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ONE magazine

Small Talk

.....

*Eight Questions
for Eddie Moody*

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*Theological Integrity:
Now More Than Ever*

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.....

*Rising to the
Challenge of the
Bi-Vocational Pastorate*



Legacy of Courage...

Chaplain Gerald Mangham was commissioned in 1967 as the first Free Will Baptist chaplain in the armed services. The Oklahoma native served his Lord, his country, and his denomination for more than 30 years in Vietnam, Korea, Germany, and the States.

Over the course of his career, Chaplain Mangham received many accolades, but he always saw his greatest achievements as commitment to faith, family, and those he served. At his retirement, Mangham remarked, "Over the years, our life verses have been Philippians 4:19 and Psalm 37:4. We have found His blessings to be overflowing through war, separations, and the trials of a ministry that is sometimes little understood."

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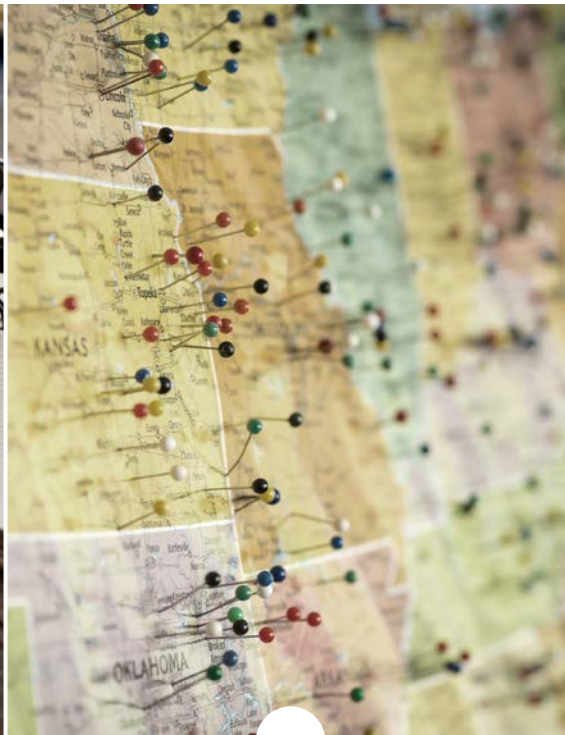
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More Crunch, Less Skroosh

BY ERIC K. THOMSEN

Crunch...skroosh.*

Crunch. Crunch...skroosh.

With each upward step, my feet sank to my ankles—that is, when I didn't just slide back to where I started.

Skroooooooooosh.

Pausing to gasp for air, I wondered for the umpteenth time, "Why in the world am I doing this?" Powdery, fine sand filled my shoes, clogged my nose, plastered my skin and hair, and turned my sweat-stained shirt into a muddy mess. Shaking my head, I started upward again.

Crunch...skroosh.

I ruefully recalled my cheeky reply to a local's warning about how tough the climb would be. "I'm from Florida; I know all about sand dunes." It didn't take this Florida boy long to learn there are sand dunes, and there are SAND DUNES. Nothing in my life had prepared me for a dune the size of a mountain!

Bruneau Dunes tower above the surrounding Idaho desert basin. Formed by receding floodwaters and eroding winds, the remarkable quartz and feldspar dunes are the tallest freestanding sand dunes in North America. Unlike other dunes, which form at the edges, Bruneau Dunes form in the center of the basin known as Eagle Cove



Depression, trapped by constant swirling winds. This remarkable topography, unique in the Western Hemisphere, makes the dunes a must-see for any Idaho visitor with a penchant for the unusual. But the promise of a dune-top panorama had lost all appeal for this out-of-shape editor struggling just to breathe.

Crunch. Crunch...skroosh. Sweat. Repeat.

And, suddenly, I was there—a narrow ridgeline of sand marking



the crest of the dunes. I hate to confess I didn't gaze in wonder. I didn't marvel at the jaw-dropping vista. No, I flopped full-length on the side of the dune and reached for the lukewarm Diet Coke in my backpack.

In the years since that exhausting climb, I have often reflected on what a wonderful analogy it provides for times of change. I don't like change (not sure anyone does). I acknowledge transformation is often necessary. Sometimes, I even glimpse the benefits and rewards

of potential change. But I dread the climb. I fear the shifting, sweating, and sliding through transition as I struggle with new skills, encounter (and hopefully overcome) unexpected challenges, and refuse to be overcome by failure.

My dunes hike gave me three simple guidelines for making the best of my occasional passage through change:

- **Stop staring at your feet.**

Change tempts us to become self-absorbed—lost in our own little world of progress and

regression, steps forward and slides back. Remember to look up. See the big picture. Remember the panorama waiting ahead. And keep on crunching.

- **Pace yourself.** Change is hard. It takes time. A mad dash or shortcut to the top can leave you gasping, hurting, and disillusioned. Be patient. Give yourself and others time to adjust.
- **Enjoy the crest.** Often, successful change leads to additional changes. Be sure to give yourself time to recover and enjoy the

view from the top. The memories of those moments will carry you up the next dune.

** While Webster offers no official entry for the word skroosh, I humbly submit it perfectly describes the sound made by Nike running shoes on sand. **ONE***

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Eight Questions for Eddie Moody

On Tuesday, July 23, delegates to the National Association of Free Will Baptists in Cincinnati, Ohio, unanimously approved 51-year-old North Carolina native, Dr. Edward E. Moody, Jr., as executive secretary of the denomination.

Dr. Moody has pastored Tippet's Chapel FWB Church in Clayton, North Carolina, since 2000. He additionally served as professor of counselor education and associate dean of the School of Education at North Carolina



Dr. Edward E. Moody, Jr.

Central University since 1995. Prior to his confirmation, Dr. Moody was vice-chairman of the Welch College Board of Trustees and a member of the Denominational Research Committee.

The Licensed Professional Counselors Association of North Carolina named Moody Counselor of the Year in 2016. He holds a Ph.D. from North Carolina State University in counselor education, an M.A. from Middle Tennessee State University in clinical psychology, and a B.A. from Welch College in pastoral training.

He is author of *Surviving Culture; First Aid for Emotional Hurts; Helping People Through Difficult Times*; and the *First Aid for Your Emotional Hurts* training series, along with numerous professional journal and magazine articles. Eddie and his wife Lynne have two children, Mackenzie and Mitchell.

The *ONE Magazine* staff recently asked Eddie to share more about himself and his vision for the denomination.



What will people be most surprised to learn about you?

Many people might be surprised to learn I am ambidextrous, though I write more with my right hand. An-

other surprise may be that I grew up a North Carolina Tarheel fan. I remained a fan until I became a student and later an instructor at North Carolina State. Some of the athletes were my students, and I just couldn't pull against them. Pretty soon I was pulling for the Wolfpack all the time.



Tell me briefly about your family.

Lynne and I have been married 30 years. We have two children. Mackenzie is a graduate of Welch College and works for the Beaufort Linen Company while she completes her MBA. She and her husband Caleb minister at First FWB Church in Beaufort, North Carolina. Caleb is also a Welch graduate and is completing a master's degree in school counseling. My son Mitchell is majoring in math and music education at Welch College this fall.



(Besides your parents) Who has had the most influence on your life?

The teachers at Bethel Christian Academy in Kinston, North Carolina, and the professors and staff of Welch College had the most influence. I suppose if I had to narrow it down to one person, though, it would be David Paramore. He served as pastor at Bethel FWB Church in Kinston for 28 years. I grew up at Bethel and experienced firsthand the revival when the church mushroomed in size.

I enjoyed the opportunity to learn at Bethel Christian Academy under godly teachers and staff, a school Paramore founded. At the church, I was able to explore my gifts. Pastor Paramore often had me do brief speeches at church as a teen, and I worked in children's church. He influenced me toward Welch College.



Mitchell, Eddie, and Lynne Moody, Caleb & Mackenzie Smith

For much of his ministry he was a bi-vocational pastor. He taught me how to visit someone in the hospital, saying often, “No one sick wants a long visit.” He taught me how to interact with people who might disagree with me politically. He truly showed me how to work with people. Growing up, I did not realize all I was learning from watching him.

? You have been a pastor, educator, counselor, and denominational leader. How have you juggled all of your responsibilities?

First, I think time is our most valuable asset, so I try to live out Ephesians 5:16 daily, “redeeming the time.” Second, I really do enjoy what I do, and as a practice, I have used Psalm 37:4 as my guide. For example, during graduate school, I did career workshops with first semester freshmen. As I left class one day, I thought, “If God doesn’t want me to do this, why do I love it so much?”

At that time I was struggling about whether I was called to be a pastor or a professor. I felt the same way about teaching a group of teens at Immanuel FWB Church. I began to sense God wanted me to do both. Rather than concluding it could not be done, I asked, “If God wants me to do this, how might it be done?” The result

has been a major emphasis on time management. For example, I had a long commute to the university where I worked. Rather than being upset by traffic, I tried to concentrate on audio books and/or podcasts. There is no wasted time.

I also have learned how to combine things. For example, when supervising students who were counseling veterans, I was able to use much of what I learned when I counseled people at the church. Later, I would do Wednesday or Sunday evening

Bible studies on what the Bible said about anxiety and trauma. Incidentally, much of that material later became books or booklets.

? Besides your church, school, and extended family, what will you miss most about North Carolina?

I love all things North Carolina—the food, the weather, the outdoor trails and parks—but I may miss the libraries most of all. Even when we lived in Tennessee I traveled to the medical center library at Duke University to gain access to books and journals I needed. Since 1992, I have been able to use the triangle research library network which includes the libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke, North Carolina State, and of course North Carolina Central University. In spare minutes before or after meetings, I am in those libraries several times a week. I will miss them.

? How would you describe your leadership style?

When you go to the doctor with a complaint he or she usually runs a test. Sometimes, it is a blood test or a culture, but they assess the problem before they begin

a treatment regimen. I try to assess a situation to learn as much as I can before jumping into action. Once I've assessed the issue, I try to convey what I have learned to those with whom I am working. I have done this at church as well as in the university. In both settings, you must bring people along. Those within the church often must be convinced. In a university setting, where many faculty members have tenure, they must see the need before one can proceed. I work with the individuals I lead to design a plan of action to address issues or problems. Then, as I confront an issue, I try to serve as a model in addressing it.

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Briefly, what do you see as the future for Free Will Baptists?

Free Will Baptists are at a crossroads, along with every other evangelical denomination. Every denomination in the United States is in decline, and it is estimated eight out of every ten churches in the U.S. are declining or have plateaued. Even most growing churches are not keeping pace with the population growth of the nation. The church no longer enjoys the "home field advantage" it once had in our increasingly post-Christian culture. In this environment, we must have healthy pastors and healthy churches capable of reaching an increasingly post-Christian, biblically-illiterate population. Pastors must prepare themselves by immersing in the Word

and developing skills to help people understand how the gospel can free them from the entangling sin rampant today.

We need outward-focused churches that strive for unity by refusing to argue about preferences but remain doggedly focused on biblical principles. We must have churchmen and women who model the lifestyle described in Philippians 2, serving those they go to school and work with.



As you begin this new adventure as executive secretary, what would you like to say most to the denomination?

We are better together. The reasons for coming together and working together are perhaps even more valid today than they were in 1935. There is no comparison between what one church, or even a handful of churches, can do compared to what 2,100 churches can do together. Together, we can send far more missionaries, educate and equip ourselves, respond to disasters, and meet our own long-term needs more effectively than we could ever do alone.

As our culture continues to deteriorate, a strong, theologically-sound denomination will be even more critical. I agree with Union University professor Nathan Finn who has noted it will become increasingly difficult to be a serious Christian in the American public square. He also indicates churches with "a thick sense of denominational identity are in the best position to provide the sort of catechesis and discipleship necessary to live faithfully in American Babylon."

That's what we intend to do. We may be small, but the parable of the talents teaches me that if we are faithful, we will have an impact and together hear "well done" when we come into the presence of our Savior. **ONE**

Parting Words *From* Keith Burdolen



Friday, September 27, marked Keith Burden's final day in the Executive Office. Before he left, the *ONE Magazine* staff gave him an opportunity to share a few parting thoughts and words with the denomination.

As you look back over your time as executive secretary, what do you see as the highlights or milestones for the denomination?

I would say three things, although not necessarily in order of importance:

First, as a denomination, I believe we are as unified as we have ever been. This doesn't mean we don't have controversy. You can't avoid that in a group as diverse as ours. But as a general rule, we are more unified than we have been in years. I think this has much to do with my predecessors who worked hard to bring the departments and the denomination together. We genuinely like one another. I think some members of previous generations thought you hadn't had a good convention unless you had a heated debate on the floor of the business session. I do not think this is the case. It is not a sign of apathy that we no longer have controversy on the floor of the convention. It shows we have learned to work together, to reach agreement on difficult issues. It shows we have grown as a denomination.

Second, I am glad for the financial stability of the office. Maybe I have "ridden this horse in the ground," but I keep reminding folks that 17 years ago, we found ourselves in a precarious position financially. It was the result of a historic convergence of events: the national economic situation, changes in our funding structure, unexpected expenses, and so on. All these things came together to create a tough financial situation. I am grateful that right now, the Executive Office is on solid, financial footing. While our financial situation is still not ideal, it has improved significantly. The denomination has been faithful in giving through some very difficult years. I am grateful.

Third, *ONE Magazine* has proven to be a tremendous asset to the denomination. It was a significant accomplishment for the denominational departments to work

together, in spite of some disagreements, to produce a high-quality magazine for our people. Rather than protecting our "turf," we banded together. As a result, I think the magazine has unified us and helped build our identity. The denomination has embraced the magazine, and everywhere we go, it continues to be well received.

What will you miss the most about serving as executive secretary?

The short answer: meeting and building relationships with Free Will Baptists across the nation and around the world. This position allowed me to develop friendships with people I would not have met otherwise. A couple of notable examples: in my wildest dreams, I never would have imagined I would be in Robert Picirilli's Sunday School class, invite him to my home for dinner, and develop a deep and lasting friendship. I am also grateful for my time with Bert and Dianne Tippet, both as fellow church members at Cofer's Chapel and later as dear friends. And, who would think that William Smith would have become one of my closest friends. We are as different as daylight and dark, but we just clicked. He helped me through some difficult times as my encourager and confidante. It has been a blessing to meet Free Will Baptists across the world and learn to appreciate the breadth and diversity of the denomination.

Can you share a humorous story from the life of an executive secretary?

The ones that are most funny, I can't share. It would incriminate folks...and I might even lose some friends [said with a broad smile]. Just understand, for all the difficulties of this job, it has given me some incredibly humorous moments, many shared with other denominational leaders. Few things are more contagious than chuckles over something that happens in a church service or business meeting.

