

NOVEMBER 1999

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS

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Somebody
Changed the
Rules

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Missionary

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Marriage God's Way

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Perfect Home
Missionary



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Educational Task Force Established



Melvin Worthington

The 1999 national convention adopted resolutions from Arkansas and Georgia calling for an educational task force to study Christian higher education in the denomination. Delegates determined that the composition of the committee would include the five college presidents and academic deans (this includes the seminary in Mexico) and five at-large members appointed by the moderator.

The Concern

The resolutions conceptualized the Christian higher education priority as the denomination seeks to fulfill the Great Commission. The resolutions called for a comprehensive approach to Christian higher education, indicating that such a program would better fulfill the denomination's educational needs.

The Arkansas resolution reminds us of our covenant commitment when it states, *We have covenanted together to extend the influence of Christ in society and to labor for the promotion of education.* The consensus of the delegates said that it was time to address the priority of Christian higher education denomination-wide.

Numbers of Free Will Baptist young people attend colleges around the country. Many are in other Christian colleges. Why don't more Free Will Baptist young people attend one of our colleges? This has been an increasing concern. The need for laborers in the harvest field requires that this problem be addressed. Perhaps this concern along with others can be addressed by the Educational Task Force.

The Charge

The resolution from Georgia states, *Be it resolved that we initiate a study committee to develop a long-range*

comprehensive plan for Christian higher education for Free Will Baptists. The resolution from Arkansas states, *Be it resolved (1) That we initiate a task force/study committee to develop a long-range, comprehensive plan for Christian higher education among Free Will Baptists, (2) That this task force be a broad-based committee composed of Free Will Baptist individuals who are knowledgeable of higher education and (3) That this task force be comprised of four Free Will Baptist colleges, as well as individuals who are not presently affiliated with those colleges.*

The Educational Task Force responsibility is the development of a long-range, comprehensive plan of Christian higher education for Free Will Baptists.

The Committee

The task force will be chaired by Melvin Worthington, executive secretary. Committee members include: Tom Malone, Milton Fields (Free Will Baptist Bible College); Carl Cheshier, Tim Eaton (Hillsdale FWB College); Wendell Walley, E. T. Hyatt (California Christian College); Billy Bevan, A.B. Brown (Southeastern FWB College); Thomas Marberry, Marco Gonzales (El Seminario Biblico La Cruz); William Davidson, Douglas Simpson, Daniel Parker, Matthew Pinson and Randall

Sawyer (at-large members).

The task force includes pastors, educators, executives, administrators and professors. They will bring concepts which are broad, balanced and blended, as well as a variety of options. Almost every area of the denomination will be represented.

Free Will Baptists are characterized by diversity, especially in the area of education. This means that we need to understand the various philosophical and practical educational concepts within the denomination and its educational institutions.

The Commitment

This task force is committed to fulfilling the mandate specified by delegates at the Atlanta national convention. An objective study can provide information and insight necessary to implement programs for the next generation of Free Will Baptist young people at all our colleges.

Two committees dealing with Christian higher education have served in the recent past—the Educational Study Committee (1976) and the Graduate Study Committee (1977). Each committee contributed to the educational life of the denomination. This task force can also make a significant contribution.

The first meeting of the Educational Task Force is set for December 10-11, 1999, in Nashville, Tennessee. This will be an organizational meeting to determine a plan of action. The work of the task force can be a catalyst for future Christian higher education among Free Will Baptists into the next century.

We encourage you to pray for each member of the task force in the days ahead. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

January 1999

- 5-6 Mississippi State Association
- 8-10 Tennessee State Association
- 11-12 Alabama State Association
- 18-20 Georgia State Association

A new day has dawned for home missionaries.

Somebody Changed the Rules!

By Russell Wright

But we have always done it that way! Brother, have I heard that more than once. It's time we realize that home missions work is not what it used to be, and many tried and true ideas have rolled over and died. Now, before you get alarmed, let me clarify.

I'm not referring to the fundamental principles of the faith, but to methods we employ in reaching those so desperately in need of salvation. I confess to being somewhat conservative in my views, and while I certainly agree that Christians should be cautious in embracing change, you don't have to run over me with a truck to get my attention when a playful swat with a baseball bat will do nicely.

However, some things do not change. First, the call of God must be upon the home missionary. If God hasn't called you, don't try it. Second, there must be a burden for the work. I have witnessed several attempts to build churches where there seemed to be no burden. That never has and never will work.

As home missionaries, my wife, Kathy, and I have seen two Free Will Baptist churches organized and are in the process of starting a third. So I speak as one to whom the Lord has granted a degree of success (and by the way, a good wife is not an option here).

Over the past two decades, the home missionary's ministry has been greatly affected by changes. Some of the most evident are a growing disrespect for all churches, moral decline in our country, and—more importantly—moral decline in our pulpits. In addition, varied religious backgrounds and nationalities, increasing cost of property and construction, and an overwhelming demand on the missionary's time all add to the difficulty.

Disrespect for Church and a Decline in Morals in our Country and Pulpits

In today's society, those who will not compromise on biblical principles are often viewed as bigoted and evil. As Christians, we have been falsely ac-

cused by the media for the recent brutal death of a young homosexual, bombing of abortion clinics, and have even been slandered by our own vice-president when he spoke during a political speech, referring to those of faith as the "extra chromosome right wing."

Have you noticed how people frequently turn to vicious attacks and self-justification when their morals are called into question by a holy God? The prevalent mind-set in our culture seems to be one of moral relativism. When witnessing, one of the most frequently heard responses is, "That's your opinion; what's right for you may not be right for me."

It's difficult to convince people of the need for salvation when they fail to understand that they are lost. Furthermore, this is an age of entertainment, and because attention spans are growing shorter, some church leaders have succumbed to the temptation to compete and play the same game. The call comes from the Holy Father above that says, "Preach the Word," (II Tim. 4:2), "And be not conformed," (Rom. 12:1-2).

Varied Backgrounds and Nationalities

For several years, the sound and color of our communities have been steadily changing, and the church today has a different look from the days of our grandmothers and grandfathers. If we are to meet the needs of our world, we must be ready to greet people of all backgrounds and cultures with open arms. A greater mission field than we may realize lies open before us, right in our own communities.

Likewise, the nature of opportunities to minister through visitation programs is changing as well. Today, unannounced visits are often unwelcome and sometimes detrimental to our evangelistic efforts.

Also, I have wasted a lot of time attempting to visit people who were not home. We ought to be better stewards than that. The method we now employ builds a basic relationship of trust with those we are trying to reach by sending a warm letter, then a phone call and then a visit if they consent. Most people who initially visit our church are somewhat apprehensive and, in a real sense, put us on trial. We must be ready to minister to them.

I have taught for years that people remember two things about our churches, and it is not our dynamic sermons or our humorous stories. Summed up in two words, it is *friendliness* and *cleanliness*. With those two elements in our services, the Holy Spirit can then deal with people through the preached messages.

Cost and Time Involved

Are the days of store-front churches over? The days of discount prices and free gifts of real estate and building materials certainly are! Most unreached people believe the church has a surplus of funds just lying around waiting to be used. In addition, securing permits and plans has placed a heavy burden on the church planter as costs have more than tripled over the last 15 years.

Recently, a church that we believed could be built for \$200,000 cost a whopping \$400,000 after we added the trimmings. However, we must continue to build churches that allow people to feel comfortable and at ease when they enter. We sometimes forget it is not our job to make them feel uncomfortable—that is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit.

In addition, the time required to disciple is now much longer than before. Converts often must be untaught before we can begin to instruct them in God's truth.

A More Informed Generation

We live in the information age. Computers put us in touch and on the information highway. Whether we like it or not, we must learn to effectively use these hi-tech resources. Therefore, we must hone our abilities, sharpen our biblical skills and refuse to rely on sensationalism. Stop preaching and teaching speculation, and teach the clear truth of God's Word.

The Bible still teaches two basic

immutable truths. First, how to get to God; second, how to live for Him. We sometimes forget that we are speaking to people whose lives are in an awful state and are looking for help. We still have the answer, but it must be presented in an intelligible and concise manner.

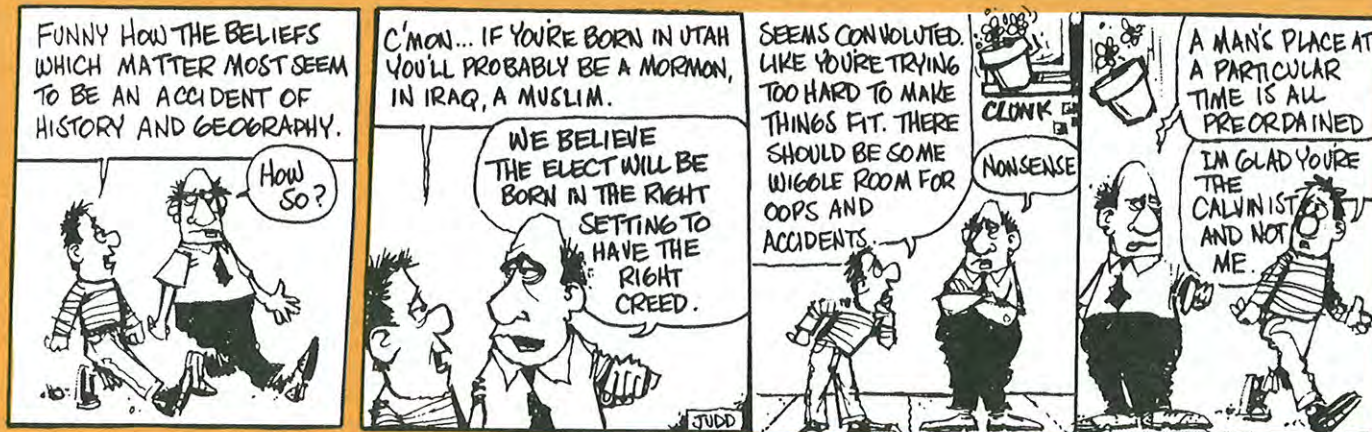
Finally, the Bible teaches the importance of prayer, and prayer is the key to successfully navigating all the obstacles we may encounter. For it is through prayer that we receive the power and blessing of God that only comes when we have been in His holy presence. Leaders of our churches must be at the forefront in employing this wonderful privilege and must set the example for both the young and newcomers to our churches.

Remember, people can spot a phony a mile away, and we need to be genuine. Be what God wants you to be. I, for one, believe that He knows what He is doing. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Russell Wright is a home missionary to the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. He has organized two new churches and is starting his third.

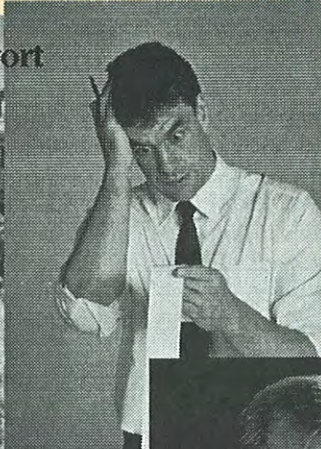
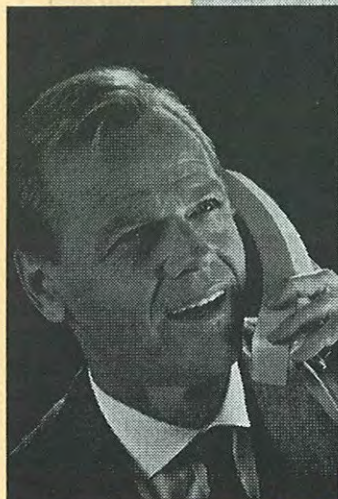
BEYOND BELIEF



He arrived in town with 19¢ in his pocket. They appointed him field secretary.

