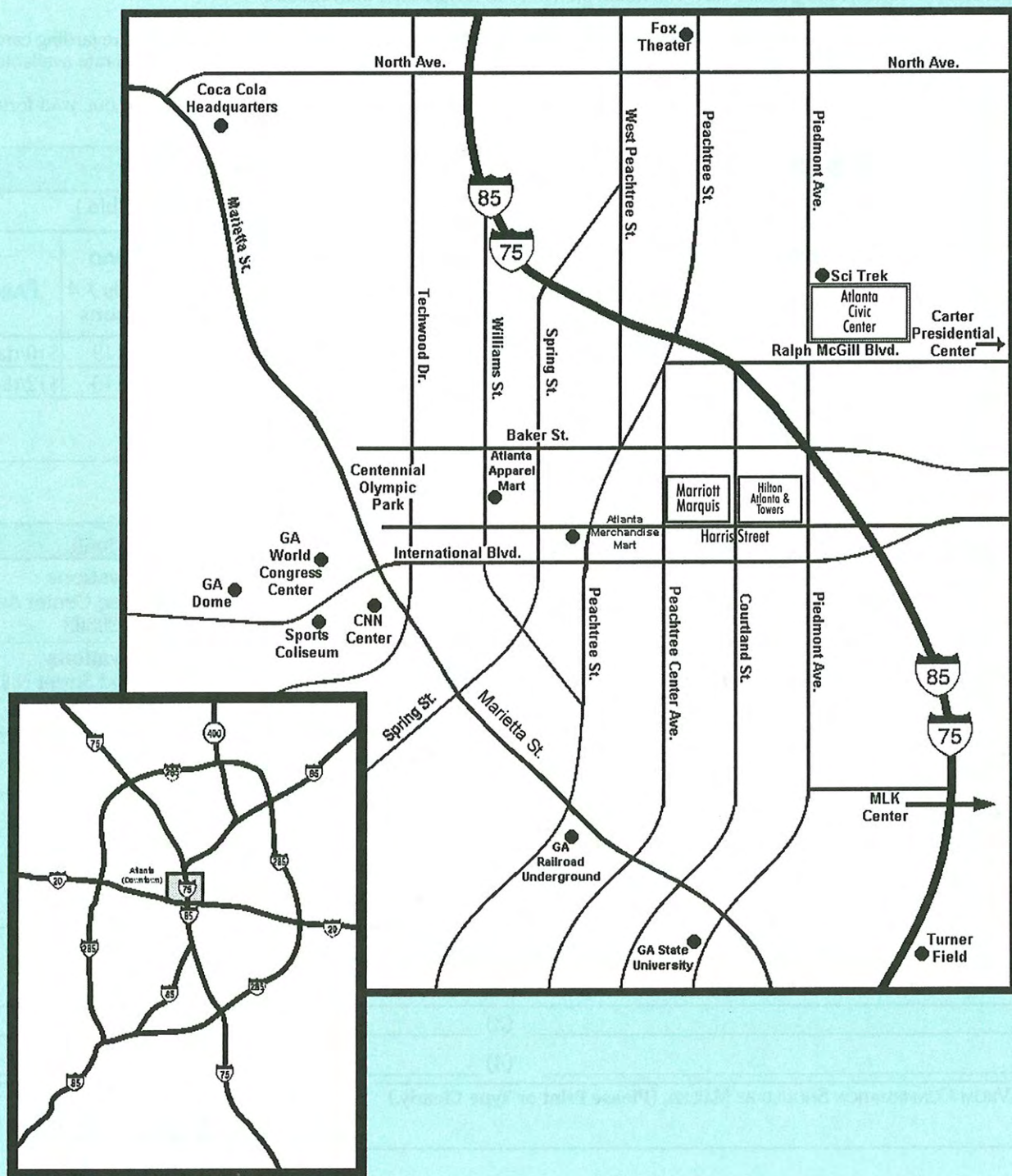
PERSON TO WHOM CONFIRMATION SHOULD BE MAILED. (Please Print or Type Clearly.)

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
 PHONE (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

Send only
 one (1)
 form per room.

May 1999, Contact 13

Atlanta Accommodations



(SHADED AREA ENLARGED TO SHOW DETAIL)

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Reverend Meryl Erickson Dies



ADA, OK—Reverend Meryl Erickson, 75, died January 12 after serving 44 years as a Free Will Baptist minister. A native of Saskatchewan, Canada, Meryl was converted in the mid-1940s.

Brother Erickson pastored eight churches in California and

Oklahoma. Ordained on February 27, 1955, he pastored for the next 22 years in California. His six pastorates in the state included churches in Manteca (1954), Visalia (1957), Fresno (1960), San Lorenzo (1962), Clovis (1964) and Concord (1975).

After leaving California in 1977, Erickson pastored two Oklahoma churches in Sulphur (1977) and Stonewall (1996). He was pastoring the Stonewall FWB Church at the time of his death on a visit to California.

During World War II, Meryl served in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Other ministerial service included the California State Mission Board, eight years as chaplain at the Veterans Administration in Sulphur (OK) and as an officer of Ok-

lahoma's Murray County Ministerial Alliance.

Graveside services were conducted on January 15 in Hughson, CA, with Reverends Nuel Brown and Doice McAlister officiating. Memorial services were conducted at First FWB Church in Ada, OK, on January 24. Reverend Keith Burden and Dr. Steve Turner officiated.

Contact editor Jack Williams said, "I considered Meryl my pastor during my eight years in California. He always came through for you. He had a generous spirit; he was a big man with a big heart."

Meryl Erickson is survived by his wife, Onema of Ada; one son, Lyle Erickson of Millbrae, CA; one daughter, Carolyn Barrett of Ukiah, CA; one brother, five sisters and four grandchildren.

California Church Celebrates 50 Years

BAKERSFIELD, CA—After half a century of service and three major building programs, members of First FWB Church in Bakersfield paused February 6-7 to celebrate their first 50 years in the community. Pastor Claudie Hames, who has led the congregation for 36 years, said, "The Lord has been very good to us."

Four sermons and the reading of the church's history topped the two-day activity. Former pastor E. B. Condit (1960-1964) preached Sunday morning. Three Free Will Baptist ministers who grew up in First FWB Church completed the preaching agenda: Phil Cramer (assistant pastor in Santa Paula), Troy West (pastor in Oxnard) and Charles Roam (pastor in Selma).

The church organized in late 1948 under the leadership of Austin Deaton. Ten other men later served as pastor: Guy McGuire, Jerry Dudley, Sylvester Crawford, Gene Shaw, Fred Winn, Otis Ferris, Harold Tally, Melvin Burns, E. B. Condit and present pastor, Claudie Hames.

Christine Forshee, the last surviving charter member, was honored by members on Sunday morning.

In 1980, Pastor Hames led the church to start Bethel Christian School, a Christian school operating on the church property with grades K-12.

The congregation completed an 810-seat sanctuary in 1993. They plan to build a gymnasium at a future date. The church property is appraised at \$1.4 million.

Family Ministries Completes New Shelter

GREENEVILLE, TN—A 4,000-square-foot emergency shelter opened February 11 at Free Will Baptist Family Ministries when 130 people attended ribbon-cutting ceremonies, according to Dawn Sweeney, church relations coordinator.