I remember flying into Chicago with David Williford, Terry Forrest, and Ron Hunter. We got to the baggage claim area, and I stepped away to the restroom, leaving the other guys to watch for my bag. When I came back, they pretended they hadn't seen my bag. I stood for about five minutes waiting for my suitcase to come around the belt. Nothing. With sinking heart, I began



to think my luggage had been lost (again). Just when I was ready to head to the claim office, Ron Hunter pointed. My bag was sitting on the floor behind me. Those rascals had removed my bag while I was gone. I'm not sure how they kept from laughing while watching me sweat.

I also remember a trip I made in 2010. I had boarded my plane for the return trip to Nashville. As the boarding process neared completion, it looked like there might be an empty seat next to me. I had just stowed my carry-on bags and fastened my seat belt when I heard a commotion at the front of the plane. I glanced up to see a large man approaching my row. He had two bags and a large cup of Starbucks coffee in his hand.

You guessed it! His seat was right next to mine. Seat 14-D. I'll never forget it. I stood to let him into his seat as he mumbled an apology. He started to cram one of the bags in the overhead storage bin, when, without any

warning, the bag slipped. Instinctively, he reached with his other hand to catch the bag. As a result, he sloshed scalding, hot coffee all over me—suit, face, glasses, and hair.

Using every ounce of self-control I had, I took a deep breath, took my handkerchief out, and wiped off the coffee, cream, and sugar mixture. As we took our seats, the man, now bright red, apologized profusely. I simply said, "It's okay. Don't worry about it."

Once we were airborne, as soon as the captain turned off the fasten seat belt sign, the man in 14-D excused himself to use the restroom. He never came back. I assume he found an empty seat at the back of the plane or was too embarrassed to return to his.

Speaking of flights, how many plane rides have you taken over 18 years in the office?

I haven't documented them exactly. But based on my annual schedule, I have flown roughly 100 times a year—1,768 segments (one-way flights between cities) as best I can tell. That is just under 900 round trips during my time in the office. I can't even begin to imagine the number of miles I have driven. Let me just say, GPS has been a great addition to my life. I hate to admit how many times I navigated by roadmap and dome light after a late flight!

What was your greatest challenge during your time in the office?

I have to go back to finances. Those difficult years had such a profound impact on our staff. We had to downsize the office and some people lost their jobs. We all tightened our belts and learned to "live on less." It changed the way we did ministry. We turned off the spigots and plugged the holes in the budget. The financial challenges would have happened to anyone who came into the office. It just happened to be me. And it was difficult. We had to borrow \$150,000 my first year in office, just to pay the bills. It was a rough way to start! If I had known the financial challenges I would face, I would probably still be pastoring a church in Oklahoma. I'm grateful God didn't share all the details. I might not have had the courage to take the job.

On the other hand, the financial crisis and the way I handled it let people know I was serious about running the Executive Office. In retrospect, I see it gave me credibility with the denomination. But I can tell you the loss of jobs and salaries gave me many sleepless nights.

Can you name some of your greatest encouragers as executive secretary?

Obviously, my wife and family top the list. They have encouraged me in those moments when I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing. I am blessed with a wife with a lot of common sense and practical wisdom. I have learned not to ask her opinion unless I really want to know it. But at the end of the day, when I was exhausted or my morale had reached a low point, my wife and my family kept me going.

I would be remiss if I did not mention one other person: Philip Taylor was a member of a California church I pastored in the mid-1980s. Not long after I became executive secretary, he asked if he could do anything for me in my new role. I asked him to pray. He told me he would, and he has taken that promise seriously. Hardly a week since has gone by without an email, call, or text from Philip to let me know he was praying. That has meant so much to me.

What are your plans for retirement?

First, I look forward to returning to the great state of Oklahoma. I'm going home. That's where my children and grandchildren live, and I look forward to spending time with them. At the convention when I was approved as executive secretary, my namesake Keith was four weeks old. He recently turned 17. Obviously, I have missed many years with my family. I look forward to being a grandpa—going to ballgames, fishing, and just enjoying time with them.

The most urgent item on my list is to build a retirement home. But, I can also tell you that getting some rest is high on the priority list as well.

I want to write—whatever opportunities come my way. I'm no theologian, and I can't even imagine writing a paper to be read at the annual symposium. But I look

forward to writing about the things I do know. I want to be an encourager, not a detractor, for the rising generation of fine, young leaders. Whatever doors the Lord opens, I will walk through. While I'm not looking to go into a high-demand, high-pressure ministry, I want to stay involved. I have no plans to sit on the sidelines and wither away. I want to be active in my local church.

What do people still not know about Keith Burden?

As a child, I had a speech impediment—stuttering. It wasn't as bad for me as it is for some, but it was tough to overcome. My high school speech teacher once told me, "You'll never be a public speaker." I can't help but wonder what she would think today of what I became. I know it is because the Lord helped me.

What one thing would you like to say to the denomination as you leave the Executive Office?

First, thank you for honoring me by placing your confidence in me to fill this office. When I think how few people have had this opportunity, I consider myself singularly blessed that I was chosen for the position. It has been one of the greatest honors of my ministry. Free Will Baptists brought the gospel to me, ordained me to ministry, educated me, and gave me an opportunity to serve from the local church to the denomination. Outside of the grace of God, I can say the people of this denomination have been the greatest influence in my life.

Second, I encourage the denomination to stay true to the Word of God. In a day

when many denominations have grown liberal, we must remain anchored to Scripture and sound doctrine.

Finally, Free Will Baptists must always keep the Great Commission as our primary focus. Taking the gospel to the lost should be the reason behind *everything* we do as a denomination. Every effort should point to sharing the Good News with a lost world that needs it desperately. **ONE**

WHATEVER
DOORS THE
LORD OPENS,
I WILL WALK
THROUGH...
I HAVE NO
PLANS TO
SIT ON THE
SIDELINES AND
WITHER AWAY.

Protect Against Cynicism

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

We have all heard some pastor say, "This job would be easy if not for people." Do you hear the cynicism in that statement? Most definitions of *cynicism* create a cynical reaction when using big words like *maladaptive behavior* or *contemptuously distrustful regarding another's motives*. Really? I cynically say, "Thank you, Mr. Webster."

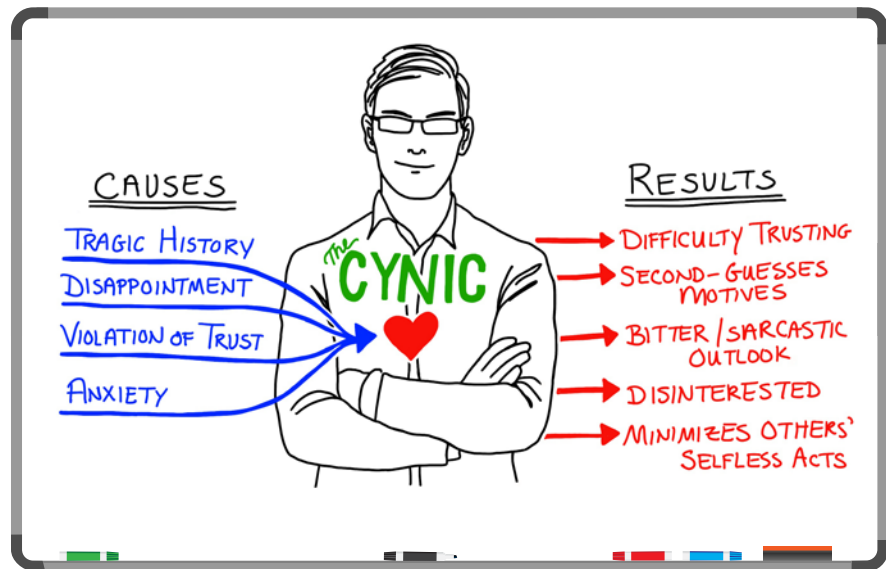
More simply, cynical people find it hard to trust others and often second-guess the motives of others. Cynicism is reflected in a sneering, bitter, or sarcastic outlook when evaluating situations, people, or organizations. Cynical people can appear disinterested and often minimize another's selfless acts.

Do we find cynicism in Scripture? Yes! In 2 Samuel 6:16, Michal

LEADERSHIP QUOTE

"The cynic is one who never sees a good quality in a man, and never fails to see a bad one."

—Henry Ward Beecher



despised David's worship because of her cynicism. Based on her experience growing up in her father's court, she expressed disdain for David's apparent lack of dignity. Michal's cynicism about David was suspicious and distrustful of his sincerity. It poisoned her relationship and caused her to act with paranoia. Another place the Bible teaches us about cynicism is found in the words of King Solomon. Ecclesiastes 1:8; 18 shows that greater wisdom and knowledge brings more grief and sorrow—ouch.

As pastors, you often know more than many members of your

church, which may bring sorrow and grief. But a know-it-all attitude actually creates the cynicism. You have been there, done that, and people have disappointed you. When you encounter irritating people, do they cause you to be pessimistic or immediately react in negative, distrustful ways? If these descriptions resonate, you might be dealing with cynicism.

You might understand cynicism more easily through characters like Charlie Brown, Squidward, Oscar the Grouch, Haymitch Abernathy, Lieutenant Dan, Han Solo, and the batch of TV shows

that defined the cynicism era such as *The Office*, *Parks and Recreation*, *Seinfeld*, *Big Bang Theory*, *Modern Family*, and others.

What causes cynicism? The *why* may result from a person's tragic history, major disappointment or violation of trust, or going through an anxious phase. What can be done? Start by praying to begin trusting, overcoming suspicions, and diminishing your

doubts about others. Like Solomon, you must admit—even though you have great knowledge—life may become meaningless unless you trust others and have greater faith in God.

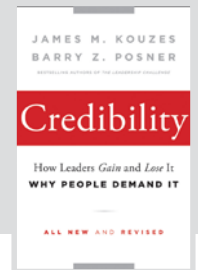
You may know a lot, but no one likes a know-it-all. Force yourself to trust others, even when they disappoint you. Relationships require trust. First, deal with the hurt people have caused you, and

note how you may be projecting the painful past into your present and future interactions.

RECOMMENDED BOOK

Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It

By James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner



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— Megan Fate Marshman

”

I cannot think of a more biblical, practical, and impactful resource for church leaders who minister to the family than D6 podcasts.

— Josh Mulvihill, Ph.D.



An Old-Fashioned Motto

BY BRAD RANSOM

Many years ago, I remember both Roy Thomas and Trymon Messer (former directors of Free Will Baptist Home Missions, now North American Ministries or NAM) used the motto, “A missionary in every state for a church in every city.” A framed picture of a map with this motto still exists and is on display at the NAM office in Antioch, Tennessee.

Although we don’t use their motto today as a guiding principle, the point is still valid. After a few minutes of quick research in the 2019 Free Will Baptist *Yearbook* I discovered startling statistics that do not match that vision. Free Will Baptists have only 14 states with more than 50 churches. Five states have between ten and 50 churches. Twenty-one states have nine or fewer churches and nine states have zero Free Will Baptist churches.

Those numbers would bother Roy and Trymon, and they bother me as well. More than *half* of the states have no significant Free Will Baptist presence. This disturbs me because I believe we need more Free Will Baptist churches in *every* state, including those with many churches. Why? Because more than 140 million unchurched people live in the United States (according to Barna Research). This does not include the rest of North America.

I realize Free Will Baptists are not a large denomination compared to some, but we certainly can continue to have an impact on the Kingdom. Currently, NAM has

50-plus church planters in 26 states and U.S. territories. That is a significant impact. However, over the next year or so, approximately 12 to 15 of existing church plants will reach self-supporting status. While this is a praise item, the reality is we don’t have enough new works “in the bullpen” waiting to step up to the plate. We need new church planters to answer God’s call to plant churches.

As I write this, I am deeply grateful we have seven new churches about to launch, but we need many more. Have you have felt God calling you? Maybe you’d be willing to pray about planting a church. Many of our teams tell us starting a church is both the hardest thing they’ve ever done and the most rewarding. Are you up for a challenge?

Maybe church planting is for you, and maybe it’s not, but it’s certainly worth praying about. If you have any questions or would like more information about church planting, visit www.fwbnam.com or call our office. We’d love to talk to you. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dr. Brad Ransom is chief training officer/director of church planting for North American Ministries. For the previous 30-plus years, he and his wife Lori lived in Oklahoma where he served as a pastor and state leader. Email Brad: brad@nafwb.org.

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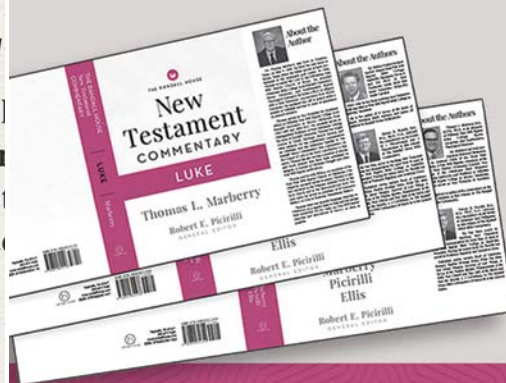
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NAM Experiences Staffing Changes



Victoria Thomsen

Antioch, Tennessee—Welcome to Victoria (Tori) Thomsen, the newest addition to the office staff. Tori joined the office May 15, after graduating from Welch College with an associate's degree. She assumed the role of administrative assistant to Chief Training Officer Brad Ransom. She also serves as office receptionist. Many roles are changing in the office following the retire-

ment of Sue Hayes, who faithfully served North American Ministries for almost 30 years.

Former Accounting Administrator Kathy Brown now serves as accounting administrator for the Church Extension Loan Fund (CELF). Teresa Womack, formerly administrative assistant to Ransom, replaces Brown as accounting administrator for the department. **ONE**

Keystone FWB Church Reaches Self-Supporting Status

Greensburg, Pennsylvania—

North American Ministries congratulates the Keystone FWB Church and church planters Nate and Jenna Altom and Tommy and Pam Jones, their ministry partners Bobbie and Jason Gilroy and Mandy and Brandon Miller, and the entire Keystone team. The church reached self-supporting status in April and is now an established church. We are proud of the church in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and excited to see what God will do in this region in the future. **ONE**



Houghtons to Plant a Church in Burlington, Vermont

Antioch, Tennessee—NAM welcomes the newest addition to the church planting family: Dan and Kami Houghton. Dan grew up in a military family that settled in the Burlington, Vermont, area where Dan attended school for many years. Kami grew up in the Burlington area.