38 Years with Home Missions

By J. Mark Vandivort



Field Secretary

While students at Free Will Baptist Bible College, my wife and I became interested in the need for Vacation Bible School teachers in New Hampshire for the summer of 1960. After sharing our interest with Home Missions director, Dr. Homer E. Willis, who also had a burden for New England, he supplemented our expenses with a \$200 check.

The late Rev. Mack C. Owens, home missionary to Littleton, New Hampshire, had sent the request for VBS teachers to the Missionary Prayer Band at FWBBC. After our December 1959 wedding, Louise resigned her 5th grade teaching position to join me at FWBBC. The trip to New Hampshire was our honeymoon!

We conducted one VBS in Twin Mountain at the only Protestant church in that village, a church which had been established by Free Will Baptists in 1881. Following VBS, we reopened the doors of that closed church with a full schedule of services and \$15 per week salary. God provided a spacious, low-rental house and a construction job.

About a year later, we began pray-

ing that God would touch someone's heart who could be a key witness in the area (Col. 4:3). While Evangelist Bobby Jackson was conducting a revival in Twin Mountain, a man named Sim explained that he would be entering the hospital for cancer surgery. In the hospital, Rev. Jackson and I led Sim to Christ.

When he was able to be home, Sim was often seen sitting in a chair in his community general store reading his Bible, telling many people about his faith in Jesus Christ. Prior to his death, 35-year-old Sim's testimony was the catalyst that led several families to our church.

Brother Willis invited me to speak at the 1962 fall Missionary Conference scheduled at FWBBC. Louise had saved a \$20 bill in her cookie jar. She pressed that bill (no credit cards) and a bag of sandwiches into my hand as I kissed her, our toddler son Andy and baby Phil, goodbye. After driving 1,300 miles, I arrived in Nashville with 19¢ in my pocket.

After my sermon, Brother Willis asked me if I would accept the newly-created position of field secretary. I was stunned!

At California Christian College, I met a student named Bill Adkisson and his wife, Peggy. They later served as home missionaries in Canada, Ohio, Missouri, New Mexico and Iowa.

While ministering in Mexico, a young pastor and his wife insisted that I sleep in their hammock (which was stretched across their tiny one-room parsonage) while they slept on one of the chapel benches. For breakfast we ate a special food—fried cactus.

On one occasion as I was loading my suitcase into our 1963 Rambler for another mission trip, our 4-year-old son, Andy, said, "Daddy, come back and see us again sometime." Tears cloud my eyes as I type these words.

After a revival service at a small mission in Springfield, Missouri, I sensed that God wanted me to witness to someone. While driving east on Highway 60 toward Mother and Dad's farm, my headlights revealed a young man in army uniform. That night Jim prayed to get right with God before leaving for Vietnam.

Having a burden for military personnel, I later edited a monthly

newsletter, *Shield Of Faith*.

After four years of traveling 80% of the time, the Home Missions Board rewrote my job description to become editor of *Mission-Grains* and assistant to the director.

Driving home to Nashville one Sunday night after preaching, I stopped at my Uncle Ben Scott's parsonage in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Lingerin' at the door I unexpectedly heard myself saying that someday I would like to start a home mission church in a university town, possibly in Columbia, Missouri, home of my alma mater, the University of Missouri.

The next day's mail included a letter from Rev. Jim McAllister, reporting the Missouri Board's unanimous decision, inviting me to start a Free Will Baptist church in Columbia.

Columbia, Missouri

In Mississippi, Rathel read in the *Campus Dispatch*, our Home Missions' newsletter to secular college students, that we were to soon start a Free Will Baptist church in Columbia, Missouri. Abandoning her plans for a master's degree, she made a decision to help us start the new mission, as did her twin sister, Mathel, a graduating senior at FWBBC.

Moving with them was their friend, Sheila. These three young women were a tremendous help in music, visitation, teaching and tithing.

During the next eight years, we became well acquainted with blessings and testings. But what rejoicing when God enabled us (with the help of many people) to build a beautiful, red brick building on five acres located two miles south of the university campus in a rapidly developing area, with a full-time pastoral budget.

Financial records revealed that the church had already contributed more money back to the denomination than was spent in establishing the church.

Flagstaff, Arizona

Believing that God was calling me to start another mission church, I knelt at the altar during the Wednesday evening missionary service at the 1976 National Association in Tulsa, confirming that I would go to Flagstaff, Arizona.

Seven years later, my neighbor, George, and I were lugging sticks of firewood up a steep mountainside to my truck. "How many people attend your church?" he asked.

I found myself praying for courage to tell my professor friend that our top attendance at that time was about 15. Eighteen months earlier we had felt that our church was nearly strong enough to build on our property located on U.S. 89 N. However, in less than 12 months, nearly all our families moved away.

A few days later, while sitting in our living room, George said, "Ruth and I and our children have decided to attend your church." (Ruth is Native American.) Their influence helped open doors to a meaningful cross-cultural ministry with people representing several tribes. Not all our cross-cultural people were Native American.

For example, I can still visualize the young woman from mainland China hanging onto every word of my sermons, counting the cost of surrendering her life to Jesus Christ. A young mother from South America, fluent in several languages, came to know Jesus Christ personally in one of our home Bible studies. And the message goes on.

When our full-time missions salary had been phased out, we were convinced that the Lord did not want our church phased out. After a long and discouraging job search, I was finally hired for a job where I worked alongside Hispanics, African-Americans and Native Americans, learning firsthand how it feels to be a minority, but more importantly, learning to know them as friends.

Eventually, many avenues to witness began to open, including conducting the funeral for my co-workers' young son. His parents are now in our church. With the income from that job and the designated missionary support that we continued to receive, we were able to continue.

Thirty-eight years!

“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalm 27:13 NKJV). Thank you to each one who made it possible for us to serve, including our five children

and their families. I thank God for calling me to be a home missionary. ■



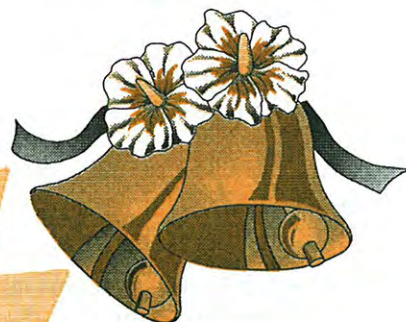
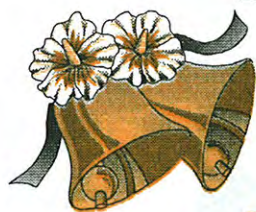
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Marriage has come a long way since Adam and Eve said, "I do," in the Garden of Eden.

Marriage God's Way

By Steve Ashby



The First Marriage

Several years ago my Dad told me a story about Adam and Eve in the garden. It seems that one evening they were talking and Eve said, "Adam, do you love me?"

And Adam said, "Who else?"

Of course, this is not the beginning of the story. Before Adam arrived at the conclusion that Eve was his suitable match, he had some unusual

events to confront him. We realize when we consider this garden scene that a great deal differs in that context from what we find in our own.

The environment there was perfect; fellowship with God was unhindered by sin; labor was not toilsome. And yet, we are told that something was missing . . . Adam was alone and this was not good.

In looking at the account of Genesis 2:18ff., we see that God set out to

remedy this situation by making "an help meet (i.e. a helper suitable) for him." Having thus declared His intention, what immediately follows looks to be out of place—God brings the animals of the field and the birds of the air before Adam to be named.

However, it only looks out of place until we consider the end of v. 20. Evidently, God brought all the animals before Adam for the naming cere-

mony so that he could see if there was one that was suited for him. But, alas, "for Adam there was not found an help meet for him."

Adam needed one who was special from among God's creation. He had been created in God's image (1:27) and only one who bore like character could complement him. So God created Eve. And then, we see God acting like the father of the bride, "bringing her unto the man," (2:22).

Adam's response was immediate: this is it, now, finally, at last! After looking over all those animals and finding none suitable for him, his sense of relief at seeing Eve must have been unbounded. He had finally found his suitable match.

So God performed the first marriage in v. 24 with those words that are still so familiar to us: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh."

The Only Constant

While all this seems fairly apparent from the account in Genesis, there are many things today that don't seem apparent to people at all. Man-woman relations, finding a suitable match, principles of marriage—the only constant seems to be that everything is constantly changing.

And for many of us, it doesn't look as though things are getting better, either in the world or in the church.

Where's The Delight?

Hostility between the sexes is not waning but rather is increasing. At every level of society we can see that as God's prescriptions are diluted in our thinking, we desire to dominate one another in our practice. Every sort of institution, whether governmental, educational, business or religious, has had to think through the issues of sexual harassment, sexual discrimination and sexual abuse.

I wonder sometimes how much farther this can go, how much worse it can get. What has happened to the delight that once existed between the sexes? Where is the delight that could take a man used to tending the garden and caring for the animals and turn him into a poet at the mere

sight of a woman—a poet who says,
*Finally,
Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:
She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

Oh, how far we have fallen!

Finding A Suitable Match

Obviously, finding a suitable match should not present us with the same kind of quandary with which Adam was confronted. Although, one might wonder, given the strange and perverse appetites that people are seeking to satisfy today. There is no shortage of people, both male and female, all created in God's image, among whom we might search. But, is just anyone as suitable a match as is everyone else?

I had an interesting conversation with a Christian student at Ball State University this week. His name is Jesse and he is preparing himself for ministry (He is currently involved in ministry, both evangelism and discipling on our secular campus).

We were talking about how he met his girlfriend. He had been praying with Jay (his accountability partner who is another Christian student). As they prayed together for several months about finding a suitable match, they put together a list of qualities from the scriptures that they should be looking for in a girl. They were serious in their study of the Bible, and they were serious in their praying.

What some would call happenstance, Jesse calls providence. It was God who brought him and Amy into the same class on this secular campus. And, as he had been praying, she had also been praying. Once they met, each recognized in the other the spiritual qualities they had prayed God would show them in the one who was suitable for them.

Principles To Follow

When God married Adam and Eve, He gave certain principles that were to characterize the marriage relationship: *leaving*, *cleaving* and *one flesh*. It is evident that this was intended to be a model for marriage for all time.

We know this because of the principle of *leaving*. A man is instructed to "leave his father and mother." It must be a model for future genera-

tions since Adam had neither father or mother.

The *leaving* and *cleaving* are two sides of the same coin. He is leaving behind one familial relationship to begin a new one, and the new one is to take priority. He is to "cleave unto his wife."

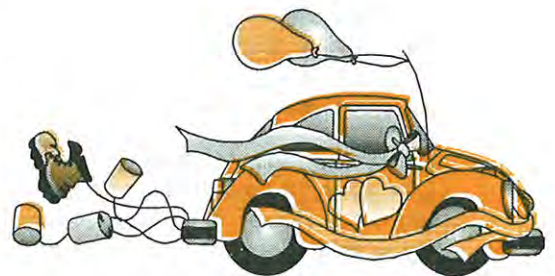
Finally, God gives the principle that the two "shall be one flesh." The *one flesh* principle of intimacy was given by God for marriage.

The order of these principles which God gave must not be reversed. Satan, who deceived the first couple in the garden, is still deceiving couples today. The tendency that is so prevalent today is to try out the "one flesh" part first. If that and everything else goes well . . . well, then we'll think about "cleaving."