The six-bedroom facility, eight months in construction, was completed with dozens of volunteers, under the direction of Buddy Arnold, plant and operations manager. Opening the new shelter concludes a five-year capital campaign.



P.A.T.H. Shelter completed at Family Ministries.

Twelve young men will eventually populate the shelter, which also includes a two-bedroom staff area. The large main room will provide ample space for the living and dining area.

Georgia Church Celebrates Centennial

GLENNVILLE, GA—More than 200 people gathered in the sanctuary at Glennville FWB Church on February 7 to celebrate the church's 100th anniversary, according to Pastor Joel Hampton. The day-long schedule included three sermons by former pastors who returned to join the festivities.

Former pastor Larry Montgomery (1967-70), Bill Regan (1970-72) and David Thomas



**Former pastor
Larry Montgomery.**

(1985-89) all addressed the congregation. Letters were read from other former pastors who were unable to attend.

Pastor Joel Hampton said, "The social hall could not contain the crowd that gathered for the afternoon fellowship meal."

Hampton said that the highlight of the day was the ringing of the church bell 100 times in memory of deceased members.

Media Commission Launches Promotional Project

ANTIOCH, TN—The Free Will Baptist Media Commission announced a series of promotional projects to bolster its financial support, according to Chairman Steve Faison. The Commission is offering a web page design, a radio commercial package and ad slicks as incentives for systematic monthly gifts.

A church or association that gives a monthly gift of \$50 or a one-time gift of \$600 to the Media Commission will receive a web page design. The radio commercial package goes to churches that give \$25 monthly or \$300 annually. Churches that support \$10 monthly or an annual gift of \$120 will receive a package of ad slicks.

Steve Faison said, "Each year that a church participates, a new package of ad slicks will be provided for them. The package includes approximately six ads designed for use in newspapers, yellow pages and such. In addition, all national home missionaries will receive the ad slick package at no cost."

The Media Commission is one of four national commissions funded by one-half of one percent of undesignated gifts to The Together Way.

The Media Commission has produced two television commercials, "The Arrow" and "Decisions," both of which are available now.

Ron Scott Named Southeastern Graduation Speaker

WENDELL, NC—Pastor Ron Scott of Laurel FWB Church in Charlotte, NC, will address the graduating class at Southeastern FWB College on May 13, according to President Billy Bevan. The graduation exercises are scheduled at 10:00 a.m. in the college's Activities Building.

Reverend Scott, a highly decorated Vietnam veteran, grew up in West Virginia. He answered the call to preach, pastored in West Virginia and then moved to California where he graduated from California Christian College in 1980.

He served six years as a home missionary to Wheeling, WV. He has pastored in four states—West Virginia, California, Georgia and North Carolina. For the past seven years, he has pastored the Laurel Church. During that time, the church relocated and built new facilities.

Reverend Scott's 22-year-old son, Myron, is a member of the 1999 graduating class at Southeastern. Ron and Delilah Scott have three children, all of whom are involved in Christian service.

Beryl Blair, World War II Veteran, Dies



COMANCHE, OK—Reverend Beryl B. Blair died February 5 after an extended illness. He was 72 and had been a Free Will Baptist minister for 44 years. Well-known as "Preach" Blair, he was ordained in June 1955, a few days before his 30th birthday.

Beryl retired in April 1998 as pastor of Grace FWB Church in Comanche, a church he founded and pastored the last 13 years of his ministry. His brother-in-law, Dr. Wade Jernigan, said, "He, only with the promise of God, dug out a Free Will Baptist church in Comanche, his final pastorate."

Reverend Blair also pastored in Velma and Duncan, OK, as well as in California.

When Beryl was 17 years old, he joined the United States Marine Corps and served with the 2nd Marine Division at Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa. Family members were startled when a local theater showed a newsreel of the Pacific island fighting, and Beryl appeared in front of the camera during one of the battles.

Funeral services were conducted February 8 at Grace FWB Church, the church that Beryl founded. Four men officiated: W. W. Harkins, Wade Jernigan, Dan Haby and L. T. Woodall.

Rev. Blair is survived by his wife, Ina Mae of Comanche; two sons, Beryl Blair of Mesquite, TX, and Tom Blair of Watauga, TX; four daughters, Carla Eddins of Brawley, CA, Judy Abshire of Comanche, Gayla Kelly and Dana Mullins of Duncan, OK; one sister, Nettie Lou Jernigan of Lexington, OK; 22 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Coming Next Month

- ☐ National Convention Program
- ☐ WNAC Program
- ☐ NYC Program
- ☐ State Association Reports
- ☐ Short Cut
- ☐ The Art of Letting Go
- ☐ Laotian Dogs Don't Speak English
- ☐ And More!

Mass Choir Recording Set for Atlanta

Mass Choir

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____

Vocal Part ☐ S ☐ A ☐ T ☐ B ☐ No

Sang with Mass Choir Last Year or in the past: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Indicate Your Intentions to Sing: (check one)

☐ During the Recording Only

☐ During the Convention Only

☐ During both Recording and Convention

Send all information by May 15 to the following:

Music Commission
c/o Lange Patrick
Faith Free Will Baptist Church
1200 W. Grantham Street
Goldsboro, NC 27530

ANTIOCH, TN—The Free Will Baptist Music Commission plans a Mass Choir recording project in Atlanta, Georgia, at the national convention, according to Randy Sawyer, chairman. The project is scheduled for July 15-17, the Thursday, Friday and Saturday preceding the convention.

"We have formally invited five church choirs from our ranks to join us for recording," Sawyer said. "However, we are counting on many who sang with us in Tulsa last year as well as first-timers to be part of the 1999 choir."

Recording Schedule

Thursday Evening, July 15	Rehearsal and Prayer
Friday Morning, July 16	Recording solos, duets, trios and praise teams
Friday Evening, July 16	Recording entire choir
Saturday Morning/Afternoon, July 17	Recording entire choir

The Mass Choir, accompanied by a live instrumental ensemble, will then perform all the songs that were recorded during convention worship services at the Atlanta Civic Center.

Those who plan to participate in the Mass Choir recording project must complete and mail the accompanying form. After receiving the completed forms, the Music Commission will send packets of information with further details and instructions.

Instrumental Ensemble to Perform at Convention

1999 Instrumental Ensemble

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____

Work Phone (____) _____

E-mail address _____

Instrument(s) _____

Years' Experience _____

Have you played in this ensemble before? When? _____

Church Name: _____

Church City _____

ANTIOCH, TN—The all-volunteer instrumental ensemble will perform in July at the 63rd annual Free Will Baptist National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, according to instrumental director Chris Truett.

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

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 complete the accompanying form and mail to:

Bethel FWB Church
Attention: Chris Truett
1936 Banks School Road
Kinston, NC 28504
252/522-2451

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

Discount Air Fares to National Convention Available

ANTIOCH, TN—The National Association of Free Will Baptists has made special travel arrangements for attendees and their families who will be flying to the national convention in Atlanta, Georgia, July 18-22, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington.

Artists Travel Corporation in Nashville has been selected as the agency of record to provide members attending the convention with discount travel services.

Discounts for air travel to Atlanta have been secured on Delta Air Lines. The airline offers a 5% discount on excursion rates and 10% discount on full coach fares. These fares cannot be purchased through another travel agency or directly with the airlines. These are contracted group air fares. First class tickets may also be booked if desired.

Artists Travel Corporation has contracted for travel dates July 15 through July 24 for the convention.