After serving in the U.S. Army Special Forces and working his way up the corporate ladder in a major communications compa-

ny, Dan left his secular career to pursue ministry. Dan served as youth pastor and media director at New Life FWB Church in New Bern, North Carolina.

Dan and Kami felt the call to be church planters. They are returning to the area where they grew up to plant the church. The Houghtons have three children and will be raising funds and moving to Burlington next spring.

ONE



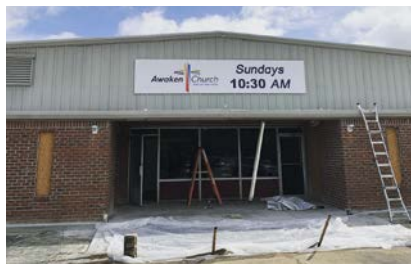
Dan & Kami Houghton and Family


Awaken Church Holds First Service in New Facility

Tifton, Georgia—Josh Bennett (lead church planter) and Shane Suggs (associate church planter) have worked hard over the past few months to renovate the building God provided as the

permanent home for Awaken FWB Church in Tifton, Georgia. On June 9, the church met for the first time in their new facility. Congratulations to the Awaken staff and leaders for a job well

done. The church hosted a grand opening service for the community in September. ONE



Two hands are positioned on either side of the title, with the index fingers pointing upwards and the thumbs pointing outwards, creating a rectangular frame around the text. The hands are light-skinned and appear to be of a woman.

Can You See It?

BY CLINT MORGAN

A Chinese proverb proclaims, “*If you don’t see it before you see it, you will never see it.*” Though it sounds like a real tongue twister, this statement contains a great truth about vision casting. Those charged with casting a vision must see things others do not see and believe those dreams can become a reality. Eventually, the vision becomes a mission, and the mission leads to the realities envisioned.

Most studies of mission history divide it into three main eras of mission work. Each reflects a philosophical shift influenced by such factors as navigational tools (i.e., the compass, radar, GPS); communication equipment (i.e., the printing press, telegraph, smartphones, etc.); transportation options (i.e. ships, trains, cars, planes); world events (i.e. colonization, world wars, etc.); natural disasters (i.e. earthquakes, diseases, etc.); demographics (i.e. different people groups in a nation, diaspora, etc.); and more.

The First Era: The Coastlands (1792-1910)

William Carey (August 17, 1761-June 9, 1834), a British Christian missionary, is known as the “father of modern

missions.” His passion to reach the “heathen” established a new model in the understanding of extending the gospel to the nations. *He could see what others did not see!*

What did he see? He saw the shipping industry as the means of passage to transport the gospel to existing ports around the world. Even more importantly, he saw explorers’ ships as the means for expanding God’s Kingdom where the gospel had never been preached. He, along with hundreds of other missionaries, boarded these ships—often with their personal effects in a casket—and traveled to the regions beyond. These committed men and women began setting up mission

stations along the coastlands of Africa, India, and other remote places. As a general rule, however, they did not penetrate the inland areas as a strategic objective.

The Second Era: The Interior (1865-1980)

About 45 years of transition and overlap occur between the first and second eras. The second era took root in the mind of the great missionary to India, Hudson Taylor. However, explorer-missionary David Livingstone came on the scene and expanded the strategic geographical approach to mission. Having a passion for exploration and a message for the nations, *he could see what others did not see!*

What did he see? Building on the method of the previous era to employ ships to reach the coastlands, Livingstone visualized the people in need of the gospel living in the interior of these countries. His vision pushed him to ask the soul-stirring question, “Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave-trade carries the trader?” He then declared, “I shall open up a path to the interior or perish.” This new era, taking the gospel past the coastlands to the interior, was a defining force in missions for over 100 years.

The Third Era: Every People Group (1934 - ?)

Again, the second and third eras overlap by about 46 years. The first two eras were guided by geographical strategies—the coastlands and interior areas of countries. In 1934, two men, Cameron Townsend and Donald McGavran, arrived on the mission scene and introduced missiological concepts that guided Christians to rethink missions. *They could see what others did not see.*

What did they see? These godly men saw beyond geographical boundaries and reframed the world in terms of people groups. *People groups* are made up of those with linguistic and custom similarities that allow the exchange and passing on of ideas and behaviors.

This line of thinking has a great impact on missions as we practice it today. According to the research agency Joshua Project, 16,543 people groups populate the world today. Out of these, 6,701 remain unreached with the gospel.

Obviously, great progress has been made in reaching the lost. But the task is still overwhelming and it is difficult to know precisely what needs to be done to reach those still without the gospel. Dedicated Christians must ask God to help them *see what others do not see* as it relates to reaching the lost, then pursue His plan with unrelenting dedication.

The Fourth Era?

As we look to the future, what factors do we believe will influence missionary efforts? While this question is too broad and profound to cover adequately in a few paragraphs, let’s consider a few major trends and potential inroads showing up on our missiological radar. As we take a quick glimpse at these, *see if you can see what others do not see* and allow God to work in you to cast a vision for the next generation(s) in their efforts to fulfill the Great Commission.

Technology: According to D. Ray Davis, who serves on IMB’s mobilization team, “Given the enormous amount of technological advancement during the past two decades, some believe that we have subtly entered a fourth era in modern mission history.” This is exciting to think about. In 2015, an estimated 3.2 billion people, or almost half of the world’s population, were expected to be online by the end of the year. As of April 2019, 56.1% of the world’s population can access some type of social media through the Internet. This number increases to 81% in the developed world. Sociologists predict 90% of the human population, aged six years and older, will be online by 2030. Are there truly any boundaries that cannot be crossed with some form of technology? *Can you see a day when every household in the world is being reached with the transforming power of the gospel through some form of online technology?*

Teaching English on the Global Campus: Understanding the power of education to advance philosophies and theologies, we must not overlook this ripe mission field. Especially when it is right under our noses. Presently, over five million international students fill college campuses around the world. What unbelievable possibilities exist on college campuses! On practically every campus, English teachers are in high

demand. *Can you see a day when every demand for an English teacher/professor in secular universities is met by a born again believer?*

A New Era of Missions Collaboration: The IM mission statement is “We exist to labor with the Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission.” This strong, Bible-based statement also invites abuse. Some people readily say we must work with all people who call themselves Christian. At IM, we are not prepared to go that far. Yet, we are relentlessly committed to working with the Body of Christ without compromising. We will ensure those with whom we partner are authentic believers, with sound doctrine and an unwavering commitment to living out the principles and commands of the Scriptures. This certainly includes fulfilling the Great Commission. *Can you see a day when all evangelical mission agencies have the same unwavering commitment to fulfill the Great Commission and find ways to collaborate to accomplish this Christ-ordained task?*

Acceleration of Bible Translation: Of the 6,468 living languages, 4,024 are still without a complete Bible. This is hard for Western evangelical Christians

to grasp. We often have five to ten copies of the Bible in our homes. Sometimes, we avail ourselves of several different translations. Thanks to the dedicated work of Bible translators, and amazing technological advances, remarkable progress is being made in producing Scripture in the heart languages of all people. Between 2000 and 2015, the number of translation projects completed annually rose from 21 to 120 respectively. It is projected, by 2025, over 215 projects will be completed each year. *Can you see a day when the Bible is translated into every living language?*

At IM we want to be on the frontlines, taking full advantage of these potentially life-transforming, world-changing trends. We will pray about these and discuss them. We will seek God’s will for us. We want to be instrumental in leading our Free Will Baptist people to also “*see it before they see it so they can see it.*” **ONE**

About the Writer: Clint Morgan has been director of IM, Inc. since 2011. Learn more: IMInc.org.



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Snapshots Around the World

Cuba: Pastor Leonel Sotero of the Jibacoa FWB Church in Cuba baptized seven people (five women and two men) Sunday, July 28.

Spain: Missionaries participated in a Spain field team retreat August 11-14.

Brazil: The Jardim Palmeiras FWB Church in Uberlândia, Brazil, recently celebrated their 30th anniversary. Tom and Nancy Hughes planted the church and Walter de Almeida serves as pastor.



Côte d'Ivoire: Several churches in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, combined to hold a two-day children's camp in the city. At least 130 children attended.



India: Over a four-week period in June and July, 150 workers in India completed two weeks of training in Sonapur. In August, ten men were ordained for ministry. Brother Carlisle Hanna oversaw this effort before returning to the States, August 28.

Côte d'Ivoire: Pastor Edmond Koadja baptized four young ladies at the Nassian FWB Church in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, June 23.

Panama: Pastor Uriel Velásquez baptized three people at the Chame mission church in Panama in June. This congregation serves the "least of these" in their community.

Brazil: Pastor JeanCarlo Ache baptized three young people at the Jaboticabal church in Brazil June 23.

Bulgaria: Three men recently accepted Christ as Savior in Varna, Bulgaria. Trif Trifonov leads this congregation.

Samburu: More than 200 people in Sesia accepted Christ as Savior in the first half of 2019. Eddy and Amanda Simmons and Victoria Little serve in this hard place. Samburu Christian leader Jackson and his family and widow Eunice assist in the ministry. People hear the gospel while waiting to be treated in the clinic. God's Word is sent out on MP3 players so new believers can share it with others. Evangelistic efforts are held in villages and health training serves communities and points individuals to Christ.



Brazil: On Sunday, August 18, First FWB Church in Campinas, Brazil, celebrated the baptism of four people. During a business meeting, the four were accepted into church membership. Members also selected four men to serve as deacons. When ordained, they will join the three already serving.

New Training Center Graduates Seven

Cuba—Cedars of Lebanon Seminary in Pinar del Río, Cuba, has trained leaders for more than 50 years. However, with the expansion of evangelism and church plants to the eastern side of the island, many who wanted additional training could not benefit from this established Bible institute.

About two years ago, Pastor Yem Cruz headed the opening of The Work of the Potter Leadership Training Center on the eastern



side of the island for those unable to travel more than 500 miles for training. The first class of seven people (six men and one woman) graduated in July with their two-year associates in arts degree in Bible and ministry. **ONE**

Missionary Balances

Antioch, TN—On July 31, 2019, only one missionary account was in the red: *India Ministry/ Carlisle Hanna*. Three newly-appointed interns populate the *dangerously low* list: Keren Delgado, Jacob Austin, and Brenton and Debbie Driscoll. Donations may be made via mail (IM, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002) or online (www.iminc.org/give). **ONE**

New Board Members Elected at Convention

Antioch, TN—Delegates to the 83rd National Association of Free Will Baptists elected two new members to the board of IM, Inc. following General Director Clint Morgan's report on Wednesday, July 24.

Delegates elected Casey Cariker (OK) to replace the unexpired term of Robert Posner (TX) who resigned in 2018 and Darren Walker (NC) to fill the unexpired term of Danny Gasperson (NC). Gasperson joined the IM staff July 1.

Cariker pastors Rejoice FWB Church in Owasso, Oklahoma. He has served the congregation since 2000—first in student ministries and then as teaching pastor before becoming lead pastor in 2011. Casey has served on the Oklahoma State Missions Board four years. He

also has served Oklahoma on the Christian Education Board. Active in overseas missions, Cariker has participated in short-term trips to eight countries. As pastor, he led Rejoice to assist North American church planters in Arizona, Illinois, and California. A graduate of Mid-America Christian University, he earned his master's degree from Moody Bible Seminary. Additional studies include the Ambassador Program for Apologetics and the Bonhoeffer Project. Cariker's term will expire in 2024.

Walker began pastoring First FWB Church, Washington, North Carolina, in February 2019, after 12 years as the congregation's youth and children's pastor. Prior to that he served First FWB Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas, as youth

pastor. A 1993 graduate of Welch College, Darren's Great Commission passion has resulted in leading 33 short-term mission trips in six states, a U.S. territory, and five international locations. Walker has participated in 11 trips to Svishtov, Bulgaria, working with IM missionaries Tim and Lydia Awtrey. Walker's term will expire in 2024.

"What a blessing to see God use the men and women who represent our churches in the business session to fill the IM board with a diverse representation of our denomination, people who love God and have His heart for the lost around the world," stated General Director Clint Morgan. "We are delighted to have these men join the board. Join me in praying for all our board members." **ONE**



Future Impact

BY KEN AKERS, MASTER'S MEN DIRECTOR

In a world where it seems everyone thinks only about themselves, I find encouragement in people like the ones who volunteer for IMPACT. They go out of their way to do jobs that need to be done, jobs that many times the local congregation cannot do without help. Battling heat and poison ivy doesn't sound appealing, but it's part of the task. Since it began, IMPACT has made a difference, not only to those we serve, but also to those serving.

IMPACT CINCINNATI

"Y'all need help in here?" one of the teenagers from a church hundreds of miles away asked as she stuck her head in the humid Sunday School room. She looked around and decided she could be of more service elsewhere, so she continued her hunt. She was looking to make an impact on Ambassador Church, and she wasn't the only one. Forty volunteers (ages seven and up) were ready and willing to do whatever the pastor asked. Some painted classrooms and the ceiling of the 400-person auditorium while others chopped down trees and washed the church sign. I watched as denominational leaders painted and pulled, sawed and sweated alongside church members.

The visitors weren't the only ones to make an impact, however. As I trimmed baseboards with my paintbrush, I began talking with the other workers. Beverly, one of the church members at Ambassador, said, "Well, you've been prayed for already; did you know that? We got

together yesterday and prayed for the people who were going to show up today."

Another 39 volunteers at Lighthouse FWB Church completed a different task: canvassing the neighborhood. Workers distributed information about the church in the surrounding area. After handing out 800 flyers, Convention Moderator and Pastor Tim York expressed pride in his youth group: "Grateful for how our teens served during IMPACT today...they were troopers in the heat."

FUTURE IMPACT

This year's workday made an impact on future conventions. While eating lunch (When do Free Will Baptists ever get together and not eat?), a member of the Ambassador host church said, "You know what this means! Next year, we've got to go to IMPACT—wherever it is."

And, Bobby Courtney, Pastor at Lighthouse FWB Church reports that since IMPACT Cincinnati, the church has had visitors in every service and two salvation decisions. Is IMPACT worth all the time and effort? For those two souls, the answer is an emphatic yes!

Want to know more? IMPACT is a National Convention-sponsored event organized by Master's Men. Anyone can participate. Make plans now to join other volunteers in Oklahoma City, July 18, 2020, to make an eternal impact on the host city. Visit www.fwbmastersmen.org throughout the year for more details. **ONE**

“He Is NOT a Good Father!”

