

GEM

**THE
FREE WILL BAPTIST**

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APRIL 1995

Volume 65, Number 4

"Thus it is written,

. . . it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations . . . "

Luke 24:46,47

PROGRAM

Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists

Theme: "Bearing the Burden"
Scripture: Galatians 6:2

MONDAY, JUNE 5, 1995

10:30 a.m. Executive Committee MeetingDays Inn Motel
 1:00 p.m. General Board Meeting.....Days Inn Motel
 7:30 p.m. **EVENING WORSHIP**Kirkville Jr. High School
 Presiding.....Rev. Gary Fry, Moderator
 Congregational Singing
 Prayer
 Welcome.....Rev. Archie Cooper
 Response.....Rev. George Naumann
 Convening the State Association
Rev. Bob Warner, Assist. Clerk
 Congregational Singing
 Special Music
 Worship in Giving
 Special Music
 Message.....Rev. Rick Dablemont
"Bearing the Burden of Equipping the Saints"
 Invitation
 Benediction

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 1995

9:00 a.m. General Board Meeting.....Days Inn Motel

MISSOURI STATE WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST CONVENTION

Theme: "Great And Mighty Things Through Prayer"
Jeremiah 33:3

9:00 a.m. Registration
 9:30 a.m. Congregational Singing
 Prayer
 Welcome.....Debbie Beck
 Response.....Elaine Skiles
 Special Music
 Morning DevotionKen Bailey
(missionary to Japan)
 Seating of Delegates
 Appointment of Committees
 Greetings From Missionaries and Other National Ministries
 Recess
 11:00 a.m. Congregational Singing
 Prayer
 Congregational Singing
 Offertory
 Special MusicNortheast Association
 Message.....Ken Bailey
(missionary to Japan)
 Benediction
 1:30 p.m. Congregational Singing
 SkitNortheast Association
 Business Session
 Special Music
 Installation of Officers
 Benediction

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 6, 1995

Days Inn Motel

2:00 p.m. Church Growth SeminarDr. Elmer Towns

TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 6, 1995

7:30 a.m. **EVENING WORSHIP**Kirkville Jr. High School
 Presiding.....Rev. Jerry Norris
 Congregational Singing
 Prayer
 Men's ChoraleCurt Gwartney, Director
 Congregational Singing
 Special Music
 Worship in Giving
 Special Music
 MessageDr. Elmer Towns
"Bearing the Burden of Evangelism"
 Invitation
 Benediction

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 7, 1995

Kirkville Junior High School

9:00 a.m. Presiding.....Rev. Gary Fry, Moderator
 Congregational Singing
 Credentials Committee Report
 Seating of Delegates
 Moderator's MessageRev. Gary Fry, Moderator
 General Board Report
 Executive Secretary Report
 Lebanon Bible and Bookstore Report
 Christian Education Board Report and Election of
 Board Member
 11:00 a.m. **MORNING WORSHIP**
 Presiding.....Rev. Lynn Beck
 Congregational Singing
 Prayer
 Special Music
 Congregational Singing
 Special Music
 MessageRev. R.E. Helsley
"Bearing the Burden of Edifying"
 Invitation
 Benediction

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 7, 1995

1:30 p.m. Presiding.....Rev. Gary Fry, Moderator
 Congregational Singing
 Devotional Message.....Rev. Ken Rieter
 State Home Missions Board Report and Election of
 Board Member
 Senior Adult Ministries Report and Election of Board
 Member
 Youth Camp Board Report and Election of Board Member

All items for publication must be in the hands of the editor *no later than the 10th of the month* preceding the issue month.
 Business Office: 202 West Commercial, Lebanon, Missouri 65536. Nathan Ruble, Editor. Address all correspondence relating to the *GEM*, including subscription and mailing information, to the above address. The sermons and articles published in the *GEM* represent the personal views of the authors and not necessarily the views and policies of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists or of the editor. Subscription rates: Single subscription, \$4.50 per year, cash in advance. Church Plan, \$4.00 per year, consisting of five subscriptions or more. The Church Plan will continue until it is canceled by the church. This magazine is published monthly.

Youth Ministries Report and Election of Board Member
Benediction

*** Moderator will designate the time for National and State Reports.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 7, 1995

7:30 p.m. **EVENING WORSHIP**..... Kirksville Jr. High School
Presiding.....Rev. Cody Freeman
Congregational Singing
Prayer
Men's Chorale.....Rev. Curt Gwartney, Director
Congregational Singing
Special Music
Worship in Giving
Special Music
Message.....Rev. Jerry Pilgrim
"Bearing the Burden of Missions"
Invitation
Benediction

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 8, 1995

Kirksville Jr. High School

9:00 a.m. Morning Session.....Rev. Gary Fry, Moderator

Congregational Singing
Devotional Message.....Rev. Vernon Long
Reports Continued
Stewardship Commission
Historical Commission Report and Election of Commission
Member
Resolutions Committee
Obituary Committee
Placement Committee
Nominating Committee
State Association Adjourns
Benediction

The Standing Boards of the State Association will meet immediately following the Benediction. The General Board will meet immediately following the Standing Boards' meeting.

** Those providing special music will be shown on the Program for the State Convention.*

Motel Information For Missouri State Convention, June 5 - 8

You will need to make your reservations as early as possible for the state convention.



America's Waking Up To Us

Hwy. 63 South * P.O. Box M
Kirksville, Missouri 63501

816-665-8244

1 - 4 persons per room — \$45.00 + tax

Complimentary Breakfast Buffet served 6:30 - 9:30, Monday - Friday (Scrambled Eggs, Hashbrowns, Biscuits & Gravy, Danish, French Toast or Pancakes, Fresh Fruit, Cereal, Fruit Juice).
Gratuities and Coffee not included.

Please mention you are with the Free Will Baptist Convention when you make your reservations. Reservations must be made as early as possible.