To book airspace at the offered discounted rates, call Artists Travel Corporation toll free at 1-800/489-2009. Ask for **Janice Jakobik** and identify yourself with the Free Will Baptist national convention. The agent will need the following:

- ◆ your name
- ◆ number of passengers
- ◆ home phone number
- ◆ correct mailing address
- ◆ city of flight origin
- ◆ business phone number

For easy billing, have a **current credit card** ready at the time of booking. Artists Travel will process and mail the tickets to you.

LOCAL CHURCH DELEGATE CARD

—1999—

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

is a duly authorized delegate to the National Association of Free Will Baptists

from _____ FWB Church,

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (District Association)

_____ or _____

_____ (Pastor) _____ (Church Clerk)

IMPORTANT: This card properly signed and accompanied by a \$25 registration fee entitles a local church delegate to register for voting privileges.

WNAC LOCAL DELEGATE CARD

—1999—

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

is a duly authorized delegate to the WNAC Convention of Free Will Baptists from

the _____ women's group

of _____ Free Will Baptist Church

_____ (Group Name)

_____ (Church Name)

_____ (Church Address)

Signed _____

_____ (Local Coordinator)

_____ or _____

_____ (Local Secretary)

IMPORTANT: This card properly signed and accompanied by a \$5 registration fee entitles a local delegate to register for voting privileges in the WNAC convention. Only one delegate allowed per church.

Directory Update

ATLANTIC CANADA

Rick Kay to Upper Brighton Church, New Brunswick

NORTH CAROLINA

Reuben Cason to Unity Church, Smithfield from Canton Church, Canton

OHIO

Oscar Baldwin to Rosedale Church, Irwin

OKLAHOMA

Jim Shepherd to Northwest Church, Oklahoma City
Randy Bishop to Greenbrier Church, Adair
Mike Kirby to First Church, Wewoka
Jeffrey Conner to First Church, Oilton
Bill Haddox to Felker Church, Valliant
C. L. Bess, Jr., to First Church, Haskell

OTHER PERSONNEL

Mark Davidson to First Church, Henderson, TX, as youth minister

THE TOGETHER WAY

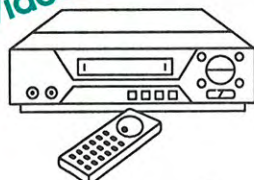
February 1999

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 552.13	\$.00	\$ 552.13	\$ 915.87	\$.00	\$ 915.87
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Arkansas	13,588.95	17,716.27	31,305.22	27,928.84	31,066.77	58,995.61
California	.00	859.18	859.18	.00	2,303.58	2,303.58
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	98.93	.00	98.93
Georgia	17,359.50	1,643.11	19,002.61	40,608.58	4,178.47	44,787.05
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	7,292.50	2,051.28	9,343.78	15,040.70	4,064.54	19,105.24
Indiana	.00	.00	.00	1,987.83	206.71	2,194.54
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	90.00	633.61	723.61
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	105.07	105.07
Kentucky	333.60	653.36	986.96	1,168.60	1,467.25	2,635.85
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	6,006.43	6,006.43
Michigan	13,120.94	3,754.73	16,875.67	24,449.17	6,039.45	30,488.62
Mississippi	7,773.31	235.00	8,008.31	7,773.31	235.00	8,008.31
Missouri	31,162.36	10,403.26	41,565.62	86,895.33	24,296.44	111,191.77
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	483.64	31.82	515.46	1,266.40	63.20	1,329.60
North Carolina	2,456.11	1,615.84	4,071.95	3,273.49	9,552.94	12,826.43
Ohio	7,384.72	2,700.77	10,085.49	17,231.30	6,756.35	23,987.65
Oklahoma	47,994.71	8,537.74	56,532.45	113,069.08	19,106.41	132,175.49
South Carolina	35,207.59	.00	35,207.59	87,845.92	.00	87,845.92
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	6,906.99	786.50	7,693.49	23,312.92	1,843.00	25,155.92
Texas	6,122.48	277.76	6,400.24	14,265.70	353.34	14,619.04
Virginia	757.67	.00	757.67	1,578.24	.00	1,578.24
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	5,593.31	263.62	5,856.93	5,701.11	263.62	5,964.73
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	205.32	11.84	217.16	590.38	27.17	617.55
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.07	.07	.00	.18	.18
Totals	\$ 204,295.83	\$ 51,542.15	\$ 255,837.98	\$ 475,091.70	\$ 118,569.53	\$ 593,661.23

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 2,076.40	\$ 23,193.95	\$ 25,270.35	\$ 4,207.43	\$ 53,356.22	\$ 57,563.65
Foreign Missions	117,787.68	6,520.08	124,307.76	275,247.93	14,999.04	290,246.97
FWBBC	12,633.39	6,520.08	19,153.47	27,070.53	14,999.04	42,069.57
Home Missions	58,329.51	5,102.68	63,432.19	137,802.99	11,738.39	149,541.38
Retirement & Insurance	275.73	3,968.75	4,244.48	809.26	9,129.87	9,939.13
Master's Men	201.98	3,968.75	4,170.73	691.91	9,129.87	9,821.78
Com. for Theo. Integrity	19.45	141.74	161.19	78.84	326.07	404.91
FWB Foundation	407.43	1,700.90	2,108.33	1,019.22	3,912.82	4,932.04
Historical Commission	3.15	141.74	144.89	41.88	326.07	367.95
Music Commission	3.15	141.74	144.89	25.62	326.07	351.69
Media Commission	19.45	141.74	161.19	54.95	326.07	381.02
Hillsdale FWB College	1,329.35	.00	1,329.35	3,099.10	.00	3,099.10
Other	11,209.16	.00	11,209.16	24,942.04	.00	24,942.04
Totals	\$ 204,295.83	\$ 51,542.15	\$ 255,837.98	\$ 475,091.70	\$ 118,569.53	\$ 593,661.23

Video Enhanced



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615/383-1340

REGIONALLY ACCREDITED

Oops! Wrong preacher. "Currently" reported in the March issue that Randy Graham pastors **Victory FWB Church in Goldsboro, NC**. Pastor **Rick Cason** sent word that "as far as I know I'm still the pastor." Sure enough, he is. *Contact* regrets the error and is happy to print this correction. Brother Graham serves as minister of C.E. and youth at the church.

Pastor **Mike Trimble** reports that growth at **Kirby FWB Church in Taylor, MI**, has resulted in two Sunday morning worship services. The congregation broke attendance records with more than 400 people a few months ago. Fifty adults meet in the parsonage for Sunday School, and **Terry Trimble** (pastor's wife) conducts a Bible class for 25 in her home Wednesday nights. The church must decide whether to relocate or build on their four-acre site. They recently gave a \$40,000 offering toward future growth.

Eighty-seven people were on hand for dedication services at **Charity FWB Church in Wendell, NC**. The church organized in August 1997, called **Jerry Johnson** as pastor, purchased land and began to build. **Randy Wright** preached the dedication message.

Pastor **Nate Ange** led dedication services for an 11,000-square-foot, 400-seat multi-purpose building at **Landmark FWB Church in Cary, NC**. The newly-paved parking lot can handle 180 cars.