PRESENTING CHRIST IN AN HONOR/SHAME-BASED SOCIETY

BY RUSTY CARNEY

“No, no, no! He is NOT a good father!” I heard these sternly spoken words one hot summer day at our church in Japan. I had been reviewing the story of the Prodigal Son with a lady connected with our church through an English group my wife Brenda attended. We had covered the part where the son had taken his portion of the family inheritance and squandered it on filthy living. Broke, hungry, desperate, and repentant, he decides to return to his Father’s house, hoping to work for him as a slave.

“As the son approached the house, the father ran to meet him, called for his servants to bring a new robe, put a ring on his finger, and kill the fatted calf so they could have a feast!” As the words came out of my mouth, she couldn’t contain herself.

“His son needs to learn it is not okay to go and waste all of his family inheritance like that! He has brought shame on

his family, and his father *should* make him a slave,” she pronounced. “I cannot believe the father would accept him back as his son, let alone give him new clothes and a ring and throw a big party for him!” Steam almost seemed to be rising from her as she spoke the words. “I just can’t believe this! No, no, no; he is NOT a good father!”

Why was her reaction so harsh to a merciful father reacting with forgiveness and kindness? The answer, I believe, is Japan is a country of *no grace*. If you mess up, that’s it. You’ve lost your only chance. You’re labeled as bad, and there are no second chances. If you’re the head

of a company and you mess up, you must resign. If you fail the test to get into the high school your parents wanted you to attend, you must live with their disappointment. If you accidentally hit and injure a pedestrian while driving, you must visit him in the hospital and pay reparations to him for a long time. No wonder





so many Japanese people give up on life. They are trying to please everyone and keep up with all the obligations placed on them. One wrong move and you're done.

This is the culture of Japan—many, many rules and obligations, with an extremely high sense of duty. How do we present Christ in this honor/shame-based culture? I believe the answer lies within this story. Just like in Jesus' day, two groups of people exist—the ones who know they have blown it, and the ones who believe they are keeping all the rules. In Japan, the ones who know they have blown it are often repentant inside, but the culture shows them no mercy. Finding no escape, they are driven to mental illness and often commit suicide.

Those who believe they are keeping the rules and doing a pretty good job do not see their sin. Much like the Pharisees, their hearts are far from their actions. We also see this attitude in the son who stayed home. He did not run off and squander his inheritance. However, he still

brought shame to his father in how he spoke to him and refused to attend the feast. Yet, the father dealt kindly with both sons.

We are all without excuse. Jesus leveled the playing field to show us we all are sinners in need of a Savior. The reaction this lady gave to the Father's love was probably much like the reaction many of the Jews had in Jesus' day. However, if we truly want justice, we can go to Hell. Each of us deserves just that.

Oh, God, give us eyes to see and ears to hear! I believe the saying is true, "It is the kindness of God which leads us to repentance." **ONE**

About the Writer: Rusty Carney and his wife Brenda have been missionaries to Japan since January 2009. To learn more, visit: IMINC.org.



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Hope Starts at Home

BY BARRY RAPER

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well” (2 Timothy 1:5).

Hope for America starts at home. Don’t misunderstand. The ultimate and only real source of hope is God. He alone is the hope for any country or culture. But He has chosen to establish the home, the family, as the foundational unit for any society. As much as we talk about the church, it is worth pointing out that family was established *before* the church. And, what takes place within the family is vitally important to the health of the church.

In this passage, Paul referred to Timothy as his *son in the faith*, his own spiritual child. Paul had a number of close friends, men into whom he poured his life—men who locked arms with him in the spread of the gospel. Yet, it is clear, Timothy held a special place in Paul’s heart, and he helped develop the young man into a godly leader. While Paul had tremendous influence in Timothy’s life, our text reveals that Timothy’s Christianity took root long before he met the Apostle. His faith started at home with his mother and grandmother.

“A faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice”

This phrase comes from the housing world and carries the idea of a



habitation or dwelling. Timothy’s mother and grandmother had a *living* faith *dwelling* inside them. From this, consider three characteristics of faith children should encounter in the home:

Sincerity. Faith without hypocrisy. The King James translators used the word *unfeigned*—faith that is the genuine article. Not perfect, because that isn’t possible, but sincere. How does one identify sincere faith? Bankers usually spot counterfeit money through association with real money. Real money has certain markers and identifying characteristics within the paper. For instance, you can tilt the bills a certain way to find marks of authenticity. Counterfeit bills are

often exposed through touch. Tellers who handle money every day can quickly detect a counterfeit in their hands.

While we cannot spot counterfeit Christians with precision, generally we can identify genuine followers of Christ. Because our children are around us constantly, we cannot fool them if our faith is not real. They are far more perceptive than we realize. Timothy wasn’t a Christian in name only, slipping on a religious mask for Sundays or around certain people. According to Paul, Timothy was sincere in his faith.

Parenting carries a lot of pressure when you take it seriously—and most Christian parents do take it

seriously. You might feel added pressure because you know you are an example of faith. Let me encourage you: you don't have to be perfect in your example. Children simply need to see consistency and sincerity.

Scripture. Faith is a popular topic these days. The spiritual-but-not-religious crowd is in style. It is not uncommon for people to talk about *faith*, but the *object* of their faith is the real issue. Later in his letter to Timothy, Paul warned about people departing from the faith and the cultural pressure that pushes churches away from the teaching of the Bible. In Chapter 3, he urges Timothy to “continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

Who acquainted Timothy with the sacred writings? It had to be his mother and grandmother since Paul says it started in his childhood. And, in those days, common people did not own a copy of the Scriptures. They went to church (synagogue) and rehearsed what they memorized of the Scriptures.

It's a good reminder: parents today shouldn't let our children decide whether or not to go to church. Some parent might protest, “Well, I don't want to force them to go.” How does that work in other areas of life? Do you make them go to bed? To school?

Of course! While we cannot force Christ on anyone, especially our children, far too many parents today allow their children and schedules to call the shots regarding church attendance.

But emphasis on Scripture requires more than church. Read it. Talk about what it says. Let them hear you ask, “What does the Bible say about this?” Provide an example that proclaims the Bible is the authoritative guide for faith and practice...and life.

The Savior. Paul continued in verse 15, “These Scriptures are able to make one wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” As you introduce your children to Scripture, you also will introduce them to the Savior. The Bible is a big volume—66 books by 40 authors containing books of historical record, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, and letters to the early church. But it only has one point: it is the story of God's plan of redemption through His Son.

The Messiah is anticipated throughout the Old Testament and revealed in the Gospels. The epistles explain the implications of His death and resurrection, and Revelation details His return. It's all about Jesus. Right after the fall in Genesis 3, God promised a Redeemer would come and the rest of the Bible unfolds the story. From the beginning, He tells us what the Bible story is about—more precisely, *who* it is about. This is how Jesus interpreted the Scriptures. After His resurrection, while walking with two of His

disciples who failed to recognize Him, He explained from Scripture how Christ would suffer and rise from the dead. Luke described the conversation: “He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” That is the ultimate goal of a Christian home—to reveal everything about Jesus.

Our culture doesn't practice arranged marriages. Sure, occasionally you will hear parents plot, wishing their son or daughter would marry this person or that person. But it doesn't go beyond that. When I was a teen, I would not have been thrilled about the idea of my mom and dad introducing me to a girl. While parents certainly cannot force children into a relationship with Jesus, let's be clear—He is the One they need to know more than anyone else. So, do your best to create a home where children encounter sincerity, the Scriptures, and the Savior.

Perhaps you cannot give your children or your grandchildren much according to worldly standards. But, dear friends, if you share with them a sincere, day-after-day faith, you will give them what matters most. **ONE**

About the Columnist: Dr. Barry Raper pastors Bethel FWB Church near Ashland City, Tennessee; serves as program coordinator for ministry studies at Welch College; and is a member of the Tennessee Christian Education Board. Barry and his wife Amanda have five children.

When “No Show Jones” Showed Up at Church

BY JESSE OWENS

I still remember the first time I heard “He Stopped Loving Her Today.” It was one of the saddest songs I’d ever heard. It’s the story of a heartbroken lover who can’t get over the woman he loves and is estranged from. He reads over letters from a bygone era of their relationship and notes all of the times she wrote, “I love you.”

The punch line of the song is powerful: it isn’t until he dies that he’s finally able to stop loving her.

Part of what makes the song so sad is that it’s descriptive of Jones’ own life: he was a self-professed alcoholic and drug user who married four times and divorced three. Jones garnered the nickname “No Show Jones” because of all of the shows he missed due to alcohol and substance abuse. This lifestyle is borne out in much of Jones’ music. Its predominant themes are substance abuse and heartbreak, followed by more substance abuse and more heartbreak. If you were to listen through “George Jones’ 16 Biggest Hits,” you’d be hard-pressed to find more than a few songs that don’t address these themes. George Jones’ life was one of incredible success but also one of deep heartbreak.

I didn’t start listening to Jones’ music until probably ten years ago. Part of what I find so alluring is that his music provides direct insight into the sorrow of sin. Russell Moore noted several years ago that even though George Jones’ music is filled with references to alcohol and cheating, it never glorifies them.¹ In fact, his music really highlights the consequences of alcohol abuse and unfaithfulness. It’s this human element, this form of honest lament that draws the listener in.

George Jones’ Free Will Baptist Connection

Sometime last year, I was surprised to learn George Jones had a Free Will Baptist connection. The connection was with Tom Malone (always “Brother Tom” to me) and took place during his time as pastor of the First FWB Church in Florence, Alabama, where he served

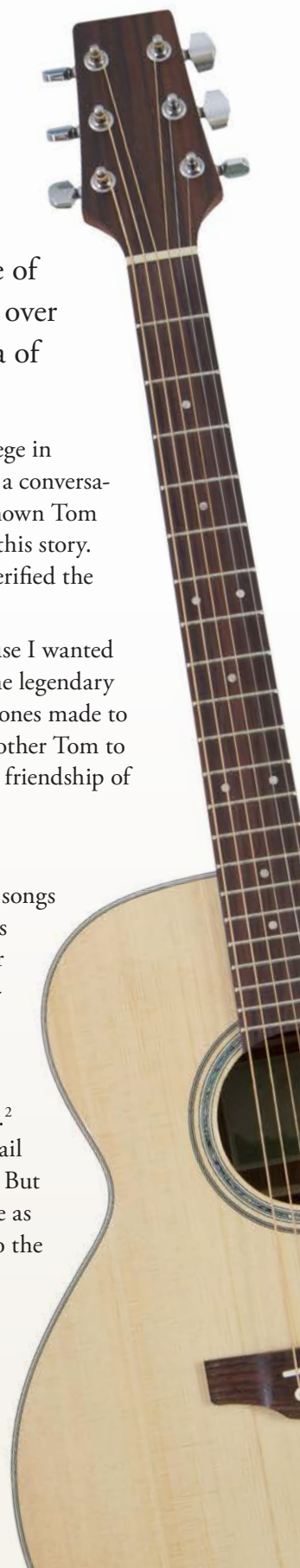
prior to becoming president of Welch College in 1990. The topic arose unexpectedly during a conversation with coworker David Williford. I’d known Tom Malone my entire life, but I’d never heard this story. He immediately called Brother Tom and verified the story. I was intrigued.

I eventually spoke with Brother Tom because I wanted to know more about his encounters with the legendary country star. The story involves two visits Jones made to the First FWB Church, several visits by Brother Tom to see Jones while he was in Florence, and the friendship of Peanutt and Charlene Montgomery.

Peanutt and Charlene Montgomery

Earl “Peanutt” Montgomery wrote over 70 songs for George Jones. He met Jones through his sister Melba, who had been a backup singer for Jones and also had an intimate relationship with him. Peanutt Montgomery and George Jones became the best of friends. Peanutt’s wife Charlene described them as being more like brothers than good friends.² Peanutt occasionally had to wake up and bail Jones out of jail in the middle of the night. But Peanutt Montgomery had the same lifestyle as George Jones—regularly abusing alcohol to the displeasure of Charlene.

That changed, though, when Peanutt Montgomery was saved at First FWB Church in Florence, Alabama, in 1976. After his conversion, Montgomery’s life



changed drastically. He couldn't continue drinking with George like he had on so many occasions. Montgomery told a reporter in 2009: "I couldn't live that life no more. I couldn't do that and then try to preach."³

Montgomery wasn't using "preach" in a metaphorical sense. He actually began traveling and preaching after he was saved. He wasn't hesitant about talking to George Jones about the Lord. When I spoke with Montgomery on the phone, he recounted praying fervently with George Jones as tears rolled down Jones' face. He even drove Jones up to the back of a tent revival one evening. As Jones heard the singing and then the invitation at the end, he got out of the car and fell on his knees in prayer. This wasn't a conversion experience, but it was a sign of the great conviction Jones felt.

Tom Malone and First FWB Church, Florence, Alabama

Peanutt and Charlene became members of First FWB Church in Florence, Alabama. Because they desired to see Jones saved, they invited him to church. He did, in fact, attend services with them on several occasions. According to Tom Malone, George always came on Sunday evenings.

On the first Sunday evening Jones walked through the doors at the church in Florence, Stanley Outlaw, a Free Will Baptist pastor and theologian, was preaching. As Malone recalls, Jones was visibly moved and in tears during the invitation. He got up abruptly and walked out of the sanctuary. A similar experience occurred on at least one other occasion when Brother Tom was preaching. Undoubtedly, the Lord was working in Jones' heart but to no avail.

Brother Tom visited Jones a few times at his house in Florence. During these visits, Jones was very careful not to let the conversation turn to spiritual matters. In an attempt to gain a hearing, Brother Tom played one of Jones' favorite games: Aggravation.⁴ Peanutt recalls the three of them riding motorcycles together.

But Jones was consistently resistant to the gospel or allowing Brother Tom to pray for him during their visits.

Jones moved away from Florence permanently in 1982, relocating to Nashville. Brother Tom became Welch College's

fourth President in 1990. I asked him if he ever interacted with Jones after moving to Nashville himself, but he did not. Their interaction was limited to the time in Florence when Brother Tom did his best to preach and share the gospel faithfully with Jones.

Faithful to the Gospel

I'm well acquainted with the ministry of Tom Malone. He was my mother's childhood pastor. My father served as his associate pastor for over a decade. He's been like a grandfather to me. No one is ever too important or too insignificant for Tom Malone. His life has always been marked by faithfulness to preaching and sharing the gospel message. I'm a product of his faithful witness.

George Jones died April 26, 2013. As I watched his televised funeral, I was deeply saddened as I considered the life he had lived. He seems to have been an embodiment of what Flannery O'Connor called "the Christ-haunted South." He was aware of the gospel message. He knew he was a sinner but spent the majority of his life resisting the Lord. Peanutt Montgomery is convinced George Jones repented at the end of his life and believed the gospel of Jesus Christ. I hope so. Only the Lord ultimately knows.