Comfort Inn of Kirkville

2209 N. Baltimore
Kirkville, MO 63501

(816) 655-2205

One Bed - 1 - 2 people \$35.95 + tax
Two Beds - 2 people 38.95 + tax
Triple or Quad - 38.95 + tax
Complimentary Continental Breakfast

Please mention you are with the Free Will Baptist Convention when you make your reservations. Reservations must be made as early as possible.



SUPER 8 MOTEL - KIRKSVILLE

1101 Country Club Drive * Kirkville, MO 63501
PHONE AND FAX: 816-665-8826

Single - \$33.05 + tax
Double - 40.70 + tax
Triple or Quad - 40.70 + tax

Please mention you are with the Free Will Baptist Convention when you make your reservations. Reservations must be made as early as possible.

DRIVE THRU

FULL HOOKUPS

EAGLE LODGE CAMPGROUND

Bob and Neva Pickens, Owners
(816) 332-7044

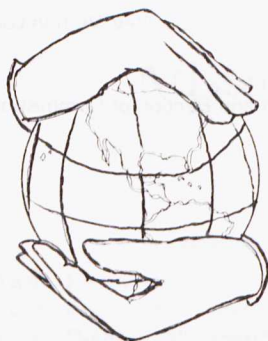
U.S. HIGHWAY 63

6 MILES S. OF KIRKSVILLE, MO 5 MILES N. OF LA PLATA, MO

\$12.00 per night hookup
\$65.00 per week

TIDBITS

from Waynelle Scott



Account Number
Matthew 28:18-20

Statement Due Date
June 6, 1995

Reach Out And Touch Your World

Summary of Bill

Amount of Long Distance	(Foreign Missions)	\$20.00
Amount of State Calls	(National Home Missions)	10.00
Amount of Local Calls	(State Home Missions)	10.00
Payment Due by June 6, 1995		\$40.00

Please pay in person
at
Missouri State Association - Kirksville
or send to your
District Treasurer by May 20, 1995

Attention All Local WNAC's . . . the above telephone bill is from the "Heavenly AT&T" (A Task Together of Reaching Our World). This will be our special gift for missions. Please bring your "bill" with your total payment to the State Meeting on June 6 or send it through your District so they can get the total amount to our State Treasurer by June 1, 1995.

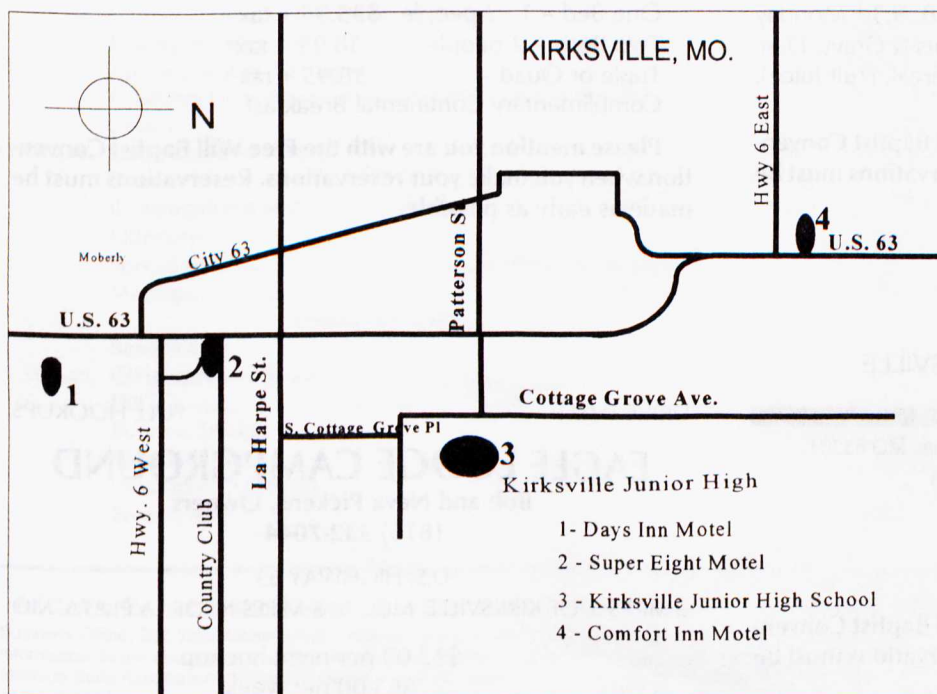
In Him Who Never Fails,
Rose Mertz, President

When was the last time you had fun with your family? Our family loves to have what we call "family night" once a week. With the busy schedules we all keep (especially now that the children are getting older), we have to adjust the evening to fit the various activities of the week. We generally manage to find some way to make time for family fun. To fail to do so would be to rob us all of an important part of our lives.

Sometimes we spend a quiet evening at home, playing games or watching a wholesome movie on the VCR (yes, there are some movies the Christian family can enjoy - you just have to be selective). Other times we plan for an evening out, going to a ball game, bowling, or just going shopping at the local discount store. Every great once in a while we drive over to Sedalia (about 30 minutes away) for dinner as a special treat. Whether the plan for the evening is simple or complex, it is designed with one purpose in mind - being together having family fun.

When our children were younger, we took turns deciding the family activity for the week. Starting with the youngest and making our way through the family until we got to Dad, we would usually go to the park at least two weeks in a row (depending on how many kids we had at the time), on to the shopping mall the next week, and then to a ball game the next. We don't take turns so much anymore, but we do try to find activities we can all agree on.

It is crucial to our family relationships that we take this for each other. It may not seem like much, but we are making memories, we are building values, we are strengthening bonds when we have fun with our families. Our children need to hear us laugh; they need to know that we enjoy spending time with them. So go on, have fun with your family this week, and every week! It's just one more way to say, "I love you."