Tennessee Free Will Baptists have established the "Riggs Medical Fund" to assist **Raymond and Winona Riggs**. Sister Riggs required 24-hour care for several months before her death. Tennessee promotional director **Charles Thigpen** said that all gifts should be earmarked "Riggs Medical Fund" and sent to **Harold Bilbrey**—1629 Apple Valley Drive—Cookeville, TN 38501.

Pastor **Jerry Myers** reports 13 new members at **Immanuel FWB Church in Joliet, IL**.

Northwest FWB Church in Chicago, IL, set a new attendance record with 81, says missionary pastor **David Potete**. He also baptized five.

The **Abundant Grace FWB Church in Louisville, KY**, logged seven conversions, three baptisms and 168 rededications, according to Pastor **Mark Wheatley** who visited in 1,207 homes last year.

A Spanish-speaking Sunday School class began in February at **Fellowship FWB Church in Bryan, TX**. **George James** teaches the class. **Levan Hubbard** pastors.

Oklahoma's New Life Association conducted an unusual 13-day revival January 25-February 6 at **New Home FWB Church in Coweta**. They scheduled 13 ministers to preach. That's not the unusual part. This is: All 13 men were over 70 years old. Maybe that's why officials advertised it as the "Over 70 Revival."

Pastor **Larry Collins** smiles bigger these days. That's because **First FWB Church in Hutchinson, KS**, was deeded 2.8 acres in a prime location. **Bill Bornholdt** did the good deed.

Musicians at **First FWB Church in Kirksville, MO**, set the standard for long-term service. When 90-year-old pianist **Iva Daniels** and 83-year-old organist **Julia Mollick** got to church one Sunday, the congregation honored them with roses and greeting cards. Sister Daniels has served more than 45 years. **William Tunstall** pastors.

Five-year-old **Bethel FWB Church in Marshfield, MO**, dedicated their new building with a full house, according to Pastor **James Crawford**. The new structure includes a sanctuary, classrooms and fellowship hall located near I-44. Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the dedication sermon.

Pastor **Dwayne Broad** reports nine new members at **Holmesville FWB Church in New Brunswick, Canada**.

Two hundred people attended dedication services at **West Knoxville FWB Church in Knoxville, TN**. Building Committee chairman **John Tullis** presented the key to the building to Pastor **Gerald Fender**. Home Missions director **Trymon Messer** delivered the dedicatory address.

New Life Bible Institute began last fall at **First FWB Church in Elizabethton, TN**. Courses included doctrine, pastoral ministry, spiritual growth and teaching techniques. Officials may opt to place institute classes in several locations throughout the state. **Phil Poston** fields questions about the institute program, sponsored by the Tennessee State C.E. Board.

Homecoming services at **New Enterprise FWB Church in Iron City, GA**, included all-day activities and dinner on the grounds. **Joe Murkerson** pastors. Georgia executive secretary **William Smith** preached the homecoming sermon. The annual event is held in conjunction with W. F. McDuffie Day. McDuffie's entire ministry was spent in Southwest Georgia after coming from Texas to study at Zion Bible School in the 1930s.

First FWB Church in Fresno, CA, completed extensive renovations, under the leadership of **Dr. Ed Hyatt**. The on-going project replaced all lighting in the social hall, installed new doors, restriped the parking lot, and set plans in motion to repaint the church and replace the roof.

Pastor **Homer Young** reports 11 baptisms at **First FWB Church in El Reno, OK**.

The **Cuban FWB Convention** reported 500 conversions, 250 adult baptisms and seven missions organized into churches. Twelve seminary students graduated from the FWB Seminary in Pinar del Río.

White Oaks FWB Church in Macon, GA, built Pastor **Charles Barnard** a model house, then covered and filled it with a \$1,520 love gift. The church is located on a 21-acre site.

Bethel FWB Church in Woodbridge, VA, celebrated 31 years of service, according to Pastor **Dave Nobles**. Billy Bevan, president of Southeastern FWB College, preached the celebration sermon. ■

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

New Computer Track Available

By Jeff Runion, Computer Teacher

Technology is a major part of every facet of our lives. As we move to the end of 1999, the issue of Year 2000 compliance (Y2K) will be on everyone's mind as companies scramble to ensure that their computer resources are up to date. In our society, we can no longer ask the question "if" we as individuals, families, and business should embrace the use of technology. We must ask the question "how" do we embrace it, learn it, and use it for positive results.

This is the approach we take in teaching computer skills at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Every student is required to take BU100, *Introduction To Computers*, where they learn the basics of using a computer and the Internet as well as word processing and spreadsheet skills. However, we try to take it a step further and help the student understand and apply how a computer can be used as a tool to enhance their vocational, ministerial, and personal lives as well. What our society needs are people with the ability to use computers as effective tools for promoting the gospel and advancing God's kingdom.

The Growing Web of Technology

Every business today uses technology in some fashion and is in need of good quality people to support that technology. Today, according to the Information Technology Association of America, 346,000 Information Technology jobs are vacant across the United States, and a prediction by the U.S. Department of Labor indicates that new and expanding technologies will account for 80 percent of new jobs in the next 10 years. This growing shortage of Information Technology professionals provides a world of opportunities for those interested in working with computers.

We feel it is time to for FWBBC to provide a broader computer based education than ever before. Currently, a business major receives the same computer training found in most every business major program at any college. Beginning next fall, we will be implementing elective courses that will add computer support skills to their knowledge base. It is essential in today's world for every business major to not only understand how to use a computer, but also to have a basic understanding of how to support the ever chang-

ing technology we are required to use. The elective courses will include *Computer User Support* and an additional class called *Implementing and Supporting Microsoft Windows*. At FWBBC, we have a state of the art computer lab to provide computer training and will be providing more computer resources in the future.

We Have The Credentials

FWBBC is accredited by the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC), approved by CHEA to accredit baccalaureate degree granting Bible colleges in the United States and Canada.

The college is also accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. This is the regional accrediting agency in the southeast.

FWBBC is also a member of the Microsoft Authorized Academic Training Program.

Young people today may choose a local, 2-year tech school for computer training. However, those cannot offer what FWBBC can: A solid foundational business degree that can prepare you for graduate studies, technology training and experience that can allow you to enter the Information Technology profession immediately following graduation, plus a quality Christian education where each subject is presented within the framework of a biblical world view.

For answers to your questions or more information, please contact the school or check out our website for more information. ■

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Mr. Runion is a 1989 FWBBC graduate. He earned his M.A. at George Washington University. He was a computer training specialist for six years, served for two years as a corporate systems engineer, and joined the FWBBC faculty in 1997.

You may contact him by writing or calling the college. His email address is jrunion@fwbbc.edu.

Check out this new program online:
<http://www.fwbcc.edu/ittrack>



HOME MISSIONS

Response to the Strategy Forum

By Trymon Messer

The Home Missions Department wants to express our deepest appreciation for all who participated in the Strategy Forum held in Nashville on January 6-8. This forum was born of a vision and conviction that the time was right, and that God was moving and leading us to get our people together to pray, plan and promote a strategy for getting our denomination focused and organized to move forward. It seemed that Free Will Baptists were ready for someone to stand up, step out and say, "Here's the plan; let's move forward!"

After the Home Missions Board retreat last August when much time was spent in praying and planning, the next hurdle was to determine if our leaders would respond to an idea such as this. We felt that if God was in it, the people would respond. They did!