What I find most moving in these accounts is the work of a faithful pastor who longed to see people—including George Jones and Peanutt Montgomery—repent of their sins and follow Jesus. **ONE**

About the Writer: Jesse F. Owens serves as pastor of Immanuel FWB Church in Gallatin, Tennessee, and instructor and landscape manager at Welch College. This article appeared previously on the Helwys Society Forum: TheHSF.com.

1 Russell Moore, "George Jones: Troubadour of the Christ-Haunted Bible Belt," <https://www.russellmoore.com/2013/04/26/george-jones-troubadour-of-the-christ-haunted-bible-belt/>; accessed February 11, 2019.

2 Charlene Montgomery and Earl Peanutt Montgomery, *The Legend of George Jones* (Monterey, CA: Heritage Builders Publishing, 2014), 37.

3 Brian Hughes, "Former George Jones Songwriter Left Fame Behind," *Times Daily*, August 24, 2009; https://www.timesdaily.com/archives/former-george-jones-songwriter-left-fame-behind/article_8f48c6b7-d6fa-588f-8942-180fd66d4f11.html; accessed February 7, 2019.

4 Charlene Montgomery notes throughout her book on George Jones just how much he loved to play the game.



Students Earn Honors

The spring 2019 semester at Welch College ended with 90 students receiving academic recognition, according to Provost Matthew McAfee. This honor roll includes both online and Enriched Adult Studies students whose spring courses ended in late May. "We congratulate these students on their academic accomplishments," says McAfee. "These students are the academic leaders among their peers at Welch College, and we hope their example will encourage others to strive for excellence in their academic work."

Twenty-four made all A's and were placed on the President's List: 6 seniors, 5 juniors, 7 sophomores, and 6 freshmen. Sixty-six earned a 3.25 GPA and all A's and B's and were placed on the Provost's list—6 seniors, 14 juniors, 25 sophomores, and 21 freshmen.

President's List: A Honor Roll

Kandace Ailworth - Sophomore, TN
Meredith Baer - Freshman, NC
Addie Barnett - Freshman, TN
Leif Barrett - Freshman, TN
Adam Brown - Junior, IL
Josh Burgus - Junior, TN
Blake Chandler - Sophomore, TN
Alyssa Davis - Freshman, NC
Grace Elkins - Freshman, TN
Daniel Hubin - Senior, TN
Josh Hunter - Senior, TN
Alejandro Johnson - Sophomore, TN
Dakota Kron - Senior, TN
Kip McNeil - Junior, TN
Catherine Blades - Sophomore, TN
Hannah Morgan - Senior, TN
Jonathan Payne - Sophomore, IL

Anna Pinson - Freshman, TN
Daniel Rojas - Senior, TN
Mallie Sharenberger - Sophomore, TN
Lizzie Stevanus - Senior, TN
Debbie Trifonova - Junior, BG
Destinee Woolett - Sophomore, SD

Provost's List: B Honor Roll

Seniors

Jacob Austin, FL
Adra Brown, TN
Keren Delgado, AR
Anna Forlines, TN
Nikollette Jones, AL
Emily Petty, IL

Juniors

Elisha Cameron, GA
Brenton Driscoll, CA
Summer Elliott, QC
Emma Guthrie, IL
Chelsea Holesapple, MO
Abby Hunter, AR
Avery Jones, OK
Kinsley Kivette, TN
Mariah Moore, KS
Dan Pappas, SC
Meredith Parrish, NC
Sarah Pierce, IL
Hannah Reynolds, RI
Laurel Woodis, TN

Sophomores

Riley Bell, TN
Hailey Boyer, MO
Emilee Davis, NC
Michaela Easley, TN
Abigail Fawbush, TN
Hannah Gorrell, WV
Hannah Goucher, MS
Ally Greenwood, TN
Kelsey Horton, TN

Bryan Houser, VA
Jami Howell, FL
Cheyenne Johnson, TN
Maks Lutsenko, TN
Jolee McClure, TN
Whitney Moody, MS
Elaine Park, TN
Ashlee Presley, TN
Kendal Ryan, IL
Ashley Snipes, GA
Tori Thomsen, TN
Savannah Watts, TN
James Webb, AL
Kullen Williams, TN
Emily Wise, TN
Andy Yerby, AL

Freshmen

Benjamin Barcroft, IL
Emmie Barnett, TN
Lauren Batey, TN
Micah Borck, TN
LeeAnn Branch, SC
Sara Carman, TN
Allie Foust, TN
Gabrielle Hicks, KS
Ashley Holland, TN
Daniel Kilgore, CA
Savannah Kelly, AL
Krista Lindsay, AL
Tori Masters, NC
Cody Matlock, KS
Caroline McDonald, TN
Kerena Morton, VA
Alexis Saunders, TN
Raygan Sellers, TN
Gabby Subeh, VA
Sydney Walker, NC
Madison Wright, NC

Welch Adds Master's Degree Tracks in Instructional Leadership and English Language

The Welch College School of Education announced two new tracks in its Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree program, according to Dr. Greg Kettelman, vice president for strategic initiatives and graduate dean of education. The college will offer tracks* in Instructional Leadership and in English Language Learning along with existing tracks in Teaching, Special Education, and Higher Education Pedagogy.

The Instructional Leadership track is designed for school leaders and aspiring school leaders. The English Language Learning track is designed for teachers who work with multilingual student groups and English language learners.

"The English Language learning track is based on Welch's existing, state-approved English Language learner endorsement," Kettelman said. "Welch College and Sumner County Schools

leaders have established a collaborative agreement to make the English Language endorsement available to Sumner County teachers."

The college is taking applications for the new M.A.T. tracks now. Find the application for the M.A.T. at <https://welch.edu/admissions>. Contact Dr. Greg Kettelman at gkettelman@welch.edu or 615-675-5312 for more information.

*pending accreditor approval

Sarah Bracey to Lead Welch College Program in Psychology

Dr. Sarah Bracey has been chosen to serve as program coordinator of the psychology program at Welch College, according to Welch Provost Matthew McAfee.



Dr. Sarah Bracey

"I am pleased to announce Dr. Sarah Bracey as program coordinator for the psychology program," McAfee said. "Dr. Bracey served as interim program coordinator for the spring 2019 term, and has distinguished herself as the best candidate to fill this position. I have been impressed by her genuine care for our students

and commitment to this institution. It's an honor to welcome her to the faculty." Bracey succeeds Mr. Michael Oliver, who completed his tenure as psychology program coordinator in December 2018.

Bracey received B.A.s in Philosophy and Psychology from Ball State University in 2003. She completed an M.S. in Professional Counseling from Lipscomb University in 2010 and recently defended her dissertation for the Ph.D. in Leadership-Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of the Cumberlands.

She has served as an adjunct faculty member at Welch College over the past five years. She has already been successful in recruiting students to

the psychology program. Dr. Bracey has also served as an on-campus counselor, which she will continue alongside her program coordinator responsibilities.

"Sarah Bracey brings a wonderful combination to her new position at Welch," Welch President Matt Pinson said. "She's a godly mentor of students, a classroom teacher who's well-loved by her students, and a scholar who is sensitive to how the Christian worldview transforms her subject matter. She will be a tremendous blessing to Welch."

Bracey is married to Matthew Steven Bracey, vice provost for academic administration, and lives in the Nashville area. For more information on Welch College, visit welch.edu or email recruit@welch.edu.



Toward a Healthy Church Budget

BY CHRIS COMPTON

One of the hardest (and saddest) things I have witnessed in my life was the decline and eventual death of my grandmother. As a teenager, I watched cancer ravage her body. We prayed she wouldn't suffer much and, thank the Lord, she didn't. However, her decline in physical vitality was real and painful to watch. Her death was even more so.

Since that time, I have played those scenes over and over in my mind. Throughout my time as a health care professional, I witnessed families go through that same emotional rollercoaster. As a pastor for seven years, I spent a great deal of time ministering to families enduring the experiences of declining health and death. Though there are some movies I like to watch over and over, this is not one of them. These people were not my family, but it was still difficult and sad to watch life just slip away.

It can also be difficult to see the life and vitality of a church slip away. I take no pleasure in the decline or death of a church, yet it seems this is becoming reality for more and more churches, even among our Free Will Baptist churches. I am grateful for all the growing and thriving congregations in our movement, and I am glad we have many of them. I am excited about church planting efforts and the difference church planters are making across the world. I would love for this health and vitality to be true of *all* our churches but it isn't.

Churches may be unhealthy and not growing for any number of reasons. One of those potential reasons is where the money is going (and not going). Most new churches grow at a faster pace than established churches. New churches also spend roughly half their budget reaching their community and the world. I think there is a correlation. The correlation is with the heart of the church. Healthy churches have a heart for reaching people with the gospel. You see this in their actions, their preaching, and their budget.

Established churches can become so inwardly focused they lose sight of their vision and heart for the world, and this is reflected in their budget. I am familiar with the story of a church whose attendance and finances were declining. Their solution was to cut money spent on outside causes. They surmised they needed to take care of their own things first. For this church, the reduction in spending only exacerbated the issue.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, your heart will be also." This is true for individuals, and

I believe it is true for churches as well. We spend our money on the things we care about and believe in. The church's mission should be the Lord's mission. That mission is to reach the lost and dying world. This is not to say we shouldn't minister to those inside the walls of the church but we shouldn't minister *only* to them.

LET'S MAKE
SURE OUR
TREASURE
FOLLOWS
GOD'S HEART.

If your church is in decline, perhaps it is a good time to consider where you spend your money. You may be surprised at what you learn. Each church is different, and there must be a balance between internal and external spending. The key is to make sure your budget makes room to reach out to your community and the world. Jonah's sin was that he cared more about the gourd than he did the people of Nineveh. He cared more about himself than he did about others.

We must not allow our churches to commit the sin of Jonah. Let's make sure our treasure follows God's heart. Let's ask God to give us a heart like His that is giving and loving. Let's commit to reaching out to our community and the world. We can be healthy and thriving, but we must be sure our heart and treasure is in the right place.

Contact the Board of Retirement for more information on creating a healthy church budget and opportunities to invest for future Kingdom work. [ONE](#)

About the Writer: Chris Compton is communications officer for the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement. He graduated in 2007 with an M.A. in Bible exposition from Columbia International University. A 1998 graduate of East Tennessee State University, he has over 13 years of administrative/financial experience in varied fields as well as seven years of pastoral ministry experience.



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Small Talk

BY BRENDA EVANS

I know, I know. It's risky to give advice. Plus it's easier to give it than to take it. Despite that, there's Agatha Christie's view: "Advice is certain to be ignored, but that's no reason not to give it." So here goes.

First, think about what *advice* is—or at least what it's meant to be. Geoffrey Chaucer helps here. In *Canterbury Tales*, Prudence is a wise wife who advises her husband Melibee he should forego the violent revenge he is cooking up and forgive instead. A thousand lines later, Melibee finally takes Prudence's good advice and decides forgiveness is "what best were to do." Regarding small talk, I'm giving advice or my opinion on "what best were to do."

Some people think small talk is pointless. Just chitchat. It is a brief verbal exchange, all right, with strangers

or passing acquaintances—check-out people, museum docents, seatmates on planes or trains, people in long lines or waiting rooms, the gym, classroom, church, bookstore, a favorite restaurant. But small talk can open doors to large talk.

Small talk may not be "functional conversation" that conveys important information, but it can bridge the silent space between you and a stranger or slight acquaintance. It is pleasant talk, light and cordial. It is kind and easy-going, not controversial, confrontational, or flirtatious. It's a Christian act.

Small talk has benefits. Almost without exception, the research I've done focuses on the career benefits we gain from it. Many studies claim small talk helps us get a job, for example, climb higher on the ladder, or make people like us—all benefits that reek of the I-deserve-it-because-I'm-nice attitude so rampant in our culture. In other words, do *this*...get *that*. That's small talk as a *getting* device. Though I agree we must do small talk in job interviews, we don't have to buy into a "gospel of getting" or the whole set of I-deserve attitudes as we run our Christian lives.

Even secularists describe benefits that are less self-serving and noxious. Elizabeth Bernstein cites studies by psychologist Dr. Gillian Sandstrom of the University of Essex, England, that small talk often gets us out of our own heads and removes the focus from self. Always a good thing! Small talk can boost our moods, broaden perspectives, and strengthen emotional health. It can improve our spiritual health, too.

Consider this. For Christians, small talk can be a "gospel of giving," not a "gospel of getting." In other words, cultivate it for others' benefit, not our own. Pastor and author Drew Hunter says we people of God are made for friendliness, not for isolation. When we engage others, we benefit, but often they do as well. Jesus said loving and paying attention to others shows we are his disciples (John 13:35). He also called us salt and light (Matthew 5:13-14). In *The Divine Conspiracy* Dallas Willard said we are light to "glow" and salt "to cleanse, preserve, and flavor" the lives of others. The unnamed author of Hebrews reminds us to be friendly and gracious to strangers (13:1-3). The Proverb writer warned about being insular, shutting out others, and being too self-absorbed (18:1).

This idea of small talk as a Christian "gospel of giving" makes me want to get better at it. So how do I engage strangers in good small talk?

The first, second, and third rules are *go slow, go slow, and go slow*. Another way to say that is to *be gentle*. I like Dr. Robert Picirilli's translation of *gentleness* from Philippians 4:5—sweet reasonableness. Small talk must be pleasant, agreeable, reasonable, not pushy or aggressive.

Smile. Ask a simple question or ask for help, comment on the weather, an event, sports or hobbies, books, hometown, or church. "Take baby steps," Elizabeth Bernstein says. Don't goad. You'll be able to tell whether that person wants to engage or be left alone. Honor his choice.

Here's a scenario. You're in a dentist's waiting room, and you ask the woman across the room, "Is Dr. Janson your long-time dentist?" She doesn't look up or make eye contact. She murmurs *no* or *yes* or *mm-m* or simply shrugs and shifts in her seat. Back off. Zip your lip. She doesn't want to talk and

doesn't want you to talk, so don't. But if a bit of give-and-take is established, keep it positive and polite. Don't go negative or political or controversial. Don't complain. Don't flatter.

Why go slow? Part of it is simple decorum or courtesy. If a person wants to avoid you, let him. It's never a good idea to push yourself on people, whatever the setting. In-your-face is not only

bad manners, it's bad behavior. Our mothers should have taught us better. If they didn't, the Bible does.