Sunday School Averages September 1994 - February 1995

CHURCHES	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB
Bethel - Festus	68	70	71	63	77	80
Calvary Chapel	88	90		77	86	104
Calvary Fellowship	254	303	228	239		
Cape Girardeau	76	109	83	98	76	78
Columbia	19	17	13	13		14
Cuba	110	107	111	117	102	109
DeSoto	180	177	184	183	164	179
Farmington	348	361	337	348	315	311
Fredericktown	37	42	42	40	34	38
Hannon	76	80	82	90	85	78
Harmony	60	56	54			
Hartville		85	89	102	94	96
Hazel Creek	72	70	74	67	74	72
Hopewell	28	29	33	35	28	29
Houston	54	43	45	46	39	50
Jones Creek	13	13	13	11	10	7
Kirksville	32					
Lebanon First	115	115	124	134	117	121
Mill Creek	50	49	50	62	48	50
Myrtle	37	31	28	37	33	48
Oskaloosa					17	17
Ozark	58	64	77	79		
Park Hills First	136	136	125	131	120	
Parkview	58	51	49			
Richwoods	33	60	45			
Rock Chapel	70	69	72	76	67	66
Springfield First	112	107	102		105	103
Thayer	137	139	126	144		139
United, West Plains	212	211	219	236	203	
Unity	36	42	47	41		
Verdella	65	70	69	80	67	65
Willow Springs	65	71	67		57	63

The above is only a partial listing - there are 177 Free Will Baptist churches in Missouri. Each church is encouraged to send in the Sunday School average each month.

Third Church Reunion

A reunion of the old Third Church, which was located at 1330 Geyer Avenue, in St. Louis, Missouri, will be held June 24, 1995, at the Ferd Lang City Park in Arnold, Missouri. Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy the reunion which will begin at 11:00 a.m. For more information, contact Wanda Huett, 3521 Dry Fork Road, Imperial, Missouri 63052, (314) 948-3831. If you are unable to attend, a response by letter will be appreciated.

Christian Academy Needs Principal

Bethel Christian Academy is in its second decade of operation with a K-12 enrollment of 70 students. We are currently in need of an administrator. Some teaching experience is required, but previous administrative time is not a necessity. The position would begin in August of 1995. All resumes should be sent to Bethel Christian Academy, 1417 Herbert Avenue, Box 535, South Roxana, Illinois 62087 to the attention of Mike McClintock.

South Central Association Supports "Together Way"



Dr. Melvin Worthington, Rev. David Brawley and Rev. Don Strauser

Members from the Bourbon, Cuba, DeSoto, Jones Creek, Oak Hill, Potosi, Rolla, and Waynesville churches gathered at the Cuba Free Will Baptist Church, Saturday, February 18, for the annual South Central Association Leadership Conference. The theme of the conference, "Christ's Church: Every Member Submitted In Service" was accentuated in two messages brought by Dr. Melvin Worthington, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Brother Worthington also conducted a brief question and answer time in the morning session.

The congregation enjoyed the inspirational and instructional worship services which included great congregational and special singing. Following the morning session, the ladies of the Cuba church served a delicious lunch.

The churches of the association voted in 1994 to support the four special offerings of the Together Way Plan with funds raised throughout the year. Each church has been encouraged to develop its own method of raising funds for this yearly project.

This plan works! The Moderator of the association, Rev. Don Strauser, and the Clerk, Rev. David Brawley, presented Dr. Worthington a check for \$3,000.00 on behalf of the District Association.

The Youth Look

by Ann Poletti

Is it irony that we celebrate Easter in the spring of the year? Spring . . . the season we associate with new life as brown grass becomes green, dead tree limbs bud new leaves, flowers stick their heads above the earth, and spirits rise with the temperatures in anticipation of prettier days.

That's what Easter is . . . a celebration of life. The day which came a couple days behind the darkest, most violent, and unjust day in history is the symbol of hope for mankind.

Of course, with spring come March winds, April showers, and tornado season. This beautiful season does not insure sunshine every day. Likewise, Christ's resurrection does not promise every day will be perfect. It merely assures us victory and hope in Christ Jesus.

And that's really all we need, isn't it?



You Can Serve in Asia

The English Language Institute was founded in 1982 for the purpose of sending qualified Christian professionals to build friendships - through teaching - with college and university students across China. The Chinese were and remain today one of the key people groups in the world.

ELIC expanded its purpose in 1991 when an unprecedented window of opportunity opened in Mongolia. Yet another opportunity occurred in 1994 when ELIC was allowed to send teachers to Vietnam for the very first time.

ELIC has a God-given vision to send 10,000 teachers to Asia by the year 2000. It is a marvelous goal, achievable only through the power and guidance of God. There are currently four Free Will Baptist Church members serving with ELIC. The need for teachers is great. As these countries strive to improve their level of English proficiency, the window of opportunity to share the love of Jesus Christ through teaching English is open . . . but for how long?

The Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department cooperates with English Language Institute by interviewing, helping process applications and assisting in raising support for those from our denomination who wish to serve in China, Viet Nam or Mongolia. Those we approve are identified as "Missionary Affiliates" of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions.

Seven Free Will Baptists have served either as teachers during a summer or for the whole school year in China. At least three Chinese students have received Christ as their Savior through their witness.

Both summer and whole year opportunities are available. If you would like more information, please contact Bob Edgar, Cooperative Recruiting Manager for ELIC, at:

English Language Institute/China
448 East Foothill Blvd.
P.O. Box 265
San Dimas, CA 91773
Telephone No: 1-800-366-3542

Missouri Freshman Named to NBCAA

Anna Crewse, Hillsdale freshman, was named to the National Bible College Athletic Association (NBCAA) Volleyball All-Tournament Team. Anna is the daughter of Rev. Gene and Dottie Crewse of Fordland, Missouri.