All our department heads and national leaders enthusiastically cooperated, encouraged, took part and joined together in a team effort to make a difference for the cause of Christ and Free Will Baptists. To God be the glory! It is, indeed, a new day for our denomination.

With this kind of support, we were ready for

the next hurdle—getting state leaders, college presidents, business men and leading pastors to attend. Would they come since the Leadership Conference had just been held a few weeks earlier? The invitation went out and everything was placed in God's hands.

Another great hurdle was the weather. Several airports and interstates closed the morning the forum began. But as one Home Missions Board member was overheard to say, "Not even ice and snow could deter the heart hungry for God to do something great among us." Hallelujah, they came! One hundred nine people from 27 states and two foreign countries were present. It was evident that the Holy Spirit was working among us, moving as we dealt with our problems and worked hard at making adjustments as the plan emerged and commitments were made.

We are late in the game and we are down a few points. It's the fourth quarter, but we have the ball. Promotional men, state leaders, pastors and all our people, will you join us in the field? Let's get out there and win for Jesus! ■

**Be sure to stop by
the
Home Missions Booth
in Atlanta**



RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

Knowing the Good and Bad of Growing Churches

By Alton Loveless

Curriculum

One should be aware that all publishers have an agenda and theological position. There are four main types of curriculum philosophies promoted by Sunday school publishers:

The uniform lesson concept is usually those that design their courses by using the International Lesson Series. These publishers pay a 3% royalty to the National Council of Churches and will only cover about 30% of the Bible before they recycle their older age group.

The unified lesson concept lends more to a topical approach. Most publishers using this method cover about 40% of the Bible in the adult age, and many use the International Lesson Series as well.

The departmental lesson concept is more like the school system's approach which begins with where the previous age group stopped. They add to knowledge already known by each level. This is the lesson plan used by most churches, both small and large, because it represents the best educational and spiritual curriculum plan available. This is the Christian education philosophy used by Randall House Publications. Those who follow this concept will cover the complete Bible in the adult cycle and give broad ranges to those age groups from high school down.

The closely graded concept is used mainly by the large church because there is a course for every age from grade 1 to grade 12. They use the departmental concept in the preschool age group and college through senior adults.

Most churches and publishers will grade their Sunday School program as follows: Cradle, age 0-2; Nursery, age 3-4; Preschool, age 5-6; Primary, grades 1-3; Junior, grades 4-6; Junior High, grades 7-9; High School, grades 10-12; Adults from college to at least three levels of adulthood.

Electives

Along with regular curriculum most churches are adding extra courses of study either in regular class periods or in small groups outside the church building. The studies range from courses on the family or home, a special book subject, but always there are classes of training because they know that with their growth will come the need to train teachers.

The growing church knows that for every one trained worker they can expect 10 additional people. As an example, if you have five teachers, you probably have around 50 in Sunday School. If 10, you will be running about 100, etc. Therefore, growing churches have teacher training programs designed to expand their growth.

Today, more people are menu-driven and want a selection of items to choose from. This has moved into the church as well, especially in the 20-35 age group.

Seeker Classes

The seeker concept is not a new idea. It actually was very strong in the time of D.L. Moody and could have been the reason for much of his success as a revivalist. The church of his day was closed to outsiders and had nearly isolated themselves from doing the work designed by the Lord. However, many people were searching for answers to their spiritual needs.

Mass evangelism became the unthreatened place people could go to be saved and find solutions. Church historians and growth researchers compare that era with our time. They mutually agree that our time is nearly the same as that period because they view the church today as closed to outsiders with assimilation being one of the churches greatest problems.

Many fundamental churches have seen the failure of their outreach programs and have begun to target the needs of their area or targeted age groups in their community. The end result is to reach them for Christ.

In essence, the church strategy is to reach those who are seeking answers and investigating Christianity. And this will become more of a need since most newcomers to our country are from non-Christian nations. Also, our own nationality wanes and many of our newer members and visitors know little about the Bible.

Liberal churches have given this approach a bad name by an easy-believism, but believers who reach people with the salvation of Jesus Christ and gather them into the church might find this a valuable method. ■

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



Garrett Reid

A Healthy Dose of Commitment

Commitment gets a bum rap these days. People dabble in this and play at that, but seldom stay devoted to one thing for any length of time. Whether it's spouses, careers, houses, checking accounts, long distance carriers or brands of pizza, our culture sees change and variety as healthy. Like professional athletes who become free agents, one should test the market and leave doors open, we are told. Thoreau's counsel from the last century sounds like much of today's pop psychology: "As long as possible live free and uncommitted."

Ironically, however, the upshot of this pick-and-choose mentality is not without cost. Theologian David Wells explains that our "furious whirlwind of choices . . . is shaking the foundations of our sense of stability," creating a "deep sense of 'homelessness,' even of lostness . . . of searching but never finding a permanent niche into which we can fit."

As I read the New Testament, I am reminded how foreign this footloose spirit is to Christ's call to commitment. His summons is not to a measured, calculated parceling out of a corner of our lives in which we play the "Christian" game, but to unrestrained, lavish abandonment of self-interest—an entire commitment of limitless affection for Him.

All too often today, the appeal is to *spend one's time doing something* rather than to *invest one's life being someone*. Don't get too tied down, says the current line; keep your options open. In contrast, Christ offers a singular option: Find your life by losing it. I'm afraid that the designer religion of the new millennium, though, will continue to offer low cost, no risk, limited return.

In his book *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, Steven Garber examines the lives of several middle-aged Chris-

tians whose commitment to Christ had remained firm over the years. He asks them, "What kept you committed?" Why had they stayed true to their faith through college, through the "dark and slippery places" of youth, beyond young adulthood?

Even during the chaotic culture upheavals of the 70s and the "me-first" generation, when many of their peers were "tuning in, turning on and dropping out," they had not jumped ship. How come, he wonders.

Garber's findings point to three common factors that surfaced repeatedly in their experiences. These believers shared:

- **convictions**—they had maintained a way of looking at the world—a worldview—that provided solid answers to the hard questions of life;
- **character**—they could identify a mentor—usually a teacher—who lived out their mutual beliefs; and
- **community**—they deliberately chose to live within the company of people who shared their commitment.

Recently I was drawn to the compelling testimony of commitment portrayed in Hebrews 10-13. Not coincidentally, I think, all three factors noted by Garber permeate these chapters and resolve into a clear, focused image of what commitment is all about.

1. The worldview of a committed Christian confesses:
 - the existence of a personal God who gives hope to life (Heb. 10:23; 11:6).
 - an understanding of the universe as a coherent expression of His personal design (Heb. 11:3).

- God's constant presence and sovereign intervention in the events of this life (Heb. 11:39-40; 13:5-6).
- His exclusive right to order our lives as He wills (Heb. 10:35, 36, 39).
- the necessary place of an informed faith in Him (Heb. 11:1, 6).
- His ultimate gift of grace in the changeless person of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:1-21; 13:8, 20, 21).
- the reality of the kingdom of God as the sole expression of unending life (Heb. 12:28, 29; 13:14).

2. A committed Christian looks to exemplary models including:

- the present company of believers in the church (Heb. 10:24).
- examples of faith from the past (Heb. 11:2-40; 12:1a).
- the testimony of Jesus Himself (Heb. 12:2, 3).
- servant leaders in the church (Heb. 13:7, 17).