Remember Paul's words in I Corinthians 13: "Love is kind...does not parade itself...does not behave rudely" (13:4-5). And there's Peter, who said, "the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit...is very precious in the sight of God" (3:4). James reminded us twice that the conduct of a "wise and understanding" Christian is not "self-seeking" (3:13-16). Pushiness is self-seeking, self-gratifying.

Another reason to go slow is cultural. Not all people are chinwaggers. In a recent *The Wall Street Journal* article, Alistair MacDonald wrote that Helsinki, Finland, seems "chitchat deficit" to him because "small talk does not come naturally" to many Finns. Not all are silent types, but many are. So are some people we meet.

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The point is, stateside or abroad, in our small community or a large city, many of us don't come from a house full of talkers, huggers, hand-shakers, back-slappers, and chatty Joes and Janes. Just because I want to chat with a passing acquaintance doesn't mean he wants to chat with me. I need to recognize and respect that.

Jill Briscoe makes a similar point when she urges Christians to become good at making allowances for people. "Forbearance is a divine quality," she says, a quality that suggests restraint, holding back. Sometimes forbearance means holding back words, a grace the Apostle Paul often commended in his letters.

If used wisely, "phatic communication," as Bronislaw Malinowski first called small talk back in 1923, is a skill we Christians can exercise to bridge distances, sharpen our listening skills, better understand others, and open opportunities to share our faith.

I never considered Jesus' conversation at the Samaritan well as an example of small talk until I recently revisited

John 4. Now I think it is. How? Jesus spoke in private. Small talk usually is private. He asked a simple thing of the woman: water. She was taken aback but asked a question in return, even chided him a bit. She was willing and ready to talk. The give-and-take grew. He offered special water of life. She asked for it and left to bring others. You know the rest of the story.

Small talk seeks the good of others, as Jesus did. At the well, He asked for water to bridge a gap. The woman asked her own questions. A salvific conversation followed. Sometimes small talk leads to large talk about our faith, our Lord. Sometimes it doesn't.

Our part is to do "*what best were to do*" and leave the other part to God. **ONE**

About the Writer: Brenda Evans lives and writes in Ashland, Kentucky. You may contact her at beejayevans@windstream.net.



Curriculum Discipleship Plan 2019 Scope and Sequence

November 2019 Special Topic

The Process of Discipleship

- Week 1 - Everyday Discipleship
- Week 2 - Honoring God's Word
- Week 3 - Nurturing Family Faith
- Week 4 - Modeling the Faith

December 2019 Old Testament: Isaiah

The Promised Messiah

- Week 1 - Call for Repentance
- Week 2 - Warning of Judgment
- Week 3 - The Gift of Peace
- Week 4 - Promise of a Savior
- Week 5 - Hope for the Nations



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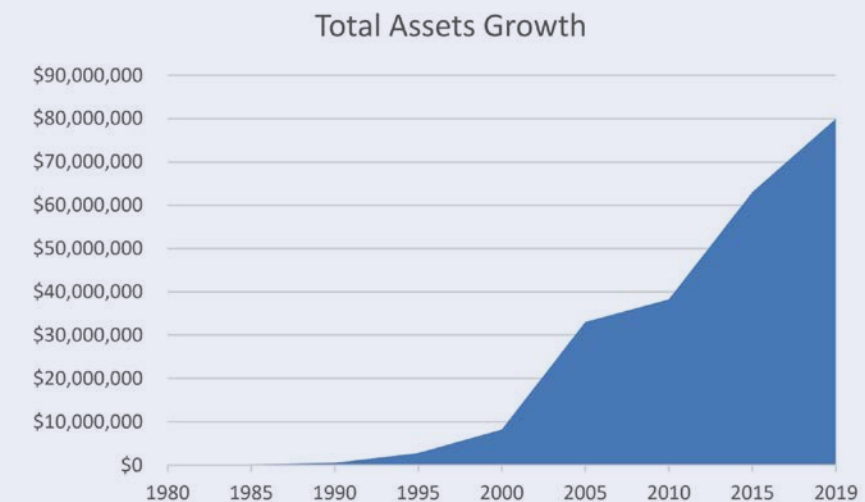


From 1980 to Zero to Eighty

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

Free Will Baptist Foundation began as a dream in the mind of Herman Hersey. His dream became a reality in 1980, when delegates to the National Association of Free Will Baptists in Anaheim, California, established the Foundation on the afternoon of July 23, 1980.

Progress was slow as Hersey began the process of educating Free Will Baptists on the value and impact the Foundation could have on the denomination. Total assets were less than \$1 million when Hersey retired July 31, 1993. William Evans followed Hersey as director from August 1, 1993, until July 31, 2007. Under his leadership, the Foundation experienced rapid growth. The first charitable remainder unitrusts were established in the planned giving aspect of ministry, along with large additions to gift annuities. Changes were made to bring the investments of the revocable trust pool under the Foundation's direct control. The investment policy of the revocable trust pool was changed to project an earnings rate. The rapid growth increased total assets more than 30-fold, reaching \$34 million by the time Evans retired.



Since 2007, the momentum that began under Evans has continued with dramatic additions to revocable trusts and major additions to new planned gifts, including the first \$1 million planned gift, made just recently.

Estate planning and a grant program also have been added to the ministry of the Foundation. On June 30, 2019, the total assets of the Foundation exceeded \$80 million for the first time. The chart above illustrates the progress the Foundation has made over the decades. It has been a remarkable run for the last 39 years. We give all glory to God for His blessings and thank Him for the ministry made possible by these funds.

Year	Total Assets
1980	\$0
1985	\$184,492
1990	\$481,127
1995	\$2,796,842
2000	\$8,199,532
2005	\$33,042,615
2010	\$38,226,088
2015	\$63,055,391
2019 (June 30)	\$80,000,000+ ONE

About the Columnist: David Brown is director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. To learn more about the grants program, visit www.fwbgifts.org.

Faithful to All Generations

BY KEREN DELGADO

When my roommate prayed for me about sharing my testimony, she prayed I would be able to express what God has done in a way that will encourage and comfort those who hear it. This is my prayer as well, that these few minutes you are encouraged and comforted by God's faithfulness to all generations.

I am Keren Delgado. I was born in Cuba, and my father was a Free Will Baptist pastor in Pinar del Río, Cuba. He is the fruit of the labor of missionaries like Pop Willey, who went to Cuba. These missionaries not only brought the gospel to my father and grandparents but also taught my father what it meant to follow God's will and reach the ends of the world with the gospel and a servant's heart.

Because of the impact of Free Will Baptist missionaries and God's calling, my family moved to Panama to serve as missionaries ourselves. I grew up in Panama as we lived and served in that country ten years. Though we thought we would work there longer, God had other plans. He brought us to the United States, to Arkansas, to work with the Hispanic community and to plant churches.

Long ago, my family surrendered to Christ and His will. He has been faithful to us since the beginning—faithful in bringing the gospel to Cuba, and faithful in guiding us step by step to serve Him. Most recently, God brought me to Welch College, where I spent four years studying and growing.

God is faithful. Not just because of my testimony, but

according to His Word. Psalm 119 says He is faithful to all generations. He has been faithful in meeting every need. During four years in college, I had many needs. I experienced physical needs. I was sick, unable to walk once, and struggled through a disease. Yet, God provided me with healing and endurance in His time.

He also provided financially through the obedience of those who generously give to Welch, again in His way and in His time. His faithfulness is even more remarkable because He provided in a way that was more glorifying to Him and conformed me more to His Son, Christ.

God also has been faithful to give me His Word constantly. I am so glad God opened the door for me to study at Welch, but beyond the many good reasons I could express, I want to testify it was because He desired for me to mature in my relationship with Him through chapel, classes, and campus church. He was faithful to bring me to a place where sound doctrine is taught. Without sound doctrine, I could not grow in my spiritual life. I have learned sound doctrine and truth from the Word of God, the only thing that can satisfy us and make us thirst no more.



Just as God was faithful to provide living water to the Samaritan woman, He was faithful when teachers at Welch cared for us as students and men and women in need of God. They did not just teach lessons but testified to God's truth and taught godly counsel with their words and lives. Through Bible conferences and missions conferences, my heart was convicted, transformed, refreshed, and challenged.

Bible studies led by Mrs. Pinson and wives of staff and faculty members opened my eyes to understand that as a woman, I have eternal value. I am able to show the world the gospel if I am obedient to His design for me.

God also was faithful in providing a community. Proverbs 17 says one in isolation follows his own desires. But God has given me a community where I don't have to live in isolation and bondage to my own desires. In this community, I have learned real love is not only toward those who are lovable and can do something for me, but also toward my enemy—the one who talks behind my back and never apologizes, or even a stranger who is so different from me.

Thank you, God, and thanks to the Welch faculty and staff for obeying God's mission for your life. Thank you to all the people who give faithfully to the school. Thanks to Mrs. Alicia Celorio and the *Do Unto Others Trust* in Miami, Florida, for providing scholarship funds. Thanks to the ladies of WNAC. Thanks to the churches that gave so I could get more than a degree, that I could gain eternal treasures such as sound doctrine, spiritual growth, and a loving community.

Thank you to my parents and grandparents for constant prayer and support. Thank you to the student body of Welch College for being the community God provided for me these

four years. As a foreigner, I thought it would be hard having an accent and coming from another culture, but I was glad to learn we have Christ in common.

I learned all these things at Welch because God is faithful, and He will continue to be faithful after graduation. As I go and serve as a missionary to Bulgaria, He will continue providing needs, healing, endurance, peace, a community, and living water. I encourage you to see God's faithfulness above all, in all, and everywhere around you. Please, constantly counsel your heart with God's Word that "He is faithful to all generations."

Adapted from Keren's senior testimony shared at Welch College commencement, May 10, 2019, with her parents and grandparents present. ONE

About the Writer: Keren Delgado, a 2019 Welch graduate, received the Miley International Student Scholarship sponsored by WNAC during all four years of her studies. In April 2019, the board of IM, Inc., approved Keren to a two-year term in Bulgaria. She is currently raising her support. Learn more: iminc.org/missionaries/kdelgado





Airborne All the Way!

BY CH (CPT) DAVID M. DODSON

I'm sitting, fully rigged in T-11 main and reserve parachutes, in a C-17 high-performance aircraft, 1,250 feet above Fryer Drop Zone at Fort Benning, Georgia. The jumpmaster gives the commands to "stand up" and "hook up." My heart is beating much faster than normal as I prepare to exit a perfectly good aircraft for the first time.

As I begin moving toward the door, I think, "How did I get myself into this?"

My mind leaps back to July 1996. It was a warm Texas evening in Fort Worth as I settled into my seat for the Wednesday service at the National Association of Free Will Baptists. All week, I had resisted, refusing to do what I knew God's Spirit was calling me to do—yield all to him. I could resist no longer. At the sound of the invitational hymn, I raced to the altar and gave myself to Jesus Christ and His will. Little did I realize His leading would take me to India, St. Croix, Uruguay, and at age 41, the United States Army and the Basic Airborne Course.

Volunteering for the 82nd Airborne Division means going to jump school, living on jump status, and, if necessary, parachuting into combat. Chaplains are not exempt from the expectation to "jump, fight, and win tonight." Since World War II, the chaplains of the 82nd have been willing to follow their "congregation" out of aircraft and into the fiercest fighting.

World War II Chaplain (CPT) Delbert Kuehl was one such combat chaplain. In 1944, he jumped with his men

into the Netherlands as part of Operation Market Garden. As the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment prepared to cross the Waal River to neutralize the Germans and take control of the bridge, Chaplain Kuehl requested permission to join his men in the assault. He later said, "We were on a

suicide mission, and my men didn't even have the choice to volunteer. Since they had to go, I chose to go too."

Chaplain Kuehl embodies the philosophy of a muddy boots ministry that says, "I will go with my men into the worst of circumstances to minister to them in their time of need." I strive to be a chaplain that goes with his





men wherever they go, even if that means jumping out of an airplane.

My thoughts return to the present and the glowing green light inside the aircraft. The jumpmaster yells, “Green light, go!”

Somewhat surprisingly, my legs remember how to move and carry me to the door. I jump from the C-17 with feet and knees together, chin on chest. I count, “one-thousand, two-thousand, three-thousand, four-thousand, five-thousand, six-thousand.” I feel the chute deploy and look up to see one of the most beautiful sights of my life—a canopy filled with air!

I land safely on the ground and lie still for a moment, looking up at the sky and thankful, not only to be alive, but also to be an airborne chaplain. **ONE**

About the Writer: Chaplain CPT David Dodson is assigned to the 2-501 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1 Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Learn more about Free Will Baptist chaplain ministry: www.FWBNAM.com.

2019 Leadership Conference “Turns the Page”

Nashville, TN—The 2019 Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference returns to Nashville Airport Marriott December 9-10. Pastors and church leaders from across the country will gather to explore the theme, “Turning the Page,” according to Ryan Lewis, conference organizer. Keynote sessions will feature recently retired Executive Secretary Keith Burden and his successor, Dr. Eddie Moody. The two leaders will assess the denomination’s past successes, present challenges, and future potential.

Tuesday morning training seminars will feature a third keynote speaker. Dr. Gordon Penfold will present *The State of the Church in America*, *How to “Make” Change*, and *Vision Basics*. Penfold has served four churches

and two interim pastorates over 37 years of pastoring and recently stepped down as lead pastor of First Baptist Church, a multi-ethnic congregation in Holyoke, Colorado.

In 2006, Dr. Penfold became director of Fresh Start Ministries, focused on bringing health and vitality to plateaued, declining, and conflicted congregations. Recently, Dr. Penfold and Gary McIntosh developed Turnaround Pastor, an organization to equip struggling pastors with tools to transform stagnant churches.

The two-day conference provides more than training. Attendees will enjoy banquet-styled meals, music provided by Welch College, and free time Tuesday afternoon for sightseeing in Nashville. A number



of national boards and committees also will meet in conjunction with the conference.

“As our denomination enters a transitional phase,” notes conference director Ryan Lewis, “we need to be encouraged to remain unified as we work to equip strong pastors and churches that will push us forward.”

Visit www.nafwb.org/leadership-conference for more information, registration, and hotel reservation information.

Get to Know Your Free Will Baptist Pastors

BY DANNY BAER

With the goal to collect a variety of information to help denominational leaders better serve pastors and churches, the newly formed *Committee on Denominational Research* sent an invitation to participate in an online survey to pastors of churches in the National Association of Free Will Baptists by email and post card. As a result, we received 639 separate responses,* resulting in a 3% margin of error for the survey at a 95% certainty level.

Demographics

Much of what we learned was of no surprise: our pastors are predominantly Caucasian (96%), speak English as their primary language (99%), are married to their first wife (94%) and have two-three children (65%).