Anna was the only freshman named to the All-Tournament Team. Hillsdale is proud of how Anna has excelled on and off the court. Miss Crewse's response to the question of how she could keep up her grades and volleyball was, "It's not easy, but if you love the sport, you make the commitment."

Hillsdale commends Anna Crewse for excellence on the volleyball court, for being an outstanding student in the classroom, and for being a Christian leader for the Hillsdale student body.



Anna Crewse

If you are interested in a college where commitment to Christian values is still honored, consider Hillsdale Free Will Baptist Bible College, Box 7208, Moore, OK 73160. (405) 794-6661.

Rev. Wade Jernigan to be Honored

Rev. Wade Jernigan will be honored for 50 years of ministry May 26, 1995, at 7:00 p.m. The special celebration will be held at the Skyridge Free Will Baptist Church located at 150 South 48th Street in Noble, Oklahoma. The Celebration Committee is requesting that friends and acquaintances of Brother Jernigan send letters and cards of appreciation to Rev. Dan Harper, P.O. Box 371, Noble, Oklahoma 73608. The letters and cards will be placed in a scrapbook and presented to Brother Wade the night of the celebration.

MEMORANDUM!

TO: Missouri pastors, Free Will Baptist colleges and all Woman's Auxiliary officers and members.

FROM: Missouri state W.N.A.C. scholarship committee.

RE: Missouri state W.N.A.C. scholarship applications.

The Missouri state W.N.A.C. convention has established a scholarship fund to assist young Christian women who attend Free Will Baptist colleges. Listed below are the criteria for qualification.

1. The applicant must be a female student.
2. The applicant must be enrolled as a "full-time" student.
3. The applicant must be a resident of Missouri and a member of a Missouri Free Will Baptist church.
4. The applicant must have already made application to a Free Will Baptist college.
5. The application should be forwarded to the president of the Missouri State W.N.A.C.
6. The scholarship committee will evaluate the applications and award the scholarship.
7. Scholarship funds will be placed in the student's name at the Free Will Baptist college specified by the student who is selected.
8. Students who are awarded the scholarship will be eligible the second year for approximately one-half of the first year's award. Applicant must reapply.
9. The deadline for receiving the application for consideration is February 15.

If there are young ladies in your congregation who would qualify for this scholarship, please share this information with them, and make a copy of the application available to them.

Thank you for helping us assist deserving young women who wish to receive their education at one of our Free Will Baptist colleges.

This year, the applications must be postmarked no later than May 27, 1995.

Please mail applications to: Shirley Jackson
13 Highland Dr.
St. Charles, MO 63303

Missouri State Woman's Auxiliary Convention

** SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

Name _____
Last First Middle

Address _____
Street or P.O. Box City State Zip

Telephone (____) _____ Social Security Number _____

Parents' Names _____

High School _____ Date of Graduation _____

Church Membership _____ How Long? _____

Pastor's Name _____ Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Birthplace _____

Probable College Major or Academic Interests _____

High School Grade Point Average _____ ACT _____ SAT _____

Class Rank _____ In a Class of _____ Students

Other Colleges Attended _____

ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS: List all awards, activities and any leadership positions held in high school and church community. Use another attachment if necessary:

REFERENCES: Please identify three references that will be submitting letters of recommendation. These should include your church pastor, a member of the Woman's Auxiliary or another church member, and one person familiar with you outside of church activities (School Principal, Teacher, etc.):

Name _____ Position _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Position _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Position _____

Address _____ Phone _____

** Along with this application, please include:

1. An official transcript of work completed at least through the first semester of the Senior year in high school and any transcripts from colleges attended.
2. A typed essay explaining your interest in this college, your spiritual commitment, your plans for the future and the contributions you anticipate you can make in your college and church communities.
3. A recent photograph of yourself.

Today's Date _____ Applicant's Signature _____



Sacrificing for Souls

"...Neither will I offer... unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing..."
2 Samuel 24:24

Jesus gave His life!

Surely some sacrifice on our part is in order!

- Fast for one meal a week during April and give the cost of the meal.
- Give up some vacation or travel plans and give the proposed costs.
- Do without some new item of clothing and give its cost.
- Give up desserts and soft drinks and contribute their price.

Give sacrificially to the

Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering April 30, 1995

Send gifts to FOREIGN MISSIONS, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002

Dec. 30, 6:15 p.m.: We arrived in Abidjan - only 30 minutes late. For Africa, that's "on time." Ron Moore, Robert Bryan and Jennifer (with two bouquets of fresh flowers) met us. Praise God our bodies and baggage all arrived without too many scratches or dents. The police and custom men allowed us to pass WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE OR FEES TO PAY!

Dec. 31, Saturday: We drove to Bondoukou. Team mates (Moore and Earnest Hollands) doing great in spite of a heavier than usual work load and Dry Season in full force! We visited Christians till 9 p.m. - time for New Year's Eve Services at Church, but first a visit to one of Carol's Sunday School Girls; Helene, a very sick girl. Church services lasted until after 12... We prayed the New Year in, holding hands asking God's guidance. Precious!

Jan. 1, 1995: Back to church with 171 others. Special songs and poems to welcome us back, plus many handshakes and rib-breaking hugs that felt so good (none were broken). African customs says we must first visit the Christians in their homes, then they will return the visit. We couldn't go to their homes because they came here first!

Linda called saying Helene was worse. Elaine and I went to her home. The family has no money to pay the admittance fee. We decide to pay and take her to the hospital. A spinal tap was done in the eight bed ward... the fluid was yellow.

Jan. 2, Monday: All our plans about getting utilities into the house we're moving into were canceled - a legal Holiday was

Pinkertons Have Arrived A Letter from Jerry and Carol

declared. We received a steady stream of visitors, so accomplished very little, but had full, happy hearts at seeing our Black Family in Christ.