The consequence of not following God's principles is often seen in the "leaving." God said to leave father and mother; what's happening today is that spouses are leaving each other. God's principles will still work today. But only if they are followed. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Stephen Ashby is assistant professor of philosophy and religious studies at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He serves on the Board of Trustees at Free Will Baptist Bible College.



13 sure-fire ways to handle distractions.

Dealing With Distractions

By Melba Hibbard



Distractions happen. Like matadors they wave their red flags and puncture your concentration, deflating your time and attention. Sometimes they're full-blown, can't-get-your-project-done interruptions, other times just minor irritations.

Since we can't live without them, we learn to live with them. The dilemma is not, "How can I get rid of them?" but rather, "How can I deal with them?" Our response to the dis-

tractions in life determines if they delay us or derail us.

Ever notice that the more difficult the task the more distractions there seem to be? It's called the Law of Irritation. For instance, try to set aside time for daily prayer and devotion. Every distraction known to man rears its head. The phone rings, there's a knock at the door, you have no pen and can't find your Bible. You become irritated before you ever start. Your attitude sabotages your good intentions.

So, how do we deal with those ir-

ritants that sidetrack us? Here are 13 ideas to help cope with the chase of distractions:

#1 "Calgon, Take Me Away!"

Often the best way to keep on task is to get away. Going to the library or a quiet restaurant when you're faced with a deadline may be time well spent. It gets you away from the phone, people and whatever else may be hindering your project. Paul

spent three years in a distraction-free zone. Look what it did for him. Just think what getting away from your distractions could do for you.

#2 Turn Off the TV

Nothing derails good intentions like the TV. That walking program you resolved to start this year or the good book you wanted to read will stay unstarted and unread if you can't pull the plug. That goes for the computer, Internet or Play Station.

#3 Value What's Important

I had to learn this lesson the hard way. I placed too much importance on keeping my house clean and declined going out at a friend's invitation. Sounds silly, I know. But you've probably done the same and allowed some insignificant task to keep you from something that was much more important.

#4 Picture Yourself at 85

What do you want your family and friends to say and remember about you? Think about it. It quickly puts into perspective what's really important in life. This wide-angle view will help you see distractions as just the minor irritations that they are.

#5 Write It Down

Whatever project or mission you're trying to accomplish will be more focused if you write down your expected goal or conclusion. I'm a list maker, always have been. My husband has always relied on his "steel trap." Rust has been a problem in recent years. He has learned the value of writing it down. You can look back and refresh your memory about what you were planning to do.

#6 Prioritize

Every recent job interview I've had asked the same question, "How will you deal with the pressures of this job?" My answer is always, "Prioritize."

Deciding the order of importance of tasks you must do today helps accomplish the most important projects. When you're "on a mission," you deal quickly with distractions and move on.

That works for a week, a month, a year or a lifetime.

#7 Learn to Say, "No"

Overachievers take on every task, project or job that anyone throws at them. Then they find themselves entangled in small distractions to the point that they can't get to the important. Discover a way to be polite but still get your message across, "No, thank you."

#8 Ask for a Time Frame

Knowing the boundaries of a project help keep distractions from overwhelming you. If you're doing work for someone else, ask for a completion date. If it's a project you're working on for yourself, set a time frame. Knowing, however, there will be interruptions, be flexible so that when you start chasing rabbits you don't get bruised in the chase.

#9 Stay Focused

Remind yourself what you're trying to accomplish. We easily drift from our original intent. Stay alert to your mission.

#10 Finish One Task

The satisfaction of being able to cross that job off your list is invigorating. Many times we get bogged down in the middle of a project. Promise yourself that you can't go on until you've completed this one. Then celebrate when you've accomplished your task.

#11 Take Inventory Often

This is the focus of those day planners that are so popular with executives and business people. They encourage a weekly inventory of how you spend your days. Sundays are

excellent times to take inventory.

Ask yourself, "Have I been distracted this week from what's really important in my life?" If you answer, "Yes," try to make a small adjustment to eliminate or better anticipate distractions of the coming week.

#12 Attend Communion and Feet Washing Service

These times serve as a compass for life. They are some of the best times in the year to determine if you are fulfilling God's purpose in your life or have been sidetracked.

#13 Keep Your Cool

Don't turn a minor distraction into the main event. When we overreact to distractions, we cause the distraction to become the main event and become ineffective at the job or on the project.

The real key to dealing with distractions is your response. Getting angry and bothered by the interruptions in your day or project only make the situation worse. Take a deep breath, and plan your reaction. That way the distraction won't get the best of you. Congratulations, you have just found a way to make the most of distractions! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Melba Hibbard is president of the California Women Active for Christ. She is a member of Village Chapel Free Will Baptist Church in Ceres, California, where her husband, John, pastors.

Marco?

Marco?

By Richard P. Kennedy

It's a cruel game when you think about it. I was sitting poolside on a recent study break. Three sisters, the oldest looked to be 8 or 9, were all in the pool playing a game. The oldest, holding the youngest and with eyes closed cried, "Marco?" The middle child returned, "Polo." Most of us have played the game at one time or another. But as I observed, two difficulties continued to arise.

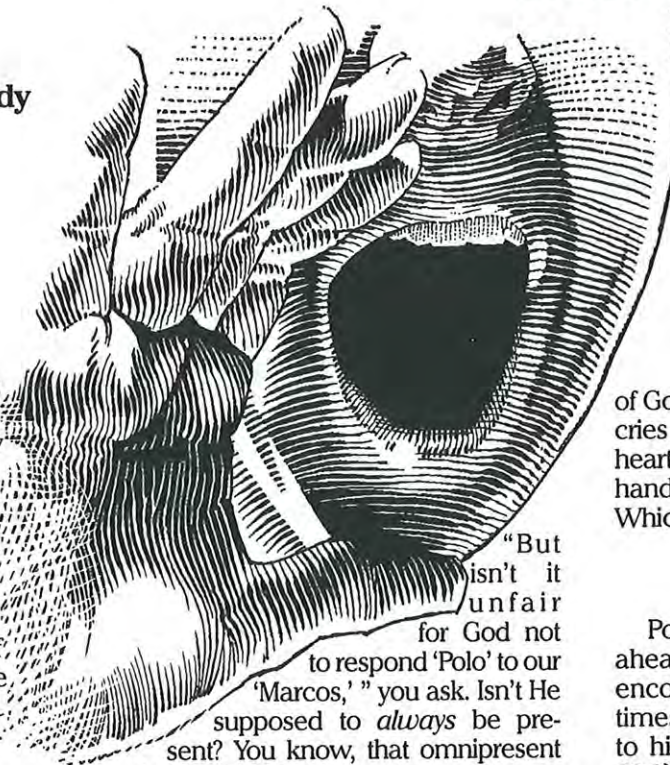
First, "Marco" kept peeking to see where "Polo" was hiding. That was a violation of the rules. And, being the middle child, she let everybody within earshot know her big sister was cheating! The second problem arose when "Polo" did not respond to "Marco's" plea. Without "Polo" responding, "Marco" was left to wander in the dark—and the deep.

Though my son is now in high school, it still bothers him to find himself home alone. His normal routine is to go through the house turning on all the lights while he calls out, "Mom?" "Dad?"

When he finds one of us we usually respond, "in here, Son."

"Oh, I just wanted to know where you are."

So it is with God. When we cry "Marco?" we want to hear "Polo." We don't always need or want something; we just want the assurance that He is close by. But sometimes we are greeted only by silence. That's when the test begins. That's when our faith is developed.



"But isn't it unfair for God not to respond 'Polo' to our 'Marcos,' " you ask. Isn't He supposed to *always* be present? You know, that omnipresent thing? Didn't Jesus say He would never leave us or forsake us?

What should we do when we are greeted by God's silence? I dislike simple "1, 2, 3" approaches to life's difficulties, don't you? I confess that my own experience has been more like 1, 3, 1, 2, 1, 3, 2, than 1, 2, and 3. But having said that, allow me to offer the following suggestions.

Never Alone

First, understand that you are not alone. In response to the silence of God, Job cried out, "Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you? Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins?" (Job 7:20, 21).

Many of the Psalms are invitations for God to cease His silence. To cease His inactivity—and *do* something! "O God, do not keep silent; be not quiet, O God, be not still. See how your enemies are astir, how your foes rear their heads," (Psa. 83:1, 2).

An even lengthier dealing with the matter is found in Psalm 73. Because

of God's seeming silence, the Psalmist cries out, "Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence," (Psa. 73:13). Which leads to my second point.

Tell God

Pour your heart out to God. Go ahead. He can take it! The Psalmist encourages us to "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge," (Psa. 62:8). It's a good thing God doesn't respond to all of our jive and jabs. He understands. He cares. So go ahead, pour your heart out to Him. Tell God what you think and what you feel. Tell Him what you want Him to do.

After the death of his wife, C. S. Lewis poured his heart out to God in his journal. "Why is He (God) so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent a help in time of trouble?" And lest we forget, even Jesus Christ cried out in His time of trouble, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

Contrary to what some believe, pouring one's heart out to God is an expression of *belief*. Lewis makes that point in *A Grief Observed*:

You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death to you. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong and sound as long as you are merely using it to cord a box. But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then discover how much you really trusted it?

Find a Friend

Third, when God is silent, find a trusted friend or group of friends. To be without friends in time of need is truly to be in need. True friends divide grief and double the joy. Friends don't have to know the answers to our questions. As a matter of fact, it is best if they don't. Ask Job. We can do without the pontificating and theologizing that often comes with friends who have never suffered.

While no doubt a sad commentary, Paul's statement: "Only Luke is with me," (II Tim. 4:11) was actually meant to say that he was not alone as he faced the wrath of Nero. The presence of a friend brings focus to our feelings. In the absence of a friend we are left alone to contend with our feelings. In the presence of friends we can see the grace of God even if He does not respond, "Polo."

Grasp Faith

Above all, hold on to your faith in God.

The story of Job strikes a sympathetic chord with us moderns, because we too have put God on trial over the issue of our suffering and His silence. People love God, said one

priest, "the way a peasant loves his cow; for the butter and cheese it produces." Loving God *without* the butter and cheese will silence the accusations of the kingdom of darkness.

When we experience dark times, when God stays silent, when nothing works according to the formula, fidelity involves learning to trust that, out beyond the perimeter of darkness, God still reigns and has not abandoned us, no matter how it may appear.

In his recent book, *The Bible Jesus Read*, Philip Yancy says,

No one has expressed the pain and unfairness of this world any better than Job. Yet behind those words of anguish lies a darkly shining truth: Job—and you and I—can through obedience join the struggle to reverse that suffering. Job paints the drama of faith in its starkest form: the best man on earth suffering the worst, with no sign of encouragement or comfort from God.

The fact that Job continued to trust God, against all odds, mattered—for him, for us, and for God. In his speech, God described the wonders of natural creation, yet clearly the wonder of creation that impressed God most was Job himself—hence this book in the Bible.

I admit that a "one, two, three" approach to dealing with the silence of God can seem cold, even sterile. Real life is less like a waltz and more like a

jitterbug. But at some point God will meet us. Our Father will break the silence. He did with Joseph, Job and Jesus. And you and I are no exception.

God is faithful to His pledge. He may not explain His silence (as in the case of Job), or He may choose to open your eyes to what you could not see (like in the case of Joseph), but you will hear His, "Polo!" So keep pouring your heart out to God. Stay connected with your friends. And keep trusting the One who said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you," (Deut. 31:6; Heb. 13:5) ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Richard Kennedy is a member of Rejoice Free Will Baptist Church in Owasso, Oklahoma. He has pastored in California and North Carolina. Dr. Kennedy can be reached at his website address www.heavenwords.com.