We did discover 55% of our pastors are over 50 years of age, and 80% are over 40. This could indicate we will soon have a lack of preachers to fill our pulpits. However, we do not have earlier surveys to confirm the average age of our pastors is indeed increasing, and we do not have accurate statistics regarding preachers not yet pastoring but ready to assume that role. We need more data and research in this area.

It is impressive that, generally, our pastors have been ministering for some time. In fact, 35% began pastoring before age 25, and 76% before age 35. In addition, over 58% have pastored no more than two churches, and 34% of our pastors have pastored only one church.

Retirement

We found 78% of pastors have not opted out of the Social Security system with 12% of those wishing they had. On the other hand, 21% did opt out of Social Security with 28% of those wishing they had not.

We were also curious about how churches helped pastors

and their retirement. We found 39% of our churches contribute toward their pastor's retirement. We realize many of the bi-vocational pastors would have retirement through their employment outside of the pastorate. However, we would encourage all Free Will Baptist churches to contribute toward their pastor's retirement.

One of most shocking responses was only 9% of pastors indicated they felt ready for retirement. Of the remaining pastors who responded, 36% said they are not ready for retirement, 33% said they are somewhat ready for retirement, and 11% are not sure. While 11% consider themselves already retired, over a third said they were not prepared for it.

Education

It is encouraging that 66% of our pastors have graduated from college and 29% from graduate school (20% with master's degrees and 9% with doctoral degrees). A majority of the graduate degrees are from Bible colleges or seminaries.

It is clear our pastors are supportive of undergraduate biblical education. However, support for a biblical graduate education is not as evident. When asked to rate the importance of a Bible college/seminary degree on a scale of one to ten, over 50% of pastors gave a ranking of seven or above for an undergraduate degree, and 23%

chose the highest rank of ten with a weighted average of 6.3. For a graduate degree, 64% gave a ranking of five or less with a weighted average of 4.7.

Study Habits and Personal Time

Over 85% of our pastors spend more than five hours a week studying for their sermons, with 25% spending 11 to 15 hours, and 29% spending more than 15 hours. Over 90% of our pastors utilize electronic sources in their sermon preparation.

Most of our pastors (93%) spend at least ten minutes a day in personal devotions with 26% in the 11- to 20-minute range, 35% in the 21- to 30-minute range, and 32% spending more than 30 minutes a day in devotions. Prayer time follows a close parallel to this same pattern. The majority (91%) spend over ten minutes in prayer, with 39% in the ten- to 20-minute range, 24% in the 21- to 30-minute range, and 28% over 30 minutes.

While this question was in no way meant to stir up controversy within our ranks, we thought it fitting to find out what pastors felt about the place of the King James Version of the Bible in preaching, teaching, and personal study. In response to that question, 10% believe the King James Version is the only version that should be used for preaching, teaching, and personal study; 25% feel the KJV is the only version we should use for preaching and teaching but consider other versions acceptable for personal study; and 65% of our pastors indicated other versions of the Bible are acceptable for both preaching and teaching.

Associational Meetings

About 66% of our pastors say they try to at least occasionally attend the National Association (39% yearly and 27% occasionally). Regarding state association meetings, 82% of pastors say they try to attend at least occasionally, with 68% attempting to do so yearly. Concerning local association meetings, 92% of our pastors say they try to attend at least occasionally with 82% attempting to attend each meeting.

When asked to rate the importance of these meetings

from one to ten, 40% of the pastors gave the National Association a ranking of ten, with a weighted average of 7.8. Regarding state meetings, 37% chose the ranking of ten, with a weighted average of 7.7. Regarding local association meetings, 30% chose the ranking of ten, with a weighted average of 6.6.

We also asked, “How many times should a local association meet yearly?” Of those responding, 37% said two times per year, and 31% said four times per year. The remaining responses were as follows: once yearly (16%), three times yearly (11%), and more than four times yearly (2%).

Parting Thoughts

You may visit www.nafwb.org/research for more details regarding the results of this survey as well as information regarding future research of the Committee on Denominational Research.

**Many of the 808 emails were rejected by email servers and addresses were eliminated by the validation process. Finally, many postcards we mailed were returned. We deeply apologize if you are a pastor and did not receive an opportunity to complete a survey. Contact the Executive Office or associational clerk to update address information. ONE*

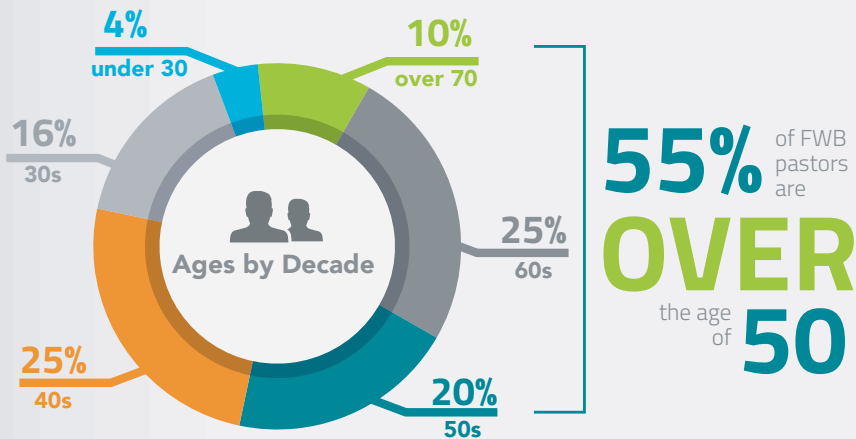
About the Writer: Dr. Danny Baer has been an ordained Free Will Baptist minister for over 40 years. He is academic dean at Southeastern FWB College and serves on the Board of Directors for FWB Board of Retirement. The Committee on Denominational Research—appointed by moderator Tim York at the 2018 FWB National Convention—currently consists of Dr. Danny Baer (Chair), Dr. Eddie Moody, Dr. Ron Hunter, Dr. Tim Eaton, Mark McPeak, Dr. Sarah Bracey, and Eric Thomsen. These efforts are funded by a \$5,000 grant from Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Survey of Free Will Baptist Pastors

NAFWB Committee on Denominational Research

July 2019

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Did You Know?

76% began pastoring before the age of 35

34% began before the age of 25

EDUCATION

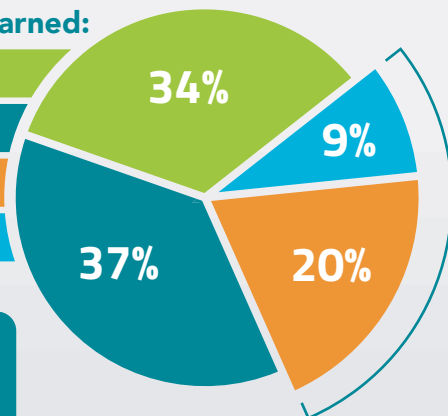
Highest Degree Earned:

High School

Bachelor's

Master's

Doctorate



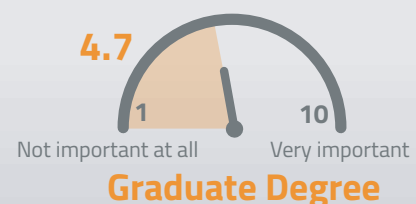
almost

60%

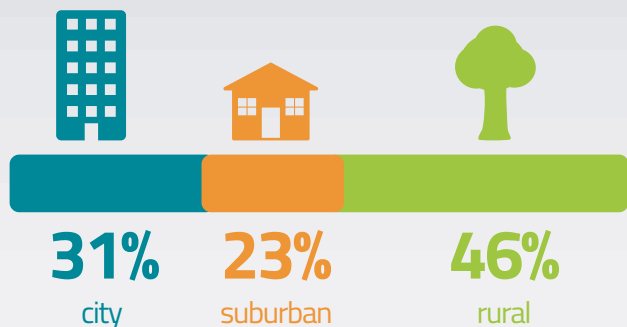
attended a Free Will Baptist Institution

29% with graduate degrees

Pastors were asked to rate the importance of a Bible college/seminary degree on a scale from 1 to 10 for both bachelor's and graduate degrees.



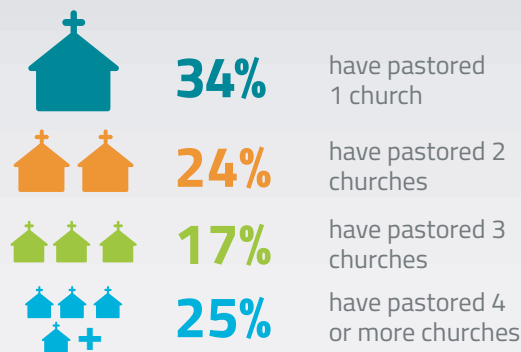
LOCATION



Did You Know?



LONGEVITY



Did You Know?



RETIREMENT



39% of churches contribute to the pastor's retirement

9% of unretired pastors feel adequately prepared for retirement

FEEDBACK

FWB pastors were asked what NAFWB can do to assist pastors and their churches. Their response:

counseling revitalization
 leadership conferences communication
 insurance church growth
 resources continued training
 refinancing seminars
 encouragement forums for practical issues
 prayer curriculum technology advice
 online materials
 mentoring pulpit magazine
 support bivocational pastors

NAFWB Committee on Denominational Research

Dr. Danny Baer, Dr. Ron Hunter, Dr. Eddie Moody, Dr. Tim Eaton, Mr. Mark McPeak

www.nafwb.org/research

Download the results using the QR codes:

1. Open the camera app on your phone
2. Point your phone at the QR code
3. Tap the pop up on your screen to open the link in your phone's web browser

Download the results on your computer:

Go to www.nafwb.org/research

Download this infographic:



Download the Executive Summary:



An alarm clock with a black face and silver bells is positioned in the top right corner of the page. The clock face is white with black numbers and hands. The background of the page is a light blue gradient, and the clock is resting on a dark wood-grain surface.

Rising to the Challenge of the Bi-Vocational Pastorate

BY RANDY BRYANT

Challenge! That word describes any ministry, but according to a recent study by the Denominational Research Committee, 38% percent of our pastors know a special challenge. These men face the unique demands of the bi-vocational pastorate.

Challenge in Concept

The bi-vocational pastor faces a challenge with the concept itself. Does bi-vocational really mean part-time? No! Part-time means you are a church's pastor only part of the time. The term originated when pastors served a given church only on certain Sundays, maybe the first and third, or second and fourth.

A bi-vocational pastor is a full-time pastor who holds down another job to support his family. A full-time pastor who works an additional job 40 hours a week while fulfilling his God-given call to the ministry—a pastor who works another job on the side, not a businessman who pastors on the side.

The average church member has no idea what is required to be a full-time pastor and hold down an outside job. What they do know is they want their pastor available in times of crisis, illness, and sorrow. They deserve no less than this, and the bi-vocational pastor's challenge is to be there when needed.

The pastor must be creative in his scheduling—available to his people while dependable and honest with his secular employer.

Fellow pastors schedule many of their activities, meetings and programs during the day when bi-vocational men can not attend. This, many times, is just a matter of not being aware of the bi-vocational pastor's schedule. In truth, the pastor working a second job probably needs the fellowship and “feeding” available at many retreats and conferences more than anyone since his schedule rarely includes free days for this type of event.

Sometimes, the bi-vocational pastor is not viewed as a “real” pastor and it takes special explanations to work with others such as hospital chaplains, funeral directors, and local ministerial associations.

Does our denomination grasp the concept? Our reporting forms ask whether the pastor is “full-time” or “part-time.” Some church clerks mark full-time because their pastor is there every Sunday even though he works another job. The numbers may be higher than we realize.

Challenge of the Clock

Every pastor struggles to find enough time to accomplish all that needs doing. When you add a 40-hour week to the schedule of the average pastor, you can see how the challenge to attend the children's school

functions and ballgames, take your wife out to dinner, participate in local ministry efforts like crisis pregnancy centers or nursing homes, and serve in denominational positions becomes nearly impossible.

However, if God has called you into the ministry, blessed you with certain gifts, and also directed that you should pastor a church that requires you to work a second job, you have to find a way to do it.

Obviously, some things have to be sacrificed. Can it be your family? No. Can it be your church members? No. Can it be people in your town that need you? Probably not. Can it be that you will not be able to serve your denomination at the district, state or national levels? Perhaps. Perhaps not.

The bi-vocational pastor must become a master of prioritizing. Some things only he can do. No one else can prepare his sermons. No one else can prepare his Sunday School lessons, and no one else can be his members' pastor in times of crisis or illness.

However, others in the church can make some visits. Sometimes, phone calls will have to suffice instead of home visits. Daytime visits with shut-ins or activities with seniors groups in the church may not happen. This may not be ideal, and it may not be the way he would choose to function, but it is reality.

The bi-vocational pastor may need to establish trade-offs with a secular boss to be at the hospital for Mrs. Church Member's middle-of-the-week, middle-of-the-day surgery. Sometimes it's tough to balance giving the secular boss your best and giving your members the time they need. It's not a good testimony to shortchange the boss, and doing church work on his time is not fair to him. God is faithful, however, and will provide a way to accomplish what He has called you to do.

Compromises may need to be made with your family. Vacations may have to be an activity at the beginning or end of the trip to the National Convention. You may have to get creative in finding time with your wife.

You may not be able to serve on local boards or attend those interesting seminars for pastors held on weekdays.

Going to dinner with a family in your church on a weeknight may mean less sleep because you still have a sermon to prepare.

Benefits for the Bi-Vocational Pastor


It's not a sacrifice though. One positive aspect is the opportunity to minister to people where you work. There will be occasions to minister to co-workers and bosses who attend other churches but need encouragement or advice. They see you every day, reacting in various situations, and after gaining their confidence you will have opportunities to minister. They may never attend your church, but you can influence them positively for the Lord.

Sermon ideas and illustrations abound. Sometimes pastors are accused of not living in the real world, being disconnected from real people and their struggles. By being out there where they are every day, you experience and understand what they are facing. You see their struggles firsthand, and can speak to them.

Finally, the bi-vocational pastor will probably be able to make enough money to care for his family. He may have health insurance or retirement plans provided by his secular job. Some smaller churches would not have a pastor if he could not supplement his earnings with a secular job.

The bi-vocational pastorate is unique and challenging. It's neither glamorous nor ideal, and many young ministers will be open only to full-time works. However, smaller churches must have pastors, too. God wants them to have a shepherd, to be cared for and taught just like larger churches. The bi-vocational pastor is essential to the existence of our denomination. It is a challenge our men must rise to meet, accept and perform by the grace of God. **ONE**

About the Writer: Randy Bryant pastors Ryanwood Fellowship FWB Church in Florida. He is also the promotional director for the Florida State Association.

