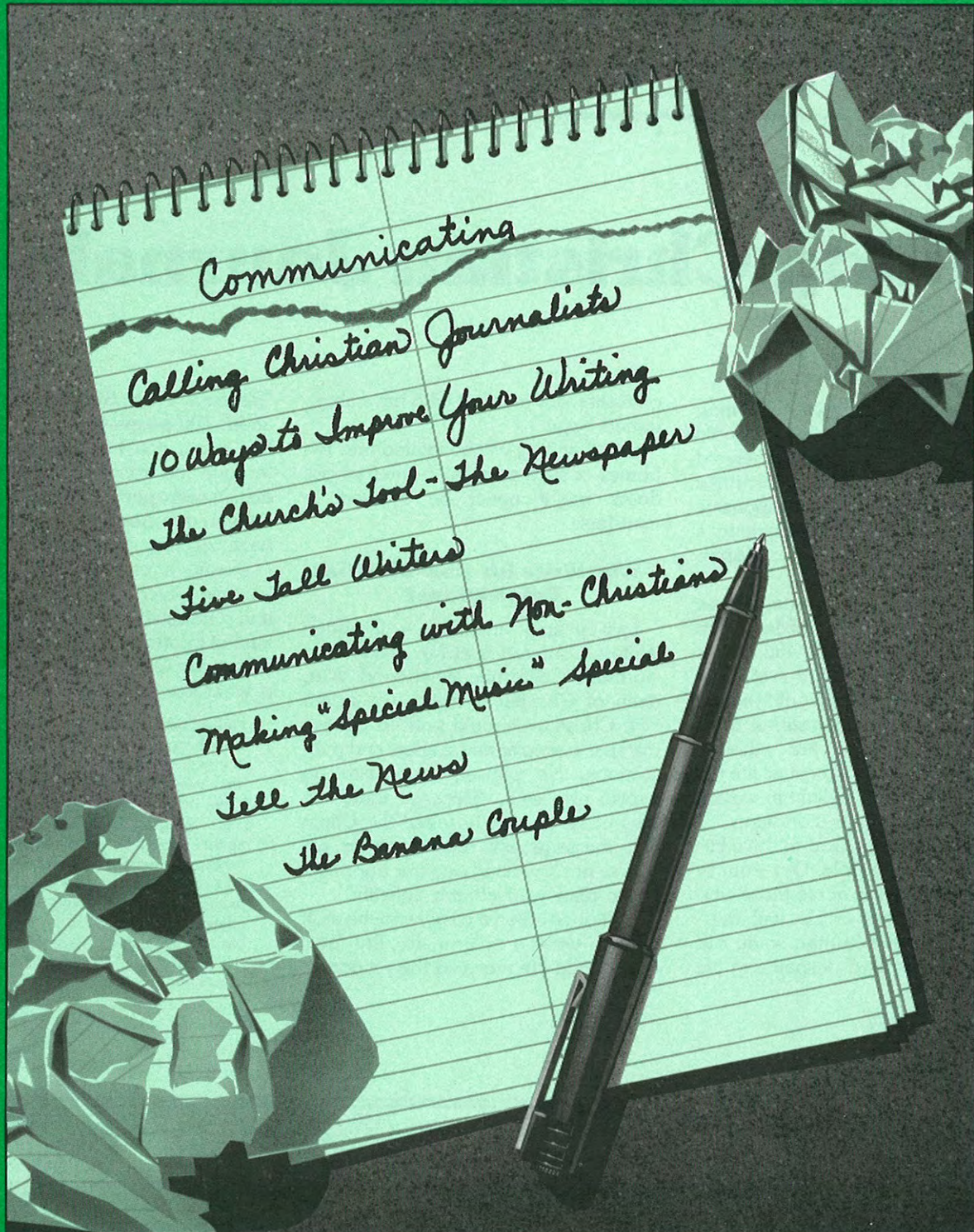


March 1990

Contact

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS





Calling Christian Journalists

By Mal King

Erma Bombeck once met a man who wasn't writing a book! Shocked, she asked, "When did the idea of not writing a book first strike you?" Bombeck strikes a responsive chord. For the idea of not writing a book—or anything else—has apparently struck many Christians.

Consequently, secular writers have moved into the vacuum and filled it with writing that corrupts morals and erodes belief. One survey revealed that more than 80 percent of writers published in newspapers and in magazines don't attend church. Some are atheists; others, agnostics. And almost all are the irreverent cynics who delight in writing of the ills of the human condition.

Perhaps it's time for God to drive His scribes out of the temple. Out—out to where the readers are, out to those who will read finely crafted articles with messages that uplift the human spirit, out to where shadow and despair sap life

of vitality, out to those who have abandoned hope.