3. A committed Christian shares in the supportive community of:

- a faithful assembly of believers (Heb. 10:25).
- servants of God in all ages and places (Heb. 12:22, 23).
- all those in Christ's body (Heb. 13:1-4).

Convictions, character, community—so reads the label on a healthy dose of commitment.

Next month we take a closer look at the profile of commitment in Hebrews 10-13. ■

YOUTH UPDATE

Christmas in July

The **National Youth Conference** in cooperation with our **Free Will Baptist Children's Homes** announces the following project for our summer convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

Our Children's Homes, located in Greeneville, Tennessee, Duffield, Virginia, Turbeville, South Carolina, and Eldridge, Alabama, need help in filling a needy child's life with joy and happiness. Help us make sure deserving children are not forgotten when it comes to basic needs for improving their lives.

Every **Love Box** you donate spreads a message of Christian love and hope to deserving children at these children's homes. Here's how you can help:

1. Select a sturdy box, which will hold all your items.
2. Allow your students to decorate the box.
3. Fill your **Love Box** with new items from the list below.
4. Enclose a note of encouragement and/or a gospel tract.
5. Seal your **Love Box** and either bring it with you to the National Youth Conference Office at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, in Atlanta, Georgia, or mail it to:

Christmas in July
National Youth Conference
114 Bush Road/P.O. Box 17306
Nashville, TN 37217

6. Due to shipping requirements, all packages must be received by July 30, 1999.

Suggested Gift Items

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Book Bags | • Back Packs | • Ink Pens | • Markers |
| • Pencil Boxes | • Scotch Tape | • White Out | • 5 Subject Notebooks |
| • Glue Sticks | • Legal Pads | • 2 Pocket Folders | • 3 Subject Notebooks |
| • 3 Ring Binders | • Trapper Keepers | • Graph Paper | • Scientific Calculators |
| • Poster Board | • Duffle Bags | • Kool-Aid | • Tea Bags |
| • Hair Brushes | • Paper Towels | • Paper Plates | • Paper Cups |
| • Stick Deodorant | • Aluminum Foil | • Plastic Wrap | • Trash Can Liners |
| • Knee High Hose | • Shampoo | • Hair Gel | • Panty Hose (all sizes) |
| • Non-aerosol Hair Spray | | • Over the Counter Medications | |

There is also a need for financial contributions. These will help students purchase class rings, graduation announcements, rent caps and gowns, and buy senior portraits.

We hope you will encourage your Sunday School classes, Children's Church members, youth groups, Vacation Bible School and others to help us in this exciting project of sharing with those in need. Will you do your part?



Dennis Wiggs

Should I Establish a Christian School?

The young preacher may find himself in a community that's fertile ground for establishing a Christian school. If he decides to pursue the idea, he should seek counsel from other ministers and church leaders involved in Christian education.

If the burden continues, the preacher faces one of the greatest challenges of his ministry—planting a Christian school. In 1972, the Lord led me to do just that. These suggestions come from over 25 years of experience in a church-sponsored school.

Get Church Support

Too many educational endeavors have been established by a pastor who had a burden but failed to share that burden with his congregation. Discuss the idea with the deacons. Share the project with the church board. Let the church vote to establish a Christian school.

Borrow Brains

Most pastors do not have the academic background to establish a church-sponsored school. That does not mean the pastor cannot initiate the project. But it does mean that he must lean on the wisdom and direction of others who have the knowledge and experience.

When we began Beaufort Christian Academy in Beaufort, NC, I looked to Lorenza Stox at Faith Christian Academy in Goldsboro for his assistance. When Pastor Randy Cox was determining the foundation for Raleigh Christian Academy, he visited several Christian schools, asked hundreds of questions, took careful notes and went back home to begin a quality school. Seek counsel. Lean upon the wisdom of others.

Determine the Rules

A church-sponsored school should be distinctively different. The rules, standards, guidelines that make it unique must be recorded in a handbook and distributed to students and parents. Don't belittle other schools to exalt your educational endeavor. Lay the foundation for a quality, above average, Christ-exalting educational program.

How Many Grades?

Start with kindergarten the first year and add a grade each year. That's what some successful schools have done. Perhaps kindergarten through grade three would be a better beginning. Determine from the community and church what is needed.

Principal David Thompson, with 20 years in Christian education, has some good ideas on these decisions. Click on www.ruthschapel.com to gather information about Christian education. He'll be glad to assist you.

Curriculum

This decision demands much homework. Visit schools that use the Accelerated Christian Education program. Evaluate materials from Bob Jones University and Pensacola Christian College. Consider other programs. Principal David Thompson and other principals can assist you in this decision, too.

Finances

Many church-sponsored schools do not charge sufficient tuition to cover the cost of operating a school. Quality education is worth the cost. Also, tuition must provide an adequate salary provision for the principal and teachers. Ask at least a dozen established church schools to send you their tuition and salary scale.

Secure Teachers

Visit Christian colleges to find qualified, dedicated teachers. Search your church for teachers who may want to invest their abilities and experience in this new educational project. Once teachers are secured, provide a continued education for them by attending one or two of the national or regional educational meetings.

The Southeastern Association of Free Will Baptist Church Schools provides valuable training and challenging meetings each year. The Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Christian Schools meets in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, in January. Contact Pastor Dann Patrick in Goldsboro, NC, for more information about these meetings.

Stay With the Ministry

Don't begin a church school, resign the church and leave inexperienced workers holding the bag! The pastor should be the overseer. However, a principal or qualified supervisor should be prepared to conduct the operation on a daily basis. Young pastor, pray for patience. School students will mark on walls, stain carpet, wear out pews, break equipment and trample the shrubbery. Church members will hold you accountable.

Rewards?

Yes, Christian education is rewarding. The purpose of sponsoring a Christian school is evangelism, edification and education. Parents (as well as students) can be won to the Lord. Students can be trained in the ways of the Lord. And, of course, the school should excel in providing a quality education for students.

Young preacher, don't jump into this arena quickly. Use your head and heart in this decision. Eternity will reveal the true results. ■

The New Tolerance

By Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler,

(Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998, 233 pages, paperback, \$12.99.)



Thomas Marberry

Josh McDowell is an internationally known speaker and writer, and one of the best-known defenders of traditional Christianity in our country. He is the author of more than 40 books, many of which have become best sellers in the Christian book market. Bob Hostetler has also written several books, some of which he co-authored with Josh McDowell.

This book confronts one of the most serious problems that contemporary Christians face, the tendency in our society to regard all forms of belief and action as being equally valid. In this world, there is no objective truth; there are no standards of right and wrong. Each individual must decide what is right for himself, and all others in society are expected to support and affirm that decision.

The stage is set for conflict because Christians who take the teachings of scripture seriously cannot approve all forms of belief and practice. No matter how much a believer may love and appreciate a homosexual person, he cannot approve the homosexual lifestyle. It is contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

No matter how much a believer may empathize with a woman who has an unwanted pregnancy, he or

she should not sanction an abortion simply as a matter of convenience. The Bible places great value on human life, and the life of that unborn child ought to be preserved.

Today's emphasis on tolerance has produced a society where nothing can be condemned as wrong. This emphasis has, in many cases, stifled legitimate public debate and discussion of important issues. As ironic as it may seem, the emphasis on tolerance has produced extreme intolerance of those who advocate unpopular positions.