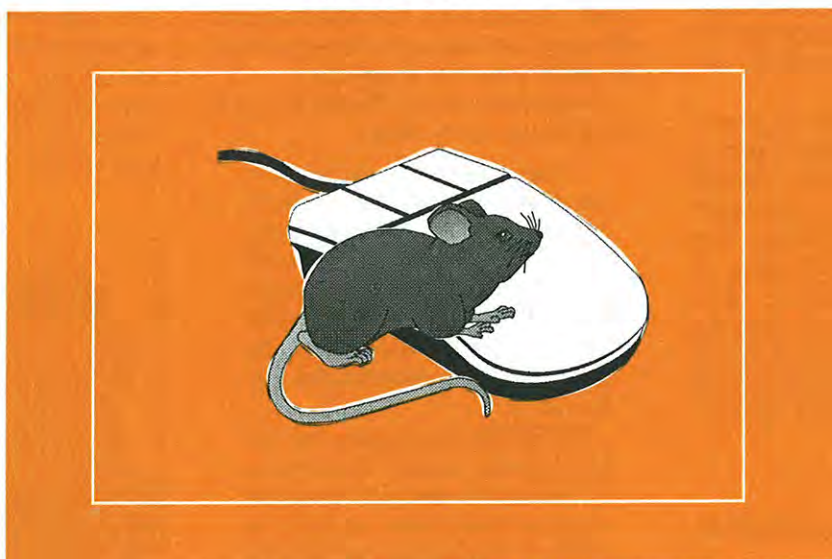
COMING NEXT MONTH

- ➡ **NORTH CAROLINA FLOOD COVERAGE**
- ➡ **PROJECT MESSIAH**
- ➡ **THE CHRISTMAS SINGER**
- ➡ **DON'T WASTE THIS TROUBLE**

Three 'change' principles that impact our lives.

Facts About Change

By David Brown



I don't like change. Sometimes people give me a hard time, because every time I get a sub sandwich it is prepared the same way: A roast beef sandwich with mustard, lettuce, tomato, onion, olives, pickles, salt, pepper, oil and vinegar. Always the same every time.

I think most of us do not like change. That's why we have jokes making fun of our aversion to change. I've been told that folks in Virginia like history and preserving history. So how many Virginians does it take to change a light bulb? Answer—five. One to change the light bulb, four to talk about how nice the old one was and how much they will miss it.

My favorite is the Free Will Baptist version. How many Free Will Baptists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer—Change? What's change?

I recently rented an animated movie for my children about an ant who wanted to change everything. Throughout the film he challenges the status quo and asks why? In the opening scene the entire ant colony is bringing in the harvest the way they have always done. They each get one grain and march back in single file following one another to the

place where they drop their load.

Since it is autumn, the leaves are falling and a leaf drops right in front of one of the ants. He immediately goes into a panic because the leaf is blocking his way, and he can not follow exactly where the ant before him walked. The line backs up behind him as he says, "I don't know what to do."

Fortunately, they have consultants (Sorry, I couldn't resist.) specially trained for these situations, and he demonstrated how to go around the leaf and get back in line. The whole time he is doing this, the frustrated ant says, "I've never done this. Are you sure we can do this? Is this legal?"

Many of us are like that ant in that we always want to do things the way we have done them in the past. Let's explore three simple statements about change:

Change can be good.

Change can be bad.

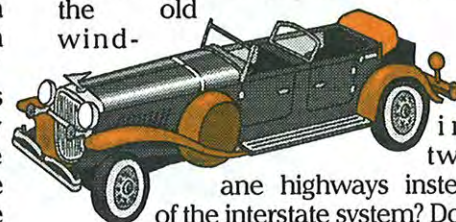
Change ultimately is inevitable.

Change Can Be Good

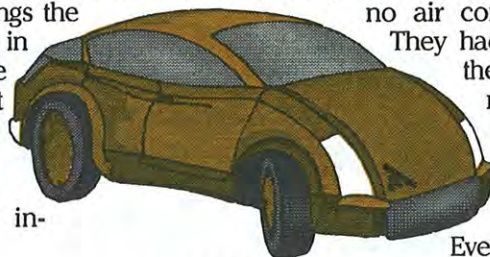
There have been many good changes over the last 50 years. Does

anyone really want to do without air conditioning? Many economists attribute the growth and development of the South and Southwest to air conditioning.

Does anyone want to go back to the old wind-



ing two-lane highways instead of the interstate system? Does anyone really want to drive the cars of the 1940s? Most had standard shift, no power steering, no power brakes, roll-up windows and, again, no air conditioning.



They had tubes in the tires that made having a flat a common occurrence. Every car trip could truly be an adventure.

Don't you like the fact that you can jump on a jet plane and fly 2,000 miles in four and a half hours?

In Acts 9, we find a good change

when Paul was converted. It was a good change for the church because Paul stopped persecuting the church. But it was also a good change for Paul personally.

Where would we all be if we each had not made this important change in our life? Changing the hearts of men is what we are supposed to be doing. We need to be careful not to go to extremes and say that change is never good. Often, and especially when it comes to salvation, change is very good.

Change Can Be Bad

The 1955, '56 and '57 Chevrol-
lets are considered some of the
best cars ever. They are classics
and are collected by many car
enthusiasts. Did you know that
Fords outsold
the Chevys for
each of those
years?

Ford was
riding
high in
the
mid
'50s.
They
were on
top of the
automotive
world.

During this time,
Henry Ford Jr. de-
cided that he wanted to shake things
up by making some changes. He de-
termined to create a new car line
and named it after his son. Ford
spent millions of dollars and several
years developing the new line.

Finally, in 1958, the Edsel was
launched. It was a colossal failure, and
after three years the line was defunct.
Meanwhile, it took Ford years to recover
from this debacle.

Why did the car fail? The Edsel was
radically different from anything else
on the road. It was ahead of its time.
The car was just too big of a change.

Over the last 50 years we have seen
a lot of bad changes in our society. The
so called sexual revolution of the '60s
led to the promiscuity we see today. It
has made sex the most important
thing in life, which has made pornog-
raphy and illicit sex widespread in our

society with millions of broken homes
and marriages in its wake.

The move to force separation of
church and state has taken Christian
values out of our schools. Is it any won-
der we now have children slaughtering
their classmates in the schools? The wholesale acceptance by our ed-
ucational system of the theory of evo-
lution has made life cheap and, there-
fore, we see no respect for human life.

In Genesis 3, Eve is faced with the
decision to make change. It
seems incredible that she
would even consider
making a change
from the life she had
in the Garden of
Eden, but she did.

We contin-
ue to see the results
of that bad change to
this day in the fallen
world in which we live
and through our inher-
ited sin-
ful nature. We can always
know that any change in di-
rect violation of God's Word is
a bad change.

Change Ultimately Is Inevitable

We can not stop the changes going
on with our bodies as we age. We may
be able to slow it down by taking bet-
ter care of our bodies or perhaps cover
it up, but we can not stop the aging
process. Some of us men used to have
more hair than we do now. Many of us
had brown, blond, black or red hair
years ago, but now it is mostly gray.

Change is also inevitable in a city. Ei-
ther a city is growing and developing,

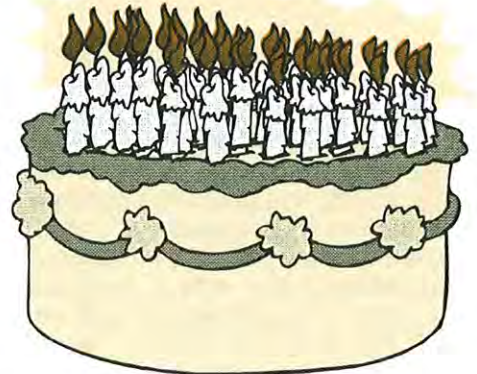
or it is shrinking and dy-
ing; either way, the city
is changing. A narrow,
winding
two-lane
road that we
liked to drive
on a few years
ago gets wid-
ened to five lanes.



Sure, we lost some of the scenery, but
we get a larger, more easily accessible
city.

Change is inevitable in our spiritu-
al lives as well. Romans 12 teaches
that we should be striving to make
the necessary changes in our lives to
be more like Jesus. Unfortunately,

just like a city, we are either moving
forward or moving backward. While
the ideal is to be steadily making
changes that make us better servants
of God, the truth is we are constantly
making changes—sometimes to be
better and sometimes worse.



If we are not trying to transform
our lives, we are by default allowing
ourselves to change for the worse.

Let us recognize that changes can
be both good and bad. We must seek
God to know when it is wise to make
a change. We also need His counsel
about when we should not make a
change. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"
Changes will come. Let's be willing to
adjust our attitudes to accept them.

Embrace the good changes. Avoid
the bad changes. Accept the in-
evitable changes. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: David Brown works as member
services representative with the Free Will Baptist
Board of Retirement.

Contentment—An Ongoing Struggle

By Joan Martin



I was raised in a lower middle class family. Because I was loved, I did not know what discontent was until one Christmas when I was 12 years old. I wanted a radio. My parents purchased a second-hand one, which stood on four legs. I was delighted until my best friend showed me her easy to carry, compact, red radio. I was enveloped in jealousy and my own joy became envy. Discontent took away my pleasure for a long time.

My father taught me a lesson one day when he answered a question I asked. "Dad, you always seem so happy when our friends have so much more than us."

He replied, "Why not? I can only sleep in one bed at a time. I can only eat one meal at a time. God has given me enough each day to make me content."

Most of us have times when we are unhappy and disappointed with our lot in life. We might want clothes like the beautiful people around us. Perhaps our home looks small and old when we observe new and modern ones down the street. We wish our children were more intelligent and talented. Even our husband might not earn enough money to please us, and he isn't very handsome either.

God said there are four things we should be thankful for: Our salary (Luke 3:14), our possessions (Heb 13:5), our needs—food and clothing (I Tim. 6:8-10), our weaknesses (II Cor. 12:7-10).

In spite of God's words, we continue to want more than we have. One afternoon, my family was visiting from out of town. I made statements about moving to another home. There were things I didn't like and wanted a change.

As the discussion continued, our younger son didn't say much. He was single and had a very little house in

another state. "Your rooms are so small, dear," I said. "You only have two bedrooms and perhaps you will want to sell it soon."

"Mom," he replied. "I just make myself contented."

Those words brought me up short. We did some remodeling and stayed. I'm making myself contented and even like my home.

So, what can I do when I'm disappointed and discontented?

Thank God

Start a habit of thanking God each morning for what I do have. A discontented woman who lived in the care facility next to my mother said, "I just hate those noisy birds that chirp each morning."

My mother, who loves birds said, "They wake me up with their singing and I just love them."

Free Others

Don't over-expect other people to make me happy or meet my needs. It works better if I don't expect and when something nice happens, enjoy it. I know my kids are busy in other states. When they call, it is a delight and I keep the conversation one of joy.

Serve Others

Become a serving person. In making someone else happy, I gain content. My friend is always looking for ways to help others. Her thinking is, "How can I help?" never "What can I get from others?"

Help Yourself

Perhaps you want success in some area and don't feel you have any talent or gifts. Psalm 37:4 says, "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

For several years I wanted to be a writer. I promised God I would write for Him. If we abide in Him and surrender our attitude, we will be amazed at how He answers our desires.