Jan. 3, Tuesday: Utility Offices open - but it was the final payment day before services would be discontinued, so the lines of people were unusually long and moved very slowly. Helene was even worse.

Jan. 4, Wednesday: Papers completed and a billfold depleted as water, electricity and a phone was requested. (Jalayn Martens will come and be a new member of the Bondoukou Team, so we're leaving the utilities in this apartment for her.) George, from Appimadoum, came bringing village news: 50 adults in Church with 60 kids! He is responsible for five area villages. Please pray for George, Ama and their new firstborn, Rebecca.

Doctors here say they can do nothing more for Helene. They want her evacuated to Abidjan, but the family does NOT have money. Her diagnosis: 2nd stage coma, meningitis, pneumonia and blood poisoning. She is critical. The missionaries lend more money and the Church helps to pay the ambulance charge. Five precious hours later, after the ambulance has been repaired, she is on the road going to Abidjan.

Jan. 5: Jerry begins painting at the other house. Carol visits the market - finding locally grown produce has tripled in price. We have no news from Helene. Tomorrow evening will mark our first week back in Africa... **thanks for bringing us back home!**

FOREIGN MISSIONS REPORT

(A Letter from the General Director)

Dear Fellow-laborers in the gospel:

Thank you for the \$381,513 you gave during 1994 to get the gospel to people overseas. Your generosity places you number four among state associations. Congratulations!

God was very generous to your foreign missions department last year. We received \$4,474,083 toward our budget of \$4,485,676.

I'm convinced there are no "little churches" in the Lord's eyes. Every church is important and we appreciate every gift from the 1,707 churches which sent an offering last year. However, we do commend the following churches in your state which gave over \$5,000 in 1994:

First FWB Church of Berkeley	\$29,186.01
Macedonia - Purdy	18,957.00
Trinity - Bridgeton	13,599.65
First FWB of Monett	12,837.74
Calvary Fellowship - Fenton	10,618.52
Grant Avenue - Springfield	9,737.88
Hannon - Liberal	9,298.96
Verdella - Liberal	7,922.78
Freeman Chapel - Stewartville	7,605.50
First FWB of Farmington	6,524.11
First FWB of DeSoto	6,491.00
Beacon - Raytown	6,035.28
Central - Grandview	5,858.23
Hazel Creek - Kirksville	5,660.23
Parkview - Desloge	5,328.51
Fellowship - Park Hills	5,275.00

God took your gifts and used them to help win souls, plant churches, and train workers in 10 countries around the world.

While we are thankful for past blessings, there is a monumental task yet to be done because over two billion in your world haven't heard the gospel. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest.

April is Foreign Missions Month. Plan a month-long emphasis in your church. And by all means, receive a generous offering on Foreign Missions Sunday, April 30. Last year Free Will Baptists gave \$77,904 to the Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering. This year our goal is \$100,000. This is the first of four "Together Way Offerings." We hope every church in your state will participate so we can reach our goal.



The Unpardonable Sin

- Matthew 12:31,32

by Vernon Long

I've preached on several sins against the Holy Ghost: the sin of grieving or vexing the Holy Spirit, the sin of quenching the Holy Spirit, the sin of lying to the Holy Spirit, the sin of tempting the Holy Spirit, the sin of resisting the Holy Spirit, the sin of defiling the body of organized believers and the sin of defiling our bodies (the temple of the Holy Ghost). These sins are forgivable sins against the Spirit of God, but continual sin in any of these areas may lead one to commit the unpardonable sin, for which there is no forgiveness.

The subject of the unpardonable sin is a difficult subject, but there are two good reasons why it should be dealt with. First, it is in the Bible. God thought it was important enough to put it in the Bible. This does not mean that it is a popular subject, for the Word of God may be popular or unpopular, pleasant or unpleasant, easy to understand or difficult, but God says that the whole counsel of God is to be preached. Second, it is a solemn warning to all who continue to live in sin. There is much misunderstanding concerning Matthew 12:31,32. The unpardonable sin is viewed by some to be a definite act that the sinner commits. Others view it as a state of the soul to which one may arrive. These views differ, but they teach the same truth. There are three questions, when answered, help to arrive at that truth. These questions are: Is it possible to commit an unpardonable sin? What is the unpardonable sin? Who can commit the unpardonable sin?

I. Is it possible to commit an unpardonable sin?

The answer to this question is found in the Word of God and not in human reasoning. The Bible states that it is possible to commit the unpardonable sin. (Gen. 6:3; Num. 15:30,31; Heb. 10:26) One proof of this is God's refusal to answer the prayers of those who have committed the sin. (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:10,11)

II. What is the unpardonable sin?

It is not the sin of adultery or fornication as some believe (1 Cor. 6:15-20). There is pardon for these sins. In John chapter four, Christ gave the living water to the woman of Samaria. In John chapter eight Jesus said, to the woman taken in adultery by the scribes and Pharisees, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."

It is not the sin of murder, though some may believe that this sin is beyond forgiveness. The sin is great, and God prescribed capital punishment as the civil penalty for this crime (Gen. 6:9), but the sin is forgivable.

It is not the sin of divorce and remarriage. The woman of Samaria would never have been saved if this were the case.

It is not the act of one particular sin. The Pharisees ascribed a miracle of Jesus to Satan in the context of Matthew 12:24. Christ does not say they had committed the unpardonable sin, but it seems that they were well on their way to committing it.

Some say it is a specific utterance of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Why would it be more of a sin to speak blasphemy against the Spirit than to speak blasphemy against either of the other persons of the Godhead? Paul was a blasphemer and even tried to force believers to blaspheme (Acts 26:11), yet he was gloriously saved (1 Tim. 1:13,14). I believe Paul could have committed the unpardonable sin, had he insulted the Spirit of

(continued on page 10)

(continued from page 9)

grace (Heb. 10:29,30), the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of grace in Heb. 10:29. It is not the rank of the person in the Godhead, for they are equal, but the increased clearness of revelation as furnished by the Spirit of grace. A person can knowingly and willingly reject and despise that revelation, which is what aggravates the crime and makes it unpardonable. The unpardonable sin is a definite act (action) at a point in time when one comes to a state of soul so that God gives them up.