As these authors document, Christians can be punished for taking stands on issues that are not politically correct. They tell the story of Dr. Jim Aist, a professor of plant pathology at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. For two years he was investigated; he was hounded by the university administration, the student body and the news media. What was his crime? He dared to post in public places on the campus fliers which offered free help and counsel to homosexuals who desired to leave the homosexual lifestyle.

This book outlines how federal courts and prosecutors have used anti-racketeering laws to obtain large fines and long prison sentences against pro-life demonstrators. These laws were originally designed to stop

organized crime, and they are not used against other groups who demonstrate on public policy issues. Once again, the emphasis on tolerance has stifled legitimate dissent and abridged the rights of abortion opponents.

How should Christians respond? These authors suggest that Christians must become informed and knowledgeable of the issues. They must speak the truth in love. They must not be intimidated by the rhetoric of our society. They must be prepared to suffer in the name of Christ.

For many years Christians in the United States and other western countries have lived in a world dominated by a Judeo-Christian philosophy of life and Judeo-Christian standards of right and wrong. That is no longer the case. We now live in a society dominated, in many cases, by non-Christian and anti-Christian philosophies.

This is a book that contemporary Christians need to read. Some of the information may be shocking. It is hard to believe that a judge in the United States of America could threaten a 17-year-old girl with six months in jail if she said a public prayer at her high school graduation, but that is reality. ■

FREE

This coupon entitles bearer to one

FREE GIFT — redeemable at the Executive Office booth, FWB Convention, Atlanta.

FREE



Expiration date: July 22, 1999



One coupon per person.

Valid only at Executive Office booth.

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FREE

OUR READERS COMMENT

Former Missionary Subscribes

We went a month without *Contact* and were wondering what had happened to our copy. About that time, I realized we had not received the recent *Heartbeat* magazine either.

Upon investigation, I noticed that we had not received any copies since our departure from the Foreign Missions Department.

We missed every copy! I had to borrow the last issue from the church so we could get caught up.

I know that an enormous amount of work goes into each issue. Thank you and the staff for the magazine.

Sincerely,
Kathy Paschall
Utica, Michigan

Long-Time Reader Writes

Sorry I forgot my subscription. I have taken *Contact* since 1953. We really enjoy it. When you get older you forget when you don't get a statement.

Rev. J. W. Russell
Walnut Ridge, Arkansas

Disagrees With Article

Shawn Hartzog's article on "Homosexuality and the Church" (February 1999) violates two clear scriptural principles.

First, he incorrectly says, "There is no single cause

for the development of homosexual tendencies." If he would stop trying to impose the liberal sociological and psychological agenda of secular academia upon Romans 1, he would understand that any homosexual tendency comes from knowingly suppressing and rejecting the general revelation of God.

Second, Hartzog says, "As long as homosexuality is not practiced physically or in the way of lust, the scriptures do not condemn it as such, for it is not temptation that is sin." In this statement, he fails to acknowledge that homosexuality is a state of being. Therefore, it is sin.

Hartzog correctly calls upon God's people to help deviants come out of homosexuality. If these precious souls are to find freedom in Christ, however, truth must not be diluted with fluctuating social sciences.

Dr. Bobby Glenn Smith
Pastor, College Lakes Baptist Church
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Praise Notes

I misplaced my *Contact* subscription renewal and did not want to miss an issue. I enjoy the magazine very much.

Anthony Galloway
Batesville, Arkansas

Thanks for a great magazine!

Wayne Bookout
Blackwell, Oklahoma

You all are doing an excellent job!

Ray Turnage
Johnson City, Tennessee

Very Good Reading

I'm still reading the March 1999 issue, but just had to stop long enough to let you know that "Briefcase," "Racial Preference," "Go Ahead . . .," "Somewhere in Between," "The Bible and Church History," "A Leg Up" are all just plain excellent.

I will read the other articles later. Thanks for some very good reading.

Charles Reeves
Spicewood, Texas

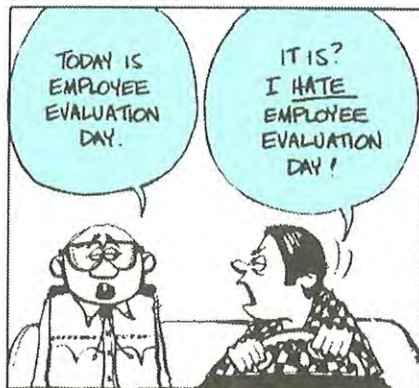
Computer Reader Chuckles

I thoroughly enjoyed the March Briefcase, "Computers Killed Here." Although I use a computer, I buy the YLP8.5x11 model by the dozen or two dozen, if they are on sale; if not I use the seasick green variety.

I have always enjoyed Jack's unique humor. Thanks for a great magazine.

Dr. Milton Fields
Academic Dean
Free Will Baptist Bible College

BEYOND BELIEF



RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY NEWS

Witch Doctor Converted

ACCRA, GHANA (EP)—A well-known witch doctor in Ghana recently became a Christian, according to James Owusu of Africa Village Missions. "As a witch doctor, John Darku was accustomed not only to using fetishes and pouring kerosene over his voodoo idols, but also to performing human sacrifices to the spirits," Owusu reported. Darku, 60, left his life of voodoo and African juju witchcraft after 39 years, openly proclaiming his Christianity and burning his voodoo possessions and shrines.

"You can hardly imagine what a strong witness that was for many villagers who had known the witch doctor for many years. As a result, many of the area's inhabitants also decided to become Christians," said Owusu.

Bank Guard's Faith Saves Holocaust Records

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND (EP)—When Swiss bank guard Christoph Meili saw a stack of war-era ledgers awaiting shredding at the United Bank of Switzerland in January of 1997, he knew something was wrong.

"When I passed the shredding room I saw the books," Meili told *EP News*. "These were not papers. They were old letter-sized books with old German letters. The top one said 'Swiss National Bank 1916-1917', so I knew these were historical records. I saw that some dates were during the war time, the 1940s and 1930s, and I knew that in this time the Jewish people were searching for evidence, pressuring Switzerland."

It would have been easy to look the other way. But for Meili, that wasn't an option. "I am a Christian," he explained. "I knew that I was supposed to do something. It took me two or three minutes to decide. I said to the Lord, 'Why me? I don't want to.' But it was my job to do."

Meili took some of the records with him. He smuggled them out of the

bank and turned them over to a Jewish organization. Meili lost his job and began to receive hate mail.

Meili hopes his experience can help build bridges between Christians and Jews, and has already seen that begin to happen. "Many times rabbis have come to me and said, 'Tell me about this Jesus. I don't understand—you're a Christian, so why do you help us?' And I tell them."

Muslims Turn to Christ

TEHRAN, IRAN (EP)—An Iranian man became a Christian after a dream in which he saw himself standing on his roof, bathed in bright light. "The light then moved down to illuminate a stream, which seemed to be made of light. I have consulted books and visited dream interpreters, but I can find no answer," the man said.

A Christian friend told him Jesus is the light of the world, that the light was Jesus calling him to be saved, and the stream indicated he should be baptized. The man believed and followed his friend's advice.

According to Campus Crusade for Christ, many Muslims who have never heard the gospel are being influenced through dreams to become Christians.

Technology Helps Reach Muslim World

COLUMBUS, OH (EP)—There are approximately 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, about 20 percent of the world's population. The ratio of Christian missionaries to Muslims is only somewhat better than one to a million. But missionaries to the Muslim world are finding ways to be more effective, thanks to modern technology.