Dump Discontentment

When things are quiet—radios, telephone and TV off—I sometimes have thoughts of discontentment. Those are times when I ask God to help me get rid of ungrateful and unhappy thoughts. There is no contentment without Him.

Paul said, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation," (Phil. 4:1b-12).

I often think of the words my father left with me about being content. I also think of Paul's words when I feel discontent creeping into my heart.

This struggle we all face can only bring victory with our closeness with the Lord. ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Joan Martin is a freelance writer who lives in Wayzata, Minnesota.

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FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Missionary Ken Eagleton, Sr., Dies



ANTIOCH, TN—Reverend Kenneth P. Eagleton, Sr., a Free Will Baptist missionary to Brazil for 32 years, died August 26. He was 71. He served in Brazil 1958-1990, then went on special assignment with the Foreign Missions Department, organizing TEAM (Teens Equipped and Active in Missions) and leading 120 high school students to 12 foreign mission fields.

A native of Texas, Reverend Eagleton was converted at age 11 and answered the call to preach in 1952 at age 24. After graduating from Free Will Baptist Bible College, he was commissioned as a foreign missionary on June 1, 1958, and left for Brazil one month later, where he helped open the Free Will Baptist mission work. He was a church planter who was uniquely gifted in discipleship and leadership training.

Foreign Missions Director James Forlines said at Brother Eagleton's funeral on August 28, "He was a tireless advocate of

the younger generation, and believed that they would respond to the needs of the world's lost if they only knew. That's why he organized the TEAM ministry."

Reverend Fred Warner, director of stateside ministries with the Foreign Missions Department, said, "Ken was a member of a very select group of men who labored in the Word and doctrine. He was a great teacher."

Warner observed, "I don't know what Ken left his family materially, but he couldn't have left them any more spiritually."

A large contingency of Free Will Baptist foreign missionaries and staff gathered with several hundred friends at Cofer's Chapel FWB Church in Nashville to remember Eagleton's life and commitment to the Great Commission.

In addition to his preaching and missionary career that spanned four decades, Eagleton was a staff sergeant in the United States Air Force (1948-1952) and an alumnus of Bob Jones University.

Reverend Eagleton is survived by his wife of 45 years, Marvis Anderson Eagleton; four sons; Kenneth, Jr., a missionary physician in West Africa; Terry, who pastors Horton Heights FWB Church in Nashville; Andrew, a police helicopter pilot in Phoenix, AZ; Stephen, a project administrator at FedEx in Memphis, TN; one brother, Philip, of Texas, and 11 grandchildren.

Hillsdale College Enrolls a Record 298

MOORE, OK—The preliminary fall enrollment statistics at Hillsdale FWB College indicate a record 298 students, according to Timothy Eaton, vice-president of academic affairs. The full-time equivalency stood at 219 in late August.

Eaton said, "There are 231 students enrolled in traditional courses and the ABLE degree program."

The numbers include 129 freshmen, 57 sophomores, 45 upper classmen and 67 in the external studies program. Officials report 47 enrolled in ministerial studies, 16 in missions and 11 in Christian vocational studies.

In addition to the 298 students enrolled in August, Hillsdale scheduled other enrollments for the ABLE degree program in September and October, plus another group in Tulsa.

Vice-president Timothy Eaton said, "We expect 350-370 students in the final count this fall."

The new ABLE (Adult Bible and Leadership Education) program enables adults with 60 semester hours of college to complete a bachelor's degree in 21 months. Students must be at least 25 years old and attend class one night each week.

Missouri Pastor, Cliff Bowman, Dies

MARSHALL, MO—The Reverend Victor Clifton Bowman, Jr., died June 19 at his home. He was 71. He was pastor of Olivet FWB Church in Marshall at the time of his death, a church he had pastored 31 years.

Born January 28, 1928, in Buhl, Idaho, Reverend Bowman was converted on Easter Sunday in 1956 and answered the call to preach later that year. He pastored five churches in Missouri over the next 43 years, in addition to conducting hundreds of revivals.

Bowman chaired the Missouri State Home Mission Board for the past 30 years, as well as serving on the state General Board and Executive Committee.

Springfield pastor Dale Skiles said, "It was Brother Cliff's dream to establish a Free Will Baptist church within driving distance of



every person in Missouri. He was a Bible scholar, a prayer warrior, a preacher of unusual ability, an extraordinary soul winner and a faithful friend."

During his 31 years at Olivet FWB Church, Bowman and his wife started Kiddie Kare Kampus and the Olivet Christian Academy. He also pastored Ami-

ty FWB Church in Niangua, Lynn Street FWB Church in Lebanon, First FWB Church in Waynesville and Cuba FWB Church.

His son, Rev. Dennis Bowman, who pastors Berean FWB Church in Independence, said, "Early in Dad's ministry, he asked the Lord to give him a personal reason that would stir his soul with a constant passion for souls. He saw a vision of his own father walking the brimstone corridors of Hell asking why someone had not told him about Christ. His father was later saved in his 70s, but Dad never lost his passion for the lost."

Reverend Bowman is survived by his son, Dennis Bowman; one daughter, Kathy J. Daniel of Memphis, TN; four grandchildren, three brothers and one sister.

Lightning Hits Missouri Church

PARK HILLS, MO—Lightning from an electrical storm triggered a fire at First FWB Church in Park Hills on June 24, according to Pastor Ken Dodson. The 4:00 a.m. fire apparently started when lightning struck the church's steeple causing extensive damage.

Within minutes after a 911 call summoned the fire department, more than 30 church members gathered on the parking lot for prayer service. Pastor Dodson said that the fire department battled the blaze for more than four hours.

The church had completed a new addition just over a year ago. Officials said that water damage to the new addition was extensive, as well as to the main auditorium and sanctuary, and to ministry offices and nursery areas.

However, after members used wet-dry vacuums for hours and did a massive clean-up, the church met for worship on Sunday, June 27.

Pastor Dodson said, "We plan to move ahead with rebuilding. Our youth services will be conducted in the fellowship hall. We have had an outpouring of support from the community, our members and sister churches. Some businesses provided equipment to help in clean-up. Many others sent money."

The church was organized in 1880. The present building was constructed about 1930.

CCC Enrollment at 76

FRESNO, CA—California Christian College roars back with a renewed burst of enthusiasm, according to new president, Wendell Walley. Enrollment stood at 76 with the cut-off date still a couple days away. Registrar Pam Hatwig reports 56 full-time, 16 part-time and four audit students.

Figures for the Russian Degree Completion Program were not available at press time, but some 25 additional students were expected to enroll in that program. The combined count is projected to reach near 100 students.

Enrollment suffered a setback in January when the state of California unexpectedly shut down the Russian program. However, the out-going academic dean, Greg McAllister, was able to gain temporary reinstatement of the program during the summer.

President Wendell Walley requests prayer for the college as they strive for permanent reinstatement of the Russian Degree Completion Program. Also pray as they attempt to gain approval of an English as a second language program (ESL).

The advantage of the ESL program is that it would allow the college to help foreign language students to become proficient in English and then join the regular student body for their classes. One of the disadvantages of the Russian program is that it is taught in Russian, thus limiting the student body and the availability of faculty.

Leadership Conference Set for December

ANTIOCH, TN—The annual Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference will meet December 6-7 at the Regal Maxwell House Hotel in Nashville, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. Some 150 state leaders are expected to participate in the two-day conference.

Conference registration begins Monday, December 6, at 1:00 p.m. After an opening dinner at 5:30 p.m., attendees will gather for a two-hour session in the hotel's Grande Ballroom.

The 1999 conference theme is "Working Together." Nine sessions

will be planned around the theme.

Arkansas pastor Rick Ketchum and Tennessee pastor Ronnie Adkins kick off the conference Monday evening.

Tuesday morning North Carolina promotional director Jim Marcum, Ohio pastor Roger Childers and Missouri executive secretary Nathan Ruble will continue with three messages.

Oklahoma executive director Ernest Harrison, Jr., and Master's Men director Tom Dooley will speak Tuesday afternoon. Georgia pastor Matt Pinson and Missouri pastor Gary Fry will conclude the

program Tuesday evening.

National Association moderator Carl Cheshier and assistant moderator Tim York will preside at all sessions. Reverend Cheshier will also chair a Monday afternoon meeting for the chairmen of all national boards.

At 3:00 p.m. Monday, Nathan Ruble will chair a meeting of the national Nominating Committee.

The Leadership Conference will conclude Tuesday evening at 9:00 p.m. National boards will then meet separately to conduct the business of each agency.

Free Will Baptist Bible College Enrolls 333

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College enrolled some 333 students in late August, according to a preliminary report from Charles Hampton, registrar. With registration still open for a few night classes, the total could be higher.

To date, there are 125 new and transfer students who are joining 208 returnees. Dr. James Cox, director of enrollment management, says, "This is the largest number of new students in at least 12 years." The dormitory population numbers 232, with 101 living off campus.

The enrollment total is well above spring projections due to a higher than usual number of summer applications.

"A lot of our people worked hard, especially in summer camps, to reach young people who might not have considered coming to FWBBC," says Bert Tippet, public relations director. "It appears that a reorganization of the enrollment management process and the addition of several summer recruiters paid off."

By classes, the present enrollment includes 126 freshmen, 86 sophomores, 57 juniors, 56 seniors and eight special students.

Registration took place on the Nashville campus August 23 and 24.

By State

Alabama	32
Arkansas	26
Arizona	1
California	2
Florida	11
Georgia	21
Illinois	32
Indiana	6
Kansas	6
Kentucky	11
Louisiana	2
Michigan	13
Mississippi	5
Missouri	15
New Mexico	1
North Carolina	27
Ohio	6
Oklahoma	7
South Carolina	12
South Dakota	2
Tennessee	78
Texas	4
Virginia	7
West Virginia	2
*Foreign	17

*Albania, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Korea, Panama, Russia, Spain

Southeastern Enrolls 152

WENDELL, NC—When enrollment closed for the fall semester, officials at Southeastern FWB College counted 152 students. That number includes 68 freshmen. Enrollment is up 17 students from the fall 1998 semester.

Fall Welcome Days are scheduled November 18-20 for prospective students.

The college's Missions Conference met October 14-15 at the Wendell campus.

CURRENTLY . . .

Free Will Baptist Family Ministries in **Greeneville, TN**, needs married couples to work as full-time house parents. The responsibilities include living with the children on campus and caring for children ages 0-18 who have been neglected, abused or abandoned. The job offers off-duty housing. Interested persons should call **Tom McMinn**, assistant executive director at 423-639-9449.

Pastor **Max Courtney** of **New Life FWB Church** in **Licking, MO**, presented a plaque for 25 years of service to **Howard Blankenship**. The church sets aside a day each year to honor faithful servants. This year they cited Brother Blankenship for his quarter-century on the church board.

Peace FWB Church in **Granite City, IL**, reports nine conversions. **David Malone** pastors.

Eight new members joined **Oak Valley FWB Church** in **Geff, IL**, according to Pastor **Jim Boggs**.

First FWB Church in **Ozark, MO**, organized with 101 members, says Pastor **Gary Mitchener**. The church began less than six years ago as a state mission project. The group averages 150 for worship in their 250-seat worship center. They also have a two-story educational wing and a gymnasium.

After the 68 boys and girls at VBS concluded their program, they had raised more than \$400 for **Chicago** home missionary **David Potete**. Pastor **James Mize** said that 98 people attended the closing program at **Belton FWB Church** in **Belton, MO**.