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a state of the soul to which man by repeated sinning arrives. There is a cutoff point where one can no longer receive forgiveness. It may be at the point where one sees the evidence of the Lord's power before his eyes, as the Pharisees did, and declares it to be Satanic power. It may be the refusal to turn from homosexuality, other sexual sins, murder, or wickedness of any kind, that God gives them up. It may be the simple act of definitely putting oneself, once and for all, on the side of Satan. The unpardonable sin can be committed by believing false doctrine and refusing to believe the truth (Tit. 3:9-11).

What is meant by a state of the soul? A person's state of soul, as it relates to the things of God, is his susceptibility to the Spirit of God. One may be indifferent to the Holy Spirit as He deals with sin. Resistance to the conviction of the Holy Spirit will cause one to become actively opposed to Him. The Spirit may continue to deal with an individual, but the individual's resistance and opposition may become active antagonism. The soul then hardens beyond the susceptibility to the Spirit of God, thus becoming a final act of sin where one's state of soul is beyond forgiveness. God gives them up. It is the condition of man (his soul) rather than any action that makes his case hopeless. One may reach the point of no return in his self-imposed hardness of heart. "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck (becomes more stubborn, rebellious), shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Proverbs 29:1) An early theologian, Augustine, called it final independence. Two things mark the one who has committed the unpardonable sin: (1) There will be an opposition to spiritual things. (2) One will be unmoved by the preaching of the Word.

Will God no longer forgive such a person? Whether forgiveness would be denied, if sought, is a useless question, since the sin is unpardonable, not on God's account, but on account of the sinner. The sinner virtually commits moral suicide, having forever killed his conscience and destroyed his spiritual susceptibility and removed himself from ever asking forgiveness. Repentance is a gift of God and the unpardonable sinner has driven from him the only person, the Holy Spirit, Who could ever work repentance in his heart. As Esau sold his birthright, so can one who continues to reject God to the point of being a reprobate or apostate. (Heb. 12:12-17)

III. Who can commit the unpardonable sin?

I believe anyone is capable of committing this sin. If you are unsaved, the Bible teaches that you can become a reprobate. A reprobate is a religious person, though sincere, who has never been saved. (II Tim. 3:8; Tit. 1:15,16; Jer. 6:27-30; Rom. 1:26-28)

If you are saved, but living in rebellion against God, you too can commit the unpardonable sin and become an apostate. The word apostate is a transliteration of the Greek word apostasia, which is translated "forsake" in Acts 21:21 and

"falling away" in II Thess. 2:3. There are several warnings in Scripture that point to the fact that saved people can go back into sin; continuing in sin willfully, they turn from and reject God's counsel and leadership. There is a point where one who has been saved can fall beyond repentance (Heb. 6:4-9{4a...6a}). Those who do not believe in apostasy say that this passage is not speaking of a saved person. However, the passage lists five characteristics of a saved person: (a) once enlightened - to light, give light to, illuminate - 10:32; (b) tasted of the heavenly gift - to taste, to partake of - 2:9 (John 4:10); (c) partakers of the Holy Ghost - share or participate in - 3:1,14; (d) tasted of the good word of God (see above); (e) tasted of the powers of the world to come (Eph. 2:5,6).

Apostasy is God's warning for the apathetic and presumptuous. He warns of its possibility. Sin's danger is not that sin severs one's relationship with God, but that sin hardens one's heart leading to an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (Heb. 3:12-14).

Like the poet, we too need to examine our relationship to God.

"There is a time we know not when,
A point we know not where;
That marks the destiny of man,
For glory or despair.
There is a time by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and His wrath.
To pass that limit is to die,
To die as if by stealth;
It does not quench the beaming eye,
Or pale the glow of health.
The conscience may still be at ease,
The spirits light and gay;
That which is pleasing,
Still may please, and care be thrust away.
But on the forehead God has set indelibly a mark —
Unseen by man, as yet is blind and in the dark.
And still the doomed man's path below
May bloom as Eden bloomed —
He did not, does not, will not know,
Or feel that he is doomed.
He knows, he feels that all is well
And every fear is calmed;
He lives, he dies, he wakes in hell,
Not only doomed but damned.
Oh, where is this mysterious bourne
By which our path is crossed;
Beyond which God Himself hath sworn,
That he who goes is lost.
How far may men go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end
And where begin the confines of despair?
An answer from the skies is sent;
Ye that from God depart,
While it is called today, repent,
And harden not your heart." (II Cor. 13:5)
Joseph Addison Alexander

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rev. Vernon Long is pastor of the Leadington Free Will Baptist Church located in Leadington, Missouri.

Financial Information

FEBRUARY 1995

COOPERATIVE DISBURSEMENTS

18.50% Mo. State Home Missions	
Board	\$7,080.76
17.50% Executive Office	6,698.02
3.50% General Fund	1,339.60
8.50% Youth Camp Bd.	3,253.32
2.50% Youth Ministries Bd.	956.86
2.50% C.E. Board	956.86
2.50% Sr. Adult Ministries	
Board	956.86
9.00% Mo. State Retirement	
Program	3,444.70
30.50% Nat'l. Ministries, Hillsdale & Calif. Christian College	11,673.69
Foreign Missions Board	
National Home Missions Board	
Same Allocation:	
Free Will Baptist Bible College	
Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College	
Executive Department	
Layman's Board	
Radio & TV Commission	
Theological Commission	
Historical Commission	
Board of Retirement & Insurance	
1.00% Calif. Christian College	
(\$116.74 included in \$11,673.69)	
5.00% Mo. State Conference	
Center Fund	1,913.72
TOTAL	\$38,274.39

"...Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!..." Ps. 106:1. God has given us another good month, and He is to be praised. The faithfulness of the Pastors and Churches in Missouri make it possible for us to have a part in carrying out the Great Commission. As we continue to work together, we will see the lost saved and the saints edified.