A photograph of a white ceramic cup filled with dark coffee, a brown leather-bound Bible, and a black pen resting on a light-colored wooden surface. The Bible is open, and the pen lies on a piece of lined paper. The background is a warm, textured wood grain.

Theological Integrity: Now More Than Ever

BY W. JACKSON WATTS

When the National Association convened in Asheville, North Carolina, 60 years ago, turbulent times loomed on the horizon. The Christian church in America would soon face battles over the Bible, the loosening of sexual standards, and a growing racial divide. But in 1959, Free Will Baptist leaders and delegates determined to prepare our churches. The Commission on Theological Liberalism was the product of this determination.

Later renamed the Commission for Theological Integrity, this group's specific purpose was to "study the menaces of theological liberalism, secularism, worldliness," and similar challenges to our spiritual and ministry fidelity (*Contact*, August, 1959, page 6). Members were challenged to alert their brethren to deceptive trends and equip them to maintain integrity in a fallen world. Through articles, pamphlets, seminars, books, and later symposiums and a website, the commission has been doing just that.

Many Free Will Baptists can't help but associate the commission with Leroy Forlines, one of Free Will Baptists' most consequential theologians. Not surprising, since his service spans nearly the length of the commission's existence. Yet, the first members of the commission included the likes of Eugene Waddell, N.R. Smith, Ronald Creech, Paul Kettelman, and Bobby Jackson.

Other notable figures such as Wade Jernigan, J.D. O'Donnell, and Steve Ashby also have served. These men and others dug deeply into our Free Will Baptist heritage, explored various areas of theological scholarship, and paid attention to American society to be best positioned to prepare our churches.

As a long-standing institution in our movement, the commission has maintained a respectable reputation for addressing tough questions. It has played a role in adding clarity to nearly every doctrinal debate we've had and confronted every major theological crisis in American Christianity. The list is long: the New Age Movement, ecumenism, the doctrine of Hell, Calvinism, the social gospel, evolution, transgenderism, and much more. In one sense, the commission's work is reactive: to discern the times and equip our churches and leaders to respond faithfully. However, its work is also proactive. Many questions the commission has addressed are cyclical in nature. The complex theological questions and cultural crises our movement faced in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s have resurfaced this century in new garb. As Mark Twain once quipped, "History doesn't repeat itself, but it rhymes." Therefore, having built a foundation of doctrinal understanding around many major issues, the commission has, in fact, provided our people with the tools to prepare for issues that arise in the future.

Since I began serving on the commission in 2013, I have been intrigued to review our materials and records and discover the level of engagement my predecessors had with the problems of the times. I've seen careful examination of issues easily distorted in a sound-bite world. I also have been reminded of our charge to help each new generation of church leaders and laymen view these problems with fresh eyes.

As we press deeper into the 21st century, there are two great challenges to our denomination's commitment to truth, which in turn, influence the commission's work. The first challenge is we need as much theological integrity in the Internet age as the early church needed in the first century. We must manage the delicate balance between making the wisest use of this incredible tool, while also being aware of its limits and destructive tendencies. The advent of Google has made it possible to learn everything and nothing at the same time. Finding a reliable source for biblical information can be challenging. Occasionally, I Google a question relating to a biblical issue to see what others have said on a subject. What I see often frightens me. If an educated pastor must exercise discernment and caution in his study, how much more is this true for those with less training or who are new to the faith? The Scriptures describe Satan as a liar and deceiver. What better weapon can he wield than a tool we use and depend upon every day?

The prevalence of lies makes the work of the Theological Commission especially significant. In 1959, the resolution that gave birth to our commission called for it to "write informative articles in our publications to warn our people." Much like Paul told Timothy to warn people of false teaching, the commission is engaged in warning (1 Timothy 1:3). Readers can expect this to continue through both digital and print resources, and at events.

The second challenge we face is related to the first but more subtle. With the first challenge we must learn how to cultivate discernment amid our many forms of media. The second challenge is as much attitudinal as it is intellectual. Sometimes, pastors and laymen are apathet-

ic toward theological reflection. This indifference is *not* rooted in malice. Rather, the pressures and problems of contemporary ministry often force us to think we need another tactic, skill, strategy, or program. This partly explains the prevalence of ministry conferences in evangelical circles. We have conferences on preaching, singing, leadership, and so much more. To be clear, I myself have benefited from such events. However, theology often has been relegated to the sidelines, because many think as long as they have their basic doctrinal beliefs worked out, they can focus on how to "do" ministry. If one can check the right boxes on a statement of faith, he can move on to *practical* concerns.

This myth about theology is the core of our modern dilemma: we believe *thinking* and *doing* are radically different things. However, theology embraces both thought and practice. Theology isn't a set of statements on a page. It is both a description of God's truth, and a way of *expressing* those truths in lived practice.

TIMELINE:

- 1959** - Commission on Theological Liberalism is appointed.
- 1960** - Commission gives its first report.
- 1962** - F. Leroy Forlines is elected chairman.
- 1985** - Commission is renamed "Commission for Theological Integrity" with its statement of purpose included in the NAFWB by-laws.
- 1996** - First Theological Symposium is held.
- 1997** - Commission issues its widely discussed report on Promise Keepers.
- 2000** - The first edition of *Integrity: Theological Journal* is published.
- 2012** - Leroy Forlines completes 50 years of service on the commission.

Somewhere along the way, theology was sidelined by the belief it is only for scholars or academics. To be fair, those engaged in theological scholarship have a burden to bear in this. Just as the “practically-minded” need to think more deeply about how theology should inform practice (and what theology is implied by their current practice), the “intellectually-minded” continually should work out the implications of their theology for the life of and practice of God’s people. In other words, theology is practical and practice is theological.

To illustrate the commission’s commitment to this vision of theology, consider a few things we have been doing. First, a few months ago, our website had a record number of unique visitors for a single day. The topic to which they were drawn was church polity and multi-site churches in an article written by our commission chairman. Second, the most recent seminar hosted by the commission at the National Convention regarded the genetics revolution, and what that has to do with our views of Adam and Eve as real people, free will, and

more. Third, the forthcoming symposium October 28-29 will center on the theme of ecclesiology (the doctrine of the Church). I believe these examples illustrate our commitment to the union of theology and practice, doctrine and ministry, truth and life.

The Commission for Theological Integrity is committed to preserving and promoting Free Will Baptist doctrine for 60 more years and beyond, if the Lord tarries His coming. We exist to serve leaders, laymen, and churches. To learn more, visit www.fwbtheology.com, Like us on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter: @fwbtheology. **ONE**

About the Writer: W. Jackson Watts, Ph.D., is pastor of Grace FWB Church near St. Louis, where he has served since 2011. He is a member of the Commission for Theological Integrity and the clerk of the Missouri State Association. Watts is the author or editor of two books, and writes regularly for the Helwys Society Forum (www.TheHSF.com).

The Widow's "Might"

Many years ago, a Free Will Baptist widow set up two small charitable gifts with **Free Will Baptist Foundation**. She enjoyed the benefits of those gifts throughout her lifetime, and when she went home to glory earlier this year, her widow's mite benefited two Free Will Baptist ministries she cared about deeply. Through these gifts, her "widow's mite" became widow's "might."

Charitable giving is for anyone who wants to continue to make a difference long after death!

Call the Foundation to learn more today!

Single Table		Joint Table	
Age	Rate	Ages	Rate
65	5.1%	65/65	4.5%
70	5.6%	70/70	5.0%
75	6.2%	75/75	5.5%
80	7.3%	80/80	6.2%
85	8.3%	85/85	7.3%
90	9.5%	90/90	9.1%



foundation@nafwb.org | 877-767-7575 | www.fwbgifts.org

Publishing Pioneer With the Lord

Nashville, TN—Rev. Harrold Harrison, 94, died peacefully July 11, 2019. The Henryetta, Oklahoma, native was born in 1925. He served in the Navy during World War II and never forgot his experiences in the Pacific aboard the battleship U.S.S. Maryland, fighting with the Seventh Fleet through 18 major naval battles.

When the war ended, Harrold married his sweetheart Lauretta (Lari) Harrison, paying a preacher \$20 to perform the ceremony following a Wednesday night prayer meeting. The couple was married 71 years until Lari's death in 2016.

After accepting Christ in 1953, Harrison answered the call to preach, was licensed a few months later, and ordained in 1955. He and Lari immediately moved to Nashville, where Harrold earned a B.A. from Welch College and later bachelor's and master's degrees from Belmont University and Middle Tennessee State University.

After pastoring Free Will Baptist churches for several years, Harrold answered the call to denominational service, serving Randall House Publications for 27 years. He stayed on the road constantly, promoting Sunday School, conducting workshops, and helping launch Bible institutes.

Harrison still found time to write curriculum, edit books, direct teacher training, and serve as assistant director for the publishing house, along with authoring four books. During a 2005 interview with *ONE Magazine*, Harrold pointed to three shelves of double-stacked books



Rev. Harrold Harrison

and said, "This is my most valuable contribution. When I came on board [at Randall House], we did not have a single book in print by

Free Will Baptist authors."

Two landmark projects mark Harrison's career: the 1978 *Who's Who Among Free Will Baptists* and the launch of the *Randall House Bible Commentary* series, completed shortly before his death.

After retiring from Randall House in 1990, Harrold worked nine years at Welch College, where he started an external education and distance-learning program.

Friends and family members celebrated Harrold at Cross Timbers FWB Church July 14. Read more about his remarkable life and accomplishments in the December-January issue.

2020 Nominees Requested

Antioch, TN—The 2019-2020 Nominating Committee, which will serve through the national convention in Oklahoma City, is prepared to receive nominees for the 2020 election, according to Ron Helms (MI), committee chairman.

The committee will meet December 10, 2019, at the annual Leadership Conference to consider nominations and compile a report offering a single nomination for each position to be filled. The report will be presented to delegates at the 2020 convention.

The following board and commission positions will be filled in 2020: Welch College (3); IM, Inc (3); Randall House Publications (3); Women Nationally Active for Christ (3); Commission for Theological Integrity

(1); Historical Commission (1); Music Commission (1); Media Commission (1); General Board (12); Executive Committee (3); and General Officers (4). The Board of Retirement will additionally elect a board member to replace Jack Daniel (GA), deceased.

The following boards do not elect members in 2020: Home Missions (North American Ministries), Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Nominations, accompanied by a brief resume, must be submitted exclusively to the chairman on or before December 2. Download the nomination form at www.nafwb.org.

Contact Chairman Ron Helms: Nominating Committee, 8977 Manor Ave, Allen Park MI 48101 or revronsouthgatechurch@gmail.com.

Big Shoes to Fill

BY EDDIE MOODY

As I begin to serve as the tenth executive secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, I feel a bit like I did when I was a kid. From time to time, I would slide my feet into my dad's big shoes and try to walk around the house in them. It was a bit uncomfortable as I tried to get around in his big shoes.

That's the way I feel following Brother Keith Burden. Anyone who has spent much time with him has noticed integrity seems to emanate from his pores. He has been God's man for this time, and he has served this denomination well. I am indebted to Keith. We all are. Not just for his work as executive secretary, but for all of his service to the denomination, beginning in 1981, when he became assistant clerk of the National Association. Think about that for a moment. That was the year Ronald Reagan was inaugurated President! Much has happened in our denomination and world since Keith began denominational work.

And we can't forget his wife Debbie. She has served beside Keith throughout this journey. We all have benefited from her work in



the Executive Office and her efficiency in coordinating registration for the National Association.

This couple not only served faithfully and well, they sacrificed greatly. It was a sacrifice for them to leave their beloved Oklahoma and be separated from friends and family. They missed many birthday parties and ballgames through the years. Let us render honor to whom honor is due. Thank you, Keith and Debbie Burden, for more than 38 years of faithful service to the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

I encourage you to join me in

praying for the Burdens as they return to Oklahoma. May they enjoy the fruit of their labor, and may they understand our appreciation for a job well done. **ONE**



Eddie Moody

Executive Secretary,
National Association of
Free Will Baptists

Flourish!

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MARCH 28, 2020
CENTRAL FWB CHURCH, HUNTINGTON, WV

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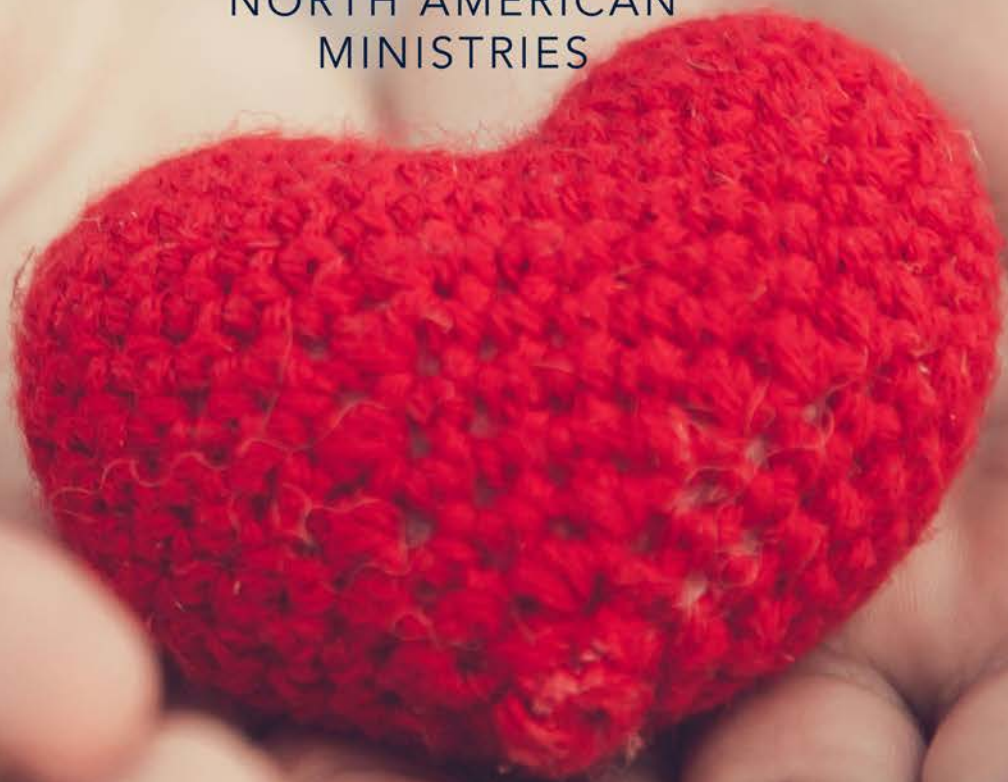
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