Forty-four people watched as Pastor **Waldo Young** burned the mortgage at **View of the Cross FWB Church** in **Prague, OK**. The 75-seat auditorium occupies three-fourths of an acre and adjoins a classroom building. Members are checking into purchasing adjoining land. Founding pastor **Wade Jernigan** preached the mortgage-burning service.

After remodeling their sanctuary to seat 100 people and adding three classrooms, members of **New Hope FWB Church** in **Kent, WA**, now want to

erect a new building. Pastor **Brent Nix** said the congregation needs \$100,000 in their building fund by September 2002 in order to proceed. They have \$25,000 on hand.

Home Missionary **Paul Collins** reports six conversions and 10 baptisms in the new work at **Harrisonburg, VA**.

Pastor **George Harvey, Jr.**, reports three conversions, four rededications and one baptism at **North Valley FWB Church** in **Phoenix, AZ**.

Landmark FWB Church near **Monroe, LA**, purchased 23 acres on which to build, according to missionary pastor **Rue Dell Smith**. The purchase price was \$87,000.

Fifty-eight people showed up for the first service at **Eagle Heights FWB Church** in **Sugar Land, TX**. Pastor **Randy Puckett** said that the service resulted in four rededications and seven other decisions.

Pastor **Carlie Lloyd** baptized his first dad among the **Hmong** people at **West Madison FWB Church** in **Madison, WI**. The cultural gap between the **Hmongs** and other residents has created some unusual demands on Pastor Lloyd. Seven other converts were also baptized.

Mt. Calvary FWB Church in **Perryman, MD**, reports 11 baptisms. **Dennis Keen** pastors.

The September 9-11 **Master's Men Regional Conference** at **Camp Hope, IL**, featured two speakers who preached twice each. Southeastern FWB College president **Billy Bevan** and Evangelist **Wade Jernigan** handled speaking duties.

When **Clear Springs FWB Church** in **Mustang, OK**, organized one year ago, they did so with 35 charter members. Attendance averages in the 70s, according to Pastor **Jim Harris**. The congregation joined the **First Oklahoma District Association**.

Ninety-seven-year-old **Rusha Gideon** plays the piano at **Hoyt FWB Church** in **Hoyt, OK**. She has been a member since 1933. During that time, she has served as clerk, treasurer, youth leader, choir director and Sunday School

teacher. **Bill Kirk** pastors.

Pastor **Joe Grizzle** reports 12 new members at **First FWB Church** in **Norman, OK**.

Contact welcomes **First Family Spotlight**, publication of **First FWB Church** in **Henderson, TX**. **John High** pastors. The church reports a new youth minister, new sign and extra parking area.

After "Dream Night" ended at **Fellowship FWB Church** in **Bryan, TX**, members had listed 21 spiritual goals and 15 building goals. They hope to totally support a missionary and to mother a new church. **Levan Hubbard** pastors.

Pastor **Danny Keen** reports 20 baptisms at **Landmark FWB Church** in **Anderson, SC**.

Twenty-five first-time visitors showed up one month at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Springfield, IL**. **Ken Doggett** pastors.

In four years at **Harvest FWB Church** in **Fort Wayne, IN**, Pastor **Jeff Sloan** has witnessed 60 conversions and baptized 50 people.

Pastor **Mark Thomas** reports four new families at **Highland Hills FWB Church** in **Greeley, CO**.

There's a new **OASIS** in Florida. That stands for Older Adults Still Active in Service. It's an idea that began in March at **Ryanwood Fellowship FWB Church** in **Vero Beach**. Nineteen people now gather for fellowship and other activities. Pastor **Randy Bryant** has harnessed retired pastor **Dan Merkh** to spearhead the **OASIS** movement.

The first-ever **State Leadership Conference** met at **First FWB Church** in **Russellville, AR**. Some 100 people heard **Tim Elmore** speak about making long-range plans. ■

Enter into
his gates
with thanksgiving,
and into
his courts with
praise: be
thankful unto
him, and bless
his name.

— Psalm 100:4

Know someone who deserves a journalism scholarship?

Each year the Evangelical Press Association awards several scholarships to deserving students. They must be 3rd or 4th year undergrads when they receive the grant and planning on a career in print journalism. Applications for the 2000-2001 academic year must be received by March 1, 2000. For an application write:

**The Evangelical Press
Association**
314 Dover Road
Charlottesville, VA 22901
fax: 804 973 2710
74463.272@compuserve.com



THE TOGETHER WAY

August 1999

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 348.31	\$ 0.00	\$ 348.31	\$ 4,161.05	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,161.05
Arizona	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,464.14	214.40	3,678.54
Arkansas	27,123.77	18,581.85	45,705.62	129,505.05	122,585.17	252,090.22
California	0.00	1,268.13	1,268.13	0.00	8,996.37	8,996.37
Colorado	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Delaware	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Florida	0.00	0.00	0.00	299.13	12,000.00	12,299.13
Georgia	31,525.30	1,465.43	32,990.73	195,387.50	14,138.47	209,525.97
Hawaii	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Idaho	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Illinois	7,503.06	1,732.67	9,235.73	65,153.92	16,064.87	81,218.79
Indiana	0.00	277.13	277.13	8,634.51	1,880.29	10,514.80
Iowa	90.00	582.84	672.84	360.00	2,324.65	2,684.65
Kansas	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	252.92	252.92
Kentucky	3,476.14	389.46	3,865.60	10,558.66	4,471.97	15,030.63
Louisiana	10.00	0.00	10.00	180.00	0.00	180.00
Maryland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8,872.73	8,872.73
Michigan	12,894.60	1,177.64	14,072.24	127,391.39	24,392.90	151,784.29
Mississippi	21,146.66	1,401.68	22,548.34	59,202.75	3,756.86	62,959.61
Missouri	43,233.88	10,872.14	54,106.02	319,034.96	96,838.37	415,873.33
Montana	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nebraska	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
New Jersey	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
New Mexico	89.56	44.78	134.34	4,644.50	292.26	4,936.76
North Carolina	475.98	3,164.82	3,640.80	9,015.03	17,518.09	26,533.12
Ohio	9,844.05	4,334.90	14,178.95	86,652.78	25,943.97	112,596.75
Oklahoma	37,277.98	9,727.26	47,005.24	406,364.21	81,126.43	487,490.64
South Carolina	38,500.19	0.00	38,500.19	336,430.98	0.00	336,430.98
South Dakota	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tennessee	16,864.30	2,222.69	19,086.99	95,076.22	14,951.05	110,027.27
Texas	5,410.35	307.78	5,718.13	69,894.45	2,509.28	72,403.73
Virginia	868.06	0.00	868.06	6,211.88	0.00	6,211.88
Virgin Islands	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
West Virginia	3,970.42	366.77	4,337.19	20,756.64	850.51	21,607.15
Wisconsin	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Canada	187.62	10.10	197.72	2,116.10	95.20	2,211.30
Northwest Assoc.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northeast Assoc.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.35	0.35
Totals	\$ 260,840.23	\$ 57,928.10	\$ 318,768.33	\$ 1,960,495.85	\$ 460,077.11	\$ 2,420,572.96

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 2,502.68	\$ 26,067.65	\$ 28,570.33	\$ 15,767.92	\$ 207,034.58	\$ 222,802.50
Foreign Missions	148,572.47	7,327.90	155,900.37	1,181,192.77	58,199.75	1,239,392.52
FVWBC	20,075.97	7,327.90	27,403.87	142,803.23	58,199.75	201,002.98
Home Missions	79,580.58	5,734.88	85,315.46	539,988.10	45,547.66	585,535.76
Retirement & Insurance	545.73	4,460.49	5,006.22	3,525.51	35,425.98	38,951.49
Master's Men	414.36	4,460.49	4,874.85	3,404.19	35,425.98	38,830.17
Com. for Theo. Integrity	28.23	159.29	187.52	360.63	1,265.22	1,625.85
FVW Foundation	368.73	1,911.63	2,280.36	3,047.57	15,182.53	18,230.10
Historical Commission	7.22	159.29	166.51	184.90	1,265.22	1,450.12
Music Commission	25.22	159.29	184.51	196.93	1,265.22	1,462.15
Media Commission	37.65	159.29	196.94	289.26	1,265.22	1,554.48
Hillsdale FVW College	1,382.41	0.00	1,382.41	12,615.83	0.00	12,615.83
Other	7,298.98	0.00	7,298.98	57,119.01	0.00	57,119.01
Totals	\$ 260,840.23	\$ 57,928.10	\$ 318,768.33	\$ 1,960,495.85	\$ 460,077.11	\$ 2,420,572.96



RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

Growing and Non-Growing Churches?

By Alton Loveless, General Director, Sunday School & Church Training Department

Growing churches plan to grow. They use mottoes, slogans and banners to keep it before the people. They call people to prayer and training. They have learned that not everyone will catch the spirit, so they lead those that rally behind the leadership of the church. Nothing breeds excitement more than, "We are growing." Somewhere before this statement, they had learned that:

*"Vision looks inward and becomes a duty.
Vision looks outward and becomes aspiration.
Vision looks upward and becomes faith."*

Organization

They see the barriers and problems to organizational units. They know that five percent of their organization is made up of self-starters with confidence to do the job. These are the VIPs. All they need is the affirmation of the leader. Time required by the leader to keep them going is only about five percent as well.

Every student of an organizational structure knows that about 15% of its people are trainable. VTPs are the Very Trainable People. These are the available ones willing to learn and to be used. They take up about 20% of the leader's time. (About 95% of all people who become active in the organization were introduced to it by these two groups.)

The third group in an organization are the VNP's. The Very Nice People. They make up 75% of a church or organization. They are nice, friendly and the type that give you extras, cause you no problems, but do not come back on Sunday or Wednesday nights. You cannot count on them for leadership or dedication to roles or tasks in the organization. The good thing is they only take about 25% of the leader's time.

However, there is a group called the VDPs that represent five percent of the church or organization, but demand 50% of the leader's time. These are the Very Demanding People. They never visit, most don't support the church or program of the church, but are always draining the leader's time and keeping the organization from fulfilling its reason for existence. Most leaders of growing churches or organizations have learned, and they had to finally conclude, that for them to grow meant going with

those who shared the vision and wanted to help, rather than hurt the leader's goal.

Successful pastors of growing churches have elected officers with a Great Commission conscience. Growing churches expect their members to be Great Commission thinkers.

Leadership

No pastor has ever built beyond his desire or leadership. While many large churches have pastors who are not excellent pulpit men, they are filled with men of vision and who are able to get the ear and heart of their followers. The pastor has shown them the way and they trust him and his leadership to get them to the goal or dream.

This type leader knows he cannot do it all himself, so builds the leaders under him who have common goals. He shares his dream and teaches the mandate of Jesus Christ. No church grows until the membership believes that every one in their community is lost until they have reached them for Christ and their church.

Growing churches have pastors who look beyond the preaching service. He places the training and teaching program of his church high on his list of priorities. He seeks those who share his convictions and places them in roles that compliment the growth program. Growing churches know the POLE method: Plan. Organize. Lead. Evaluate.

Superintendent

The pastor-leader who moves his church beyond its earlier status nearly always has a Sunday School superintendent who shares his conviction for growth. These two are convinced that the preaching and teaching program of the church are necessary for future enlargement. The Sunday School and educational agency is the Bible in "work clothes."