"The answer can be reduced to two words: electronic mail," says David Hariman, director of development for Frontiers, a mission agency to the Muslim world. "Electronic mail is the lifeline of communication for missionaries all over

the world. In Muslim countries where communication is more sensitive, electronic mail is absolutely crucial."

Bible Literature International has provided laptop computers for missionaries with Frontiers. "I'm very grateful for BLI's assistance because they're making it possible for missionaries to communicate with their home support network in ways they never before have been able to," said Hariman. "Having this kind of communication tool enables prayer information to go out that much more promptly."

BLI has also made available solar power units and transformers for missionaries who work in areas where electricity is unreliable or unavailable. These allow workers to run the computers without fear of power disruptions.

"I think one of the things that's making such a major difference in the Muslim world now in terms of receptivity and openness is the increasing number of people who are praying," Hariman continued.

"The quality of information makes it possible for people to pray in a more informed way. So as missionaries stay in touch in more complete and current ways through electronic mail and laptops and so forth, more people are praying more informed prayers for what God is doing in those situations."

Dear Mom . . .

Let's talk about mothers, bless 'em. Mother's Day comes once each May and seems to impact the entire year. There's something almost magical about the day, and something absolutely magical about the women who inspire the day with all its words and emotions.

God must like mothers; I see 'em everywhere. I meet them in grocery stores, dodge them in supermarket parking lots, get in line behind them at banks, tip my hat (when I wear one) to them on sidewalks and hug them every chance I get.

Mothers never forget. They know more secrets than the CIA. They remember the craziest stuff 30 years after it happened and you're trying to live it down. They collect grammar school grade cards and hair shorn from a wiggly 4-year-old.

There's not a doubt in my mind that mothers come equipped with factory-installed sock radar. After you search every drawer for a pair of matching black socks and come up empty, Mother can zip into the room and locate six pairs in four seconds flat—then look at you as if you're blind.

I'm convinced that there's a Mothers' Union operating world-wide. They gang up on everybody else. If you doubt it, try running your finger across the top of a pineapple cake anywhere in the world. From out of nowhere, a mother will mysteriously appear, slap your hand and utter those immortal words, "That's for company!"

I think the FBI should hire mothers to track down the bad guys. James Bond and Dan'l Boone are silly boys compared to a mother's instinct for where to find you. Only a mother can track a teenage son through a car wash, two shopping malls, history class, down a side street, across four lanes of traffic and remind him (in front

of his friends) that he needs a haircut.

Mothers sweep through life with noses like bloodhounds. They're energetic as Schnauzers, tenacious as English Pugs and possess the loyalty of Charlie Brown Beagles—all wrapped in a size 10 jumper.

They can smell a fever two days before you know you've got one. They also know 87 home remedies for coughs, all of which involve some foul-tasting liquid that would peel paint off a battleship.

Yet, strangely enough, mothers have the ability to make 200-pound linebackers go all gooey inside. They can put iron in a 5-year-old's backbone with a smile and an encouraging word.

They make toady teens feel like Prince Charming. Somehow, mothers know whose foot fits the glass slipper, where an extra \$10 can be found and how to sew a button on a borrowed tux.

Mothers understand more about love than Saint Valentine. They cure more broken hearts than Ann Landers. They paradoxically speak with the abrasiveness of a top sergeant and the coo of a dove—and can direct both at the same kid within a 15-minute time span and never change expressions.

It's unexplainable, but ask any husband and he'll tell you that nobody cooks hamburgers like his mother. Yet those same world-class chefs of suburbia raise daughters who can't boil an egg and sons with barely enough intelligence to distinguish onions from beef jerky!

Moms are the bravest scaredy cats in the world. The same 108-pound mother who's afraid to pull a frog from her 4-year-old's dirty jeans pocket would fight a water buffalo on the court house square rather than let someone else tuck the little

frogger in at night.

Ah, mothers. They perform major surgery with iodine and a band aid. They fix what broke with a screw driver and a coat hanger. When you need her, she's there. When you think you don't need her, you just aren't smart enough to know how much you do.

Mothers don't lose wars; they love the boys and husbands who survive them. Turn a television camera on a 6-10 basketball player, and the first thing he says is "Hi, Mom!"

There's an unbreakable bond that links mothers and sons, mothers and daughters. Everybody wants to marry a girl "just like Mom."

No matter how high a man rises, how many of his peers salute his accomplishments, how far away he travels, how many women he meets—somewhere, in some small hamlet or village, in a row house or a condo, there lives one woman who stood by him when everybody else walked away, who waited up at night until his foot touched the front porch, who loved him enough to turn him loose and make him be a man. That woman goes by the name of *Mother*.

There is none like her anywhere in the world. I met that mother in the vineyards of the San Joaquin Valley, in the coal towns of Eastern Kentucky, in the wind-swept plains of Oklahoma, in Tennessee's Smoky Mountains.

She lives on every street, in every town. She's a Cherokee Indian, a Black matron, a Spanish señora, a Hill-billy princess, a dream, an idea.

That special lady called Mother steps from the story book, the legend, the memories and wears the name, _____ (you insert the name). And today she is loved. ■



Jack Williams

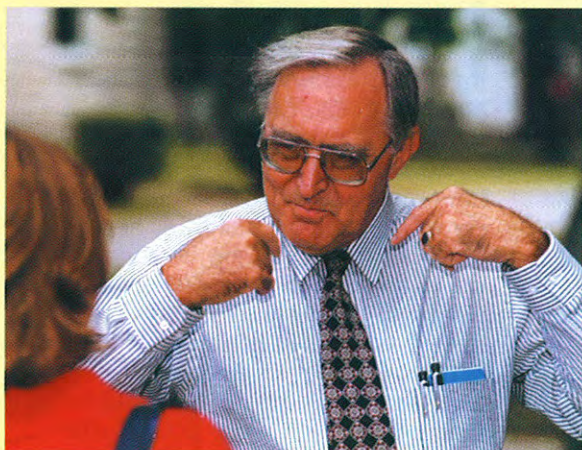
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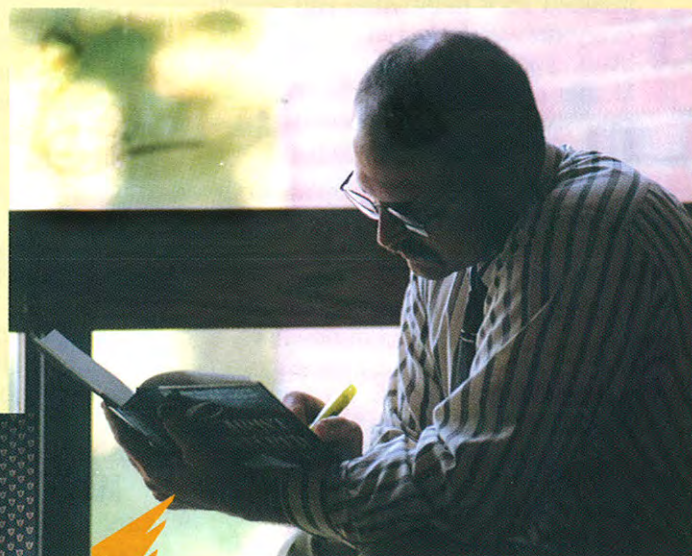
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