Good writing will be invited into the homes of such people—homes whose doors might never be opened to ministers.

Why Write for Non-Christian Publications?

Last year I attended a Christian Writers Conference at Mt. Hermon in Northern California. Sherwood Wirt, dean of Christian writers, was asked why Christians should seek to publish material in secular newspapers and publications. He paused, and with an impish grin said, "Because that's the only place many who need the Christian message will read it. After all, they're not knocking on your door asking to read your church bulletin."

Wirt once asked a pastor why he took time to write a column for the local newspaper. He received this response,

"Because each Sunday I preach to about 100 people in my congregation. But every day I reach 3,000 people through my front-page column in our daily newspaper." But if his column had appeared in *Reader's Digest* he would have reached more than 20,000,000.

During a commencement speech, Georgie Geyer, a foreign correspondent and syndicated columnist, conveyed the kind of information that we as Christian writers can send out into the world. This is what she said:

I talked with a young man the other day, who happened to be a fundamentalist Christian. He spoke of how important the three years before marriage to his wife had been, before they became physically intimate. "We got to know each other in a way at that time that we could never have known otherwise," he told me. "When you go to bed too soon, you lose all kinds of precious levels of the development of a relationship." He was so right. The Bible has a lot about this. "There is a time to . . . and a time. . . ."

Continuing the quote from Ecclesiastes, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: . . . A time to keep silence, and a time to speak [and to write]. . . ." That time is now. With all kinds of creatures coming out of closets, it is past time for Christian writers to come out.

Why Get into a Market that Doesn't Want the Christian Viewpoint?

When his wife told him that she had been to see *Doctor Zhivago*, Yogi Berra is said to have replied, "Oh, what's the matter with you now?" Much of the world is as ignorant of the Christian message and what it can do for them as Yogi was of the movie *Dr. Zhivago*. So we must venture into the world with a pen that—guided by the Holy Spirit—becomes more powerful than a guided missile.

Untold millions long for the language of hope and uplift that can only come from a pen inspired by the Spirit of God. If God has called you to write, His words will not return void. They will speak to humanity of The Way to reach full stature where man walks once more with God in the cool of the evening. Only His words can help man live fully in the world yet removed from its turmoil like a bottle dancing freely and undisturbed in a strong sea.

Why Compete?

He who controls the presses controls the world and he who edits publications controls what goes into those publications. America needs Christian editors and writers who will complement rather than combat what comes from our pulpits.

Christians have a message—magical and blessed—a message which answers the deepest longing of the human soul. Well-written articles carrying this spiritual message can haunt us, help us make a deeper connection and keep us from making an eternal mistake. Because we become what we read, we must be careful of what we read and we must break into the secular market with something worth reading.

Without "preaching" you can become a voice for God in the secular press. Don't misunderstand. Don't think that I'm urging Christian writers to stop writing for Christian publications, and don't think I'm unimpressed with

preaching—nothing on earth is more important.

But think about this, with whom did Christ spend His time? With the lost. If He were here today as a writer rather than a carpenter, would He not try to have His written message go to those who otherwise would never hear it?

As Christ's scribe, you can be a voice where He would have His voice go. In *Newsweek* and other publications you can be the leaven that transforms that publication. Who made the greatest impact in the 20th century for Christ? Was it a preacher? No, it was C.S. Lewis, a writer. Preachers might reach their thousands, but editors and writers can reach their millions.

How Can I Hope to Compete?

This question is reminiscent of the one Jeremiah asked after God had told him he was ordained a prophet to speak to the nations. Consider God's response to Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak [or write]."

The Christian writer has an editor and a source unavailable to the unsaved—the Holy Spirit. Consider the awesomeness of God's power. He fashioned the world and the galaxies that stretch even beyond man's technology and fertile imagination into endless space. And how did God do all of this? With the Word. In the beginning was the Word.

Just as God breathed life into our nostrils so can He breathe life into our writing giving it a luminous and lasting quality which secular writing can never match.

Lodewijck van Gruuthuse, a 14th century diplomat-soldier, built a great house which still stands. Even today it draws admiration for its grace and warmth. Throughout the house, Gruuthuse had carved in stone walls his motto: *Plus est en vous* ("There is more in you").

And there is more in you than meets the eye, and perhaps more than you will ever know. As God gives light, let *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Reader's Digest* and your local newspapers know what it is. For there is more in you. And that more is God.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mal King is president of the Mentor Consulting Group. The free-lance writer is a member of Santa Paula Free Will Baptist Church, Santa Paula, California.

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