Most churches already have in place the mechanism for the easiest and best way for church growth. It is the Sunday School which includes every age group, is the teaching arm of the church, and could be organized to reach more people quicker than any program ever invented. ■

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Treasurer's Tips on Paying for College

By Tom Sass, FWBBC Treasurer

As a Free Will Baptist Bible College alumnus, as a father whose three children have attended FWBBC, and as one whose career at the Bible College spans 27 years, Tom Sass is qualified to advise people who are looking for help putting children through college. Here are Six Tips you would do well to consider.

The facts: An average dorm student's semester bill for 1999-2000 is \$4,875 (plus fees and books). Two semesters per college year = \$9,750. By following these six tips, your child can attend Free Will Baptist Bible College with little or no debt.

Tip #1: Check out the Hope Tax Credit

You can receive the Hope Tax Credit *the first two years* your child is at FWBBC. This is a benefit of up to \$1,500 per person. The Lifetime Tax Credit can provide up to \$1,000 per year beyond the second year your child is in school.

Tip #2: Consider part-time work

Your child works four hours each weekday afternoon while in Nashville (\$7 hr. x 20 hrs. wk.) for nine months. This is the average hourly wage in Nashville and unemployment is under 2%. *Note:* It's a proven fact most college students do better in their studies if they work! It helps them make better use of their free time.

Tip #3: Include your savings at home

You pay the difference saved out of your pocket because your son/daughter is no longer eating/using utilities at home (\$150 a month x 9 months)

Tip #4: Plan on summer work

Your son/daughter works during the summer at home (\$5.15 hr. x 40 hrs. for 12 wks.) *Note:* You pay for their food/utilities.

Tip #5: Consider a lighter full-time load

Have your child begin college by taking 12 semester hours, instead of 15. By doing so, he/she will still be classified as a full-time student.

Tip #6: Avoid the "Car Pit"

Possibly the most important tip of all: Help your child avoid the "car pit." One of the biggest reasons for not attending college or

having to borrow heavily are excessive monthly auto and insurance payments. If a car is absolutely necessary, get a reasonably-priced one. This could save up to \$25,000 over a college career!

The above is without any consideration for any financial aid which may be available for qualifying families:

1. Pell Grant = \$3,125 maximum per year
2. SEOG Grant = \$1,000 maximum per year
3. Institutional Scholarships from \$100 to \$2,000 per year
4. Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TN students) = \$2,394 maximum per year

Please note: All of the above aid is in the form of grant funds—no loans to repay. Be sure to apply for aid at our Student Financial Aid Office right away. (The early bird definitely gets the maximum aid, so don't wait.)

Call 1-800-76-FWBBC today to talk with a college representative regarding admission and financial aid. We'll be glad to help your child prepare for a fulfilling future.■

Write for a free copy of:

Treasurer's Tips



3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205
Or call 615-383-1340



FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

What Will Happen to Your Estate?

By William Evans, General Director

It is surprising how many Christians are so taken up in how to transfer their assets that they forget the most important question: "Who should be benefitted and to what degree?" Here are some simple steps to help answer these questions:

Step #1

Which individuals are financially dependent on me? Spouse, parents, minor children or children in school, church and possibly other ministries. List these along with some reasonable figures of monthly dependency. This will meet the requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 5:8.

Step #2

Which individuals would you want to benefit because of love? Some who might appear on the dependent list may also be included here. Adult children, even though financially independent, special friends or care givers, others from your personal experience.

Step #3

Inventory your property. No, I don't mean making a list of all your shoes, socks and such. But it is helpful to make a general list of all your assets and how they are held. It will be helpful to include its cost and an estimate of its present fair market value. List all your debts in a similar fashion.

The result should be a simple dollar figure of assets minus liabilities equals net worth (Assets - Debts = Net Worth). Forget that it is made up of clothes and cars and houses or land, consider it cash.

Step #4

Spend some time in prayer. Rejoice and praise God for what He has provided if you are on the plus side. If your debts are greater than your assets, now would be a good time to request His help in getting things under control. You may need to seriously consider getting out from under some of your debt. Others will need to reconsider spending habits and learning to spend less.

The important thing to remember is that nothing you have, own or owe for will go into the next life with you. Therefore, pray for guidance to know His will for you and these assets.

Step #5

Now, give it away. Look at your lists from 1, 2, and 3, and distribute your stack of money as you would want it done if you had died last night.

If you are sensitive to the Holy Spirit and honest with your dependents and loved ones, your distribution plan will be the best it can be. Now, to disperse the assets with the least amount of cost and delays, you must consider the tools, tax consequences and counselors you will use to achieve your goals.

Regardless of how well you get things arranged today, your plan must be reviewed in the future. Most attorneys suggest a review of estate plans at least every five years and more often when events like births or deaths, marriages or even success occur to those on your list. ■



HOME MISSIONS

Benjamin Randall Day

November 21, 1999

By David Crowe, Director of Missionary Assistance

I thought that the following information, taken from *The Centennial Record of Freewill Baptists 1780-1880*, might be appropriate for Benjamin Randall Sunday and Offering. It deals with the first report of the Home Missions Society to the New Hampshire Yearly Meeting in 1836.

Meanwhile, on June 10 and 11, the second annual meeting of the Society had been held at Sandwich, in connection with the New Hampshire Yearly Meeting, as was the custom at that time. The meeting was peculiar. It was the young Society's testing time, and its friends were filled with anxiety. The circumstances were as follows: Some of the more zealous members of the Society desired to have public anniversary exercises, and they had proposed to appoint their meeting Saturday, at 1 o'clock P.M.

"But now," says the Secretary in his record of the meeting, "it was thought by some of our brethren present that it would be unsafe to adjourn the Mission meeting to that hour, which is generally or always appropriated to the services common to the Yearly Meeting. It was thought that by such a measure we should hazard the displeasure of the Yearly Meeting and endanger the interests of Zion. Saturday afternoon seemed to be regarded as sacred to the services of preaching, exhortation, &c., and therefore to appropriate that time to any kind of business meeting would be an unwarrantable innovation upon established usage, if not a fatal desecration of that day and occasion."

But it was finally decided to appoint the meeting on Saturday, and risk the consequences. "During Friday afternoon and Saturday morning," says the Secretary, "many fearful forebodings were expressed by some of our brethren and by some of the members of the Society, that the proposed measure would be attended with calamitous consequences."

Finally the hour approached, and amid "whisperings that there was a strong opposition against the reading of the Report," and amid "fear and trembling from apprehended dangers" the Secretary arose to

read. "The labor and effect," he tells us, "of bringing forth before that meeting the sentiments with which the Report opened, seemed to the reader like the breaking up of thick ice—as if you must swim through a chilling, wintry flood, up stream, and break away the ice before you."

But there was no outbreak. The Report melted those icy hearts as if it had been a living flame. At its conclusion volunteer addresses were made, and people "began to feel for their wallets." A Mr. David Webster threw a ringing half-eagle on to the table, remarking it was "all he had, and he must trust to the Lord to help him home;" another brought forward a handkerchief, which he had just paid a dollar for—all he had to give; old Gen. Hoitt a hearty Methodist, gave \$20; a hat was passed around, in which \$94.86 was collected, and this sum a Bro. Williams Thayer at once made up to \$100. Thenceforth the Society had an assured place in the confidence of the people.

From such modest beginnings, the Free Will Baptist Home Missionary Society grew and God blessed. In the history of the Home Missions Department of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, God has blessed and the department has grown. In the beginning, Free Will Baptist people responded to the mandate of missions in a sacrificial way. We pray and trust that you and your church will respond in like manner this November 21, to our Benjamin Randall offering. This is Home Missions' Day in The Together Way Plan for all of our departments. ■



Garnett Reid

A New Man for the New Millennium

I feel like a new man"—my friend was describing his revitalized, self-confident attitude stemming from recent weight-loss victories in the battle of the bulge.

I was reminded, though, that the phrase "new man" is a biblical one used by Paul twice in Ephesians (though not in the same sense intended by my previously portly pal!). How appropriate that this profoundly beautiful book provides the occasion for Paul to discuss the "new man."

Ephesians celebrates God's glory "in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages" (3:21). The first three chapters focus on the Christian's *position* "in heavenly places." Chapters 4-6 then examine the effects of this saving faith in the *practice* of a believer.

One of Paul's comments regarding the new man occurs in each half of the letter—chapters 2 and 4. In 4:24, right in the heart of the "behavior" half of Ephesians, Paul exhorts those in Christ to "put on the new man" through a transformed lifestyle reflecting "righteousness and true holiness." I'll say more about this individual challenge next month.

For now, though, note Paul's statement in 2:15 regarding the "new man" directed toward the Gentiles. Here his focus is not so much on the individual who is made new in Christ but on the church corporately. In this context, *the church itself* is the "new man" created, or more accurately, re-created through Jesus.

Paul's explanation of how this change occurred takes these Gentile Christians from "time past" (v. 11) to "now" (vv. 13, 19). His perspective here is in three dimensions, so to speak: Jew and Gentile, who were *apart* (vv. 11-12), are brought *together* or "near" (vv. 19-22) by Christ who comes *between* them (vv. 13-18).

Verses 11 and 12 portray unsaved

non-Jews as *apart* from the promises of salvation God had extended through the Abrahamic covenant. They were "uncircumcised," "without Christ," "aliens" and "strangers" without hope and "without God."

Yet Christ has taken His place *between* Jew and Gentile. Through His blood shed on the cross, He "is our peace," making Jew and Gentile "one" (vv. 13-18). Notice Paul's careful choice of words. The "middle wall," probably alluding to the partition dividing the Court of the Gentiles from the Temple proper in Jerusalem, is now "broken down" (v. 14). Indeed, Christ's broken body (v. 15) joins rather than separates Jew and non-Jew.

Paul actually describes two deaths here. By allowing Himself to be killed, Jesus "kills" the "enmity" that separates people from God and from each other (vv. 15-16). The result is "one new man," a "holy temple fitly framed *together*" where the Spirit of God lives (vv. 19-22). Jesus is the cornerstone. The apostles and prophets provide the foundation. God's people make up the building, and the Lord Himself is at home here.

From foreigners without Christ to "fellowcitizens" in Christ, Gentiles join believing Israelites as God's new man, the church.

In a day of global factions, when many political, ethnic, and religious groups splinter and polarize over turf wars and in-fighting, the church must not lose sight of its corporate, transnational, multi-ethnic identity. Much good has come out of the modern emphasis on small group ministry in the church, so I'm not being critical of the concept itself.

However, when Christians *over-emphasize* our differences along demographic, social and cultural lines, we run the risk of losing our sense of the *whole* church with all of its unity-in-di-

versity. Remember that the "new man" includes all believers, whether they fellowship with the mothers of pre-schoolers, the businessman's prayer breakfast, the single-again class, or whatever other groups we may envision within the scope of local church ministry.

Ironically, as American Christianity divides further into these sub-groups, our brothers and sisters around the world often have a greater awareness of the varied makeup of the church as a whole than we do. Looking around the room at a recent Sunday night fellowship event at our church, I caught a glimpse of this "new man" the Lord is bringing together. I reflected on the church treasurer and on the Wednesday night pianist whose sons are planting churches in Japan and in Spain.

Others were there: our pastor and another Sunday School teacher recently returned from ministry in Russia; a young Chinese man who had been baptized that night; a college student reporting on summer missions work in France; a deacon whose son is a church worker in Brazil; a Korean wife about to join her husband in Hong Kong; the brother of a missionary to France; not to mention the rest of us—blended believers all, making up God's home, His "new man." ■

ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PREACHERS

"D" Day

Don't avoid things in life you just don't want to consider. You'd rather put them on the back burner. "I'm young. Nothing is going to happen to me." Tell that to some women who become widows at a young age.

The honest, thinking, practical young preacher will want to consider the following. It is best to repair the roof when the sun is shining. Good health and exuberant life today may change tomorrow. It is not wise to put off until tomorrow what should be done today.

Death

"More preachers die of heartache than a heart attack," someone said. However, young preachers do die! Young preachers often live in parsonages. What would happen to your wife if she called 911 tonight and paramedics pronounced you dead on the floor of that house that is not yours?

She would be required to move out and make room for the new pastor's family. What would your bereaved mate do? Life insurance could meet this financial need. Term life insurance can be purchased inexpensively. How much? Begin with \$100,000, maybe two or three times that much while the children are being educated.

Disability

Lose your voice and you cannot preach. Suffer a stroke or a heart attack and be laid up for weeks, perhaps the rest of your life. Disability benefits from the government usually take months to receive. Why don't you consider a short-term disability policy? Or maybe a long-term policy? The church treasurer is allowed to write the check from your salary provision.

Dividends

Most young preachers live from week to week, stretching the salary just as far as possible. But most preachers just beginning their ministries can set aside a few dollars each week for the future, if they exercise financial discipline. Begin early; profit later.

Begin a savings account. Build it up to a few hundred dollars. Invest in stocks or mutual funds. Sign the reinvestment form and allow the dividends to grow.

A monthly contribution to the denomination's retirement plan would be a wise investment. Thirty years of consistent investing will produce a much-needed crop when you come to the end of the ministerial road. In the event of your death, your spouse and children will have some financial security.

Date

Young preacher, your most prized possession should be your mate. Date your mate while you are rearing the children. Don't let the ones God has loaned you stand in the way of enjoying the presence of your wife. Before you know it, the youngsters will be grown. Enjoy your wife's company now.

Take her out to eat once a week. Schedule a few days of rest and relaxation once a year without the children. Write her love notes. Treat her like a queen. Remember, we are married for "better or worse." Sometimes the worse invades even a young preacher's home. Be prepared for the rainy days by enjoying the sunshine today.

Dedicate

If the Lord blesses a young



Dennis Wiggs

preacher and his mate with children, those youngsters should be dedicated to the Lord in the crib. How long will the Lord allow you to have those precious ones? Many young preachers and their wives have buried a child. It behooves the man of God to rear those boys and girls in the ways of the Lord.

Spend time with them. Tell them you love them. Do it several times a day. Give that child your undivided attention when he or she wants to vent feelings. That television ball game can wait. Exercise stewardship of your children as if the Lord may remove that child or children from your home any day.

Deed

The young preacher could possibly benefit by locking in a safe place two deeds: the deed to a home and the deed to a cemetery lot. Purchasing a home may be one of the best investments a preacher may make.

But the smallest piece of land you will ever buy may come in handy if the Lord chooses to remove you from your family's presence. It is never too early to contemplate this purchase. Even if your body is destined for a family plot near the home place, it may be wise to get a deed and save your wife this trouble, if you die unexpectedly.

Gruesome!

No, this will not be your favorite article. However, let's face reality. If you don't make these plans and decisions now, it will be too late when death or disability strike. I challenge you to give careful consideration to these words. Your spouse may thank me in a few years. ■

YOUTH UPDATE

COMING 2000

I Press toward the Goal...

...the next generation!

2000 National Youth Worker Retreats

February 11 - 13, 2000

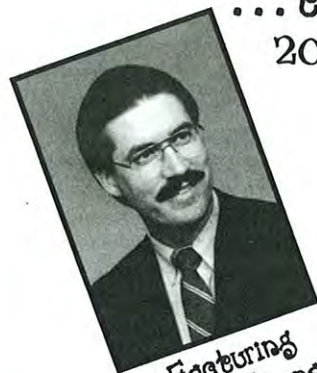
Branson, Missouri

Stonecroft Conference Center

February 18 - 20, 2000

Prestonsburg, Kentucky

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Featuring
Dean Stone

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Join other youth workers for fellowship and exciting workshops with special speaker Dean Stone, Director of the International Network of Children's Ministry.



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Student Leadership Conference

July 3 - July 19, 2000

If you're a high school freshman, sophomore, junior or senior, and are interested in some serious Christian leadership training, then plan on spending SUMMER 2000 here. You'll find life changing events designed to help you reach the goals the Lord has set for you!

For more information about the National Youth Workers Retreats or Truth & Peace, please call 1-800-877-7030 or write to: Youth Ministries Division, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, TN 37217.

1 & 2 Timothy/Titus In The NIV Application Commentary

By Walter L. Liefeld

(Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999, 378 pp., hardback, \$27.99).



Thomas Marberry

Dr. Walter Liefeld, with a long and distinguished history as a student of the New Testament, is distinguished professor emeritus of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is the author of leading commentaries on several New Testament books including Luke, Acts and Ephesians.

The NIV Application Commentary series reflects a rather new and different approach to writing commentaries. Most commentaries go in one of two directions. They are either long on historical background and short on modern application, or they are short on historical background and long on modern application.

This commentary seeks to keep these two important aspects of biblical study in the proper balance. It outlines clearly the original meaning and context of each passage. It also suggests how we can use that passage and apply it to different situations today.

For example, I Timothy 4:1-5 warns the believers about the imminent danger of false teachings within the church. Two specific false teachings are listed in the passage—forbidding people to marry and teaching people to abstain from certain foods. The author first explains the original meaning and significance of the passage. Then he applies the teaching of the

passage to our situation today.

According to Liefeld, "The important truth to apply today from the present passage is that we should beware of people who are deceitful, whose teachings are contrary to scripture (possibly originating in demonic sources), and whose practices are a result of their evil origin. The specific error that must be addressed is the assumption that God's creation in part or in the whole is not good."

This commentary includes excellent summaries of current literature in the field. Considerable attention has been devoted to the pastoral epistles in recent years, and the author demonstrates a good understanding of that literature. He devotes considerable attention to the theology and ethics of these books.

He notes, for example, that "One of the most obvious theological distinctives in the pastoral letters is their repeated designation of God as Savior." He also points out that "The saving work of Christ is thus not separated from or subordinated to the saving work of God, but is proclaimed in the context of the love of God for the entire world . . ."

Liefeld accepts a quite traditional approach to the date and authorship of these letters. In contrast to many modern scholars, he accepts the tradition of Pauline authorship of all

three. He considers the order of writing to be I Timothy first, then Titus, and finally II Timothy.

He correctly notes that these letters are not strictly private correspondence between Paul and two of his closest associates. They were semi-public letters designed to be read in the churches. Part of their purpose is to clarify the authority and position of Timothy and Titus as leaders within the Christian community.

Throughout the commentary, Liefeld emphasizes that the teachings of the Christian faith must be put into practice in the lives of Christian people. They not only must be believed, they must be lived.

On the final page of his commentary the author says, "Every instruction about doctrine, every warning about heresy, and every encouragement to holiness and good works is effective only as it is realized in the lives of real people."

This is a mature commentary on these three important epistles. It presents the conclusions of years of study and reflection on the books of the New Testament. It contains no revolutionary conclusions, but it places these books in their first-century context and helps us understand them and apply them to the church today. It is a book worth having in your library. ■

Benjamin Randall Day Offering
November 21

The Perfect Home Missionary



Jack Williams

The prototype home missionary is 35 years old and was born and raised in Arkansas. He spent 10 years in North Carolina, pastored three churches in Missouri, moderated the Ohio State Association twice and lives in Birmingham, Alabama. He and his wife of 27 years have four children, two of whom plan to enter the ministry.

After graduating from Free Will Baptist Bible College with a 4.0 grade point average, he was elected to the Board of Trustees at Hillsdale FWB College. He preaches the annual Bible Conference at California Christian College and taught homiletics five years at Southeastern FWB College.

He supports The Together Way Plan, practices cooperative giving and designates funds to each national agency. He wears \$500 tailored suits which he buys at the Salvation Army Thrift Store for \$30 each.

The politically correct home missionary speaks fluent Spanish, understands Russian and Farsi, and hasn't made a grammatical error since Watergate. He has read the holy books of all the world's great religions. He preaches 17-minute sermons from memory, quotes the original Greek and Hebrew texts, and does his public Bible reading from the 1611 edition of the King James Version.

He raised his support in one week during a missions conference in Florida, the same conference where an anonymous benefactor agreed to purchase 27 acres alongside the interstate and underwrite the cost to build a 300-seat sanctuary.

The grass-roots home missionary reads every publication printed in the denomination. He writes articles for *Contact* and *Aim*, and was the first man featured on the front cover of *Co-Laborer* magazine.

He corrals 87 people for his first service. He baptizes three new converts each Sunday. He conducts a daily radio program and is interviewed by the local television station whenever a question about religion arises. The newspaper sends its ace reporter to church on Sunday morning to capture quotes for the editorial page. He expects to be self-supporting within 12 months.

He's a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association and serves as chaplain for the police department. He's a Vietnam veteran who survived Omaha Beach and flew stealth bombers during the Gulf War, after he carried the flag up Mt. Suribachi and waded ashore with MacArthur in the Philippines.

The new breed home missionary speaks in a conversational tone at all times, and yet can be heard 100 yards down the road without a public address system. He's a striking combination of John the Baptist daring a generation of vipers to repent and Barnabas binding up the fragile ego of John Mark.

He drives a new Chevy truck with 120,000 miles on it. He brakes at stop signs, runs a kennel for homeless dogs, and halted downtown traffic yesterday while two cats decided which side of Elm Street they preferred.

The well-informed home missionary buys Sunday School literature from Randall House Publications and sings from *The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book: Rejoice*. He studies from *The Randall House Bible Commentary* and hopes the promised commentary on Revelation will unravel the millennial maze in words that he can pronounce.

He rises at 5:00 a.m. daily to pray, studies three hours, then visits the sick and elderly from noon till 4:00 p.m. He goes soul-winning from 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., stopping briefly at McDonald's for a quick dinner. He lunches with his wife each Wednesday in order

to spend quality time with her and catch up on her numerous activities.

The can-do home missionary repairs what breaks with a coat hanger and a set of Sears wrenches. He volunteers to mow the church yard and knows where to find the paper towels when a piece of chocolate cake collides with a 5-year-old in a hurry.

He understands enough about electrical engineering to avoid electrocution while installing a light fixture in the men's room. He's equally at ease discussing theology or replacing a leaky faucet. The manager of the hardware store wants him to leave the ministry and get a real job . . . as his resident handyman.

The perfect home missionary?

Sorry, he probably doesn't exist. But if he did . . . He could quote the Bible like Rue Dell Smith and confront Mormonism in Utah with Bill Phillips. His personality package would include the small-town warmth of George Harvey, Jr., the cross-cultural experience of Norman Richards and the tenacity of Joel Nason.

The perfect home missionary would knock doors with Robert Trimble in Battle Creek and follow the entrepreneurial vision of Russell Wright. He would be as bold as Carlie Lloyd and as cosmopolitan as Dwain Crosby. He would be tall like Ken Doggett and confident like Dennis Haygood. He would possess the humility of David Potete, the smile of Jose Rodriguez, the pizzazz of Bob Lewis, the diplomacy of Paul Park and the cold weather aptitude of Jeff Crabtree.

Don't you recognize him yet? You saw his picture on the Home Missions map. He's that ordinary guy from Everytown, USA, whom God sent to build a Free Will Baptist church in your state. Today, we stand and applaud as he steps to the head of the line. ■

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