The allocation for National Ministries is designated this year, with FWBCC and Hillsdale receiving an equal amount. California Christian College will continue to receive 1%.

FEBRUARY 1995

COOPERATIVE

Bailey Chapel	\$ 100.00
Belton	360.83
Berean	8.00
Bethel - El Dorado Springs	71.34
Bethel - Northview	206.60
Black Oak	250.11
Bourbon	56.81
Cabool	348.19
Calvary Chapel	353.52
Cape Girardeau 1st	829.37
Carthage	210.00
Central	189.90
Central	937.49
Chapel of the Ozarks	173.30
Clifton	88.00
Columbia	109.00
Copper Mines	307.47
Crossroads - Richland	304.00
Crossroads - Wentzville	407.00
Cuba	528.00
DeSoto 1st	1,055.00
Eastern Gate	345.25
Faith & Hope - Aurora	79.20
Faith & Hope - Willow Springs	104.00
Farmington 1st	2,393.21
Fordland	435.96
Fourth - St. Louis	190.00
Fourth - St. Louis	200.00
Fredericktown 1st	423.00
Freeman Chapel	289.85
Friendship - Branson	395.54
Grant Avenue - Springfield	1,049.58
Hannon	617.75
Happy Home	115.02
Harmony	960.00
Hartville	539.62
Heritage	116.00
Hopewell	88.00
Houston 1st	374.32
Hurryville	426.28
Joplin 1st	664.73
Kirksville 1st	247.66
Koshkonong	208.61
Leadington	339.52
Lebanon 1st	865.27
Liberty	252.60
Lone Star - Seymour	45.80
Marshfield	318.70
Meris Chapel	232.00

Mill Creek	353.16
Mine La Motte	41.50
Monett 1st	758.83
Mtn. Grove 1st	1,311.71
Mt. Pisgah	199.00
Mt. Zion - Gower	45.50
Myrtle	214.83
Neosho 1st	190.00
New Harmony	17.24
New Hope - Fredericktown	20.00
New Rock Springs - Cabool	120.00
North 5	173.60
Number One - Huggins	50.80
O'Fallon 1st	828.84
Oak Hill	99.38
Oak Hill - Union	550.90
Olivet - Marshall	1,000.00
Overland	130.00
Ozark 1st	768.07
Park Hills 1st	590.20
Parkview - Desloge	352.43
Pleasant Grove - Mtn. Grove	271.81
Pleasant Hill - Thayer	69.14
Pleasant Home - Mtn. Grove	204.74
Pleasant Ridge - Urbana	92.00
Potosi 1st	137.24
Rock Chapel	414.88
Rolla 1st	86.53
Royal Oak	142.00
Seymour	101.00
Seymour	119.00
Smyrna	140.00
Springfield 1st	1,308.68
Springfield 1st	891.74
St. Peter's	684.03
Stockton	163.90
Terrill Road	176.00
Thayer	851.00
Trinity	841.22
Tyrone	42.00
Union Grove - Norwood	221.00
Union Light - Marq.	112.00
United	1,030.54
Unity - Lebanon	252.00
Verdella - Liberal	379.03
Victory - Altan	214.86
Victory - K.C.	380.06
Waynesville 1st	276.62
West Plains 1st	1,100.88
Willow Springs - Mtn. Grove	236.20
Wolf Creek - Mansfield	306.90
TOTAL	\$38,274.39

STATE HOME MISSIONS

Bethel - Festus	\$ 64.90
Central	10.00
DeSoto Victor's Class	10.00
Faith & Hope - Aurora	60.00
Faith & Hope - Aurora (NH)	35.37
Faith & Hope - Willow Springs	25.00
Farmington 1st	10.00
Fourth - St. Louis	10.00
Fourth - St. Louis	20.00
Grant Ave. - Springfield	19.00
Hannon	308.88
Kirksville 1st	17.93
L. Wormington	30.00
Lebanon 1st	10.00
Lebanon Bible & Book Store	380.00
Macedonia Women's Aux.	100.00
Marshfield	31.87
Mtn. Grove 1st	25.00
Myrtle	10.00
New Life - Monett	63.20
New Testament	40.00
O'Fallon 1st	71.17
Ozark 1st	10.00
Pleasant Grove - Mtn. Grove	25.25
Pleasant Ridge - Urbana	25.00
Rock Chapel	107.17
Thayer	5.00
Trinity	55.00
Union Light - Marq.	56.00
Viburnum	5.00
Victory - K.C.	10.00
West Plains 1st	35.00
TOTAL	\$1,685.74

FOREIGN MISSIONS

B. Thebeau	\$ 15.00
Belton	176.30
Bethel - Festus	188.00
C. Thompson	25.00
Calvary Chapel	55.00
Carthage	91.00
Central	30.00
Central	257.50
Central	11.00

Columbia	25.00
D. Lewis	10.00
DeSoto 1st	350.00
DeSoto Joymakers	10.00
DeSoto Yg Marries Cl	50.00
E. Percival - Pleasant Ridge	10.00
Eastern Gate	119.00
F. Rogers	10.00
Faith & Hope - Aurora	60.00
Faith & Hope - Willow Springs	150.00
Faith - St. Louis	50.00
Faith - St. Louis	25.00
Farmington 1st	147.00
Farmington 1st	308.33
Fordland	105.00
Fourth - St. Louis	60.00
Fourth - St. Louis	70.00
Freeman Chapel	390.00
Grant Ave. - Springfield	704.17
Greenfield	175.00
Hannon	905.25
Hartville	107.92
Houston 1st	144.00
J. Hoggard	10.00
J. Schebaum	15.00
Jones Creek Road	30.00
K. Minor	20.00
Kirksville 1st	17.93
L. Voyles	20.00
Leadington	30.00
Lebanon 1st	50.00
Lebanon 1st	25.00
Macedonia Women's Aux.	1,300.00
Marshfield	30.00
Meris Chapel	200.00
Monett 1st	200.00
Monett 1st	558.00
Mtn. Grove 1st	353.00
Mt. Pisgah	100.00
Myrtle	124.00
N. Akeman	10.00
Neosho 1st	345.00
New Harmony	86.21
New Home - Hartville	290.00
New Testament	125.00
Niangua	45.00
Niangua	11.00
Niangua	12.00
O'Fallon 1st	71.17
Oak Grove - Cabool	65.00
Oak Grove - Norwood	129.40
Ozark 1st	140.00
Park Hills 1st	236.08
Parkview - Desloge	284.00
Pleasant Grove - Mtn. Grove	62.18
Pleasant Home - Mtn. Grove	65.47
Pleasant Ridge - Urbana	45.00
R. Garrett	20.00
Richwoods	35.00
Rock Chapel	195.50
Southeast Assoc.	25.00
St. Peter's	95.00
Thayer	230.00
Trinity	503.55
Union Light - Marq.	150.00
Union Mission	140.00
United	16.00
Unity	40.00
Verdella - Liberal	484.04
Viburnum	110.00
Victory - K.C.	220.00
Warren Livingston	10.00
Waynesville 1st	25.00
West Plains	50.00
TOTAL	\$12,289.00

NATIONAL HOME MISSIONS

Belton	\$ 46.30
Bethel - Festus	20.00
Carthage	55.00
Central	10.00
Central	67.50
Columbia	10.00
DeSoto 1st	100.00
DeSoto 1st	500.00
Eastern Gate	10.00
F. Rogers	10.00
Faith & Hope - Willow Springs	25.00
Farmington 1st	10.00
Fordland	21.00
Fourth - St. Louis	28.00
Fourth - St. Louis	20.00
Grant Ave. - Springfield	200.96
Hannon	66.77
J.W. Rader	20.00
L. Voyles	10.00
Leadington	20.00
Lebanon 1st	5.00
Mtn. Grove 1st	15.00
Mt. Pisgah	50.00
Myrtle	111.00
New Harmony	86.21
New Home - Hartville	20.00

New Testament	240.00
O'Fallon 1st	67.17
Oak Grove - Norwood	64.70
Overland	4.00
Park Hills 1st	79.02
Parkview - Desloge	10.00
Pleasant Grove - Mtn. Grove	5.00
Pleasant Home - Mtn. Grove	42.44
R. Gamble	5.00
R. Keith	20.00
R. White	20.00
Richwoods	57.00
Rock Chapel	45.00
Southeast Assoc.	25.00
St. Peter's	45.00
Terrill Road	50.00
Thayer	145.00
Trinity	120.00
Union Light - Marq.	35.00
Verdella - Liberal	20.00
Viburnum	59.00
Victory - K.C.	65.00
Victory - K.C.	201.38
Warren Livingston	10.00
Waynesville 1st	25.00
West Plains 1st	65.00
Wolf Creek - Mansfield	10.00
TOTAL	\$3,072.45

MISSOURI FWB YOUTH CAMP

Thayer	\$ 40.00
New Life - Monett	63.20
Myrtle	33.00
Mtn. Grove 1st	10.00
New Home - Hartville	10.00
Hartville	10.00
Willow Springs - Mtn. Grove	10.00
Hannon - Liberal	15.00
Mt. Pisgah - Cabool	10.00
Lebanon Bible & Book Store	170.00
Cabool	10.00
DeSoto 1st	50.00
New Rock Springs - Cabool	10.00
Marshfield	20.00
Ozark 1st	10.00
Park Hills 1st	18.98
Trinity Baptist - Bridgeton	14.00
Bethel - Festus	64.90
TOTAL	\$569.08

CHILDREN'S HOME (TN)

New Life - Monett	\$ 63.20
Myrtle	43.00
New Hope - Fredericktown	32.00
Unity - Lebanon	10.00
DeSoto 1st	50.00
TOTAL	\$198.20

HILLSDALE FWB COLLEGE

HAVE A HEART

Thayer	\$ 45.00
Victory - K.C.	95.24
Central - Grandview	60.00
Hannon - Liberal	50.00
Eastern Gate - Springfield	69.00
Neosho 1st	120.00
Grant Ave. - Springfield	10.00
Beacon - Raytown	323.00
Wolf Creek - Mansfield	300.00
Farmington 1st	141.66
TOTAL	\$1,213.90

FWB BIBLE COLLEGE

Thayer	\$ 40.00
DeSoto 1st	35.00
West Plains 1st	416.66
Grant Ave. - Springfield	10.00
Farmington 1st	133.33
TOTAL	\$634.99

REV. JOHN McCLURE

Thayer	\$ 10.00
Jones Creek Road	30.00
Monett 1st	30.00
Carthage	17.00
Fourth - St. Louis	20.00
Farmington 1st	13.65
TOTAL	\$120.65

CALIFORNIA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Farmington 1st	\$25.00
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YOUTH MINISTRIES BOARD

Lebanon Bible & Book Store	\$50.00
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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

Lebanon Bible & Book Store	\$50.00
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SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES BOARD

Lebanon Bible & Book Store	\$50.00
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RETIREMENT & INSURANCE

Grant Ave. - Springfield	\$1.00
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WORLD RELIEF

Victory - K.C.	\$10.00
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WORLD VISION

Victory - K.C.	\$5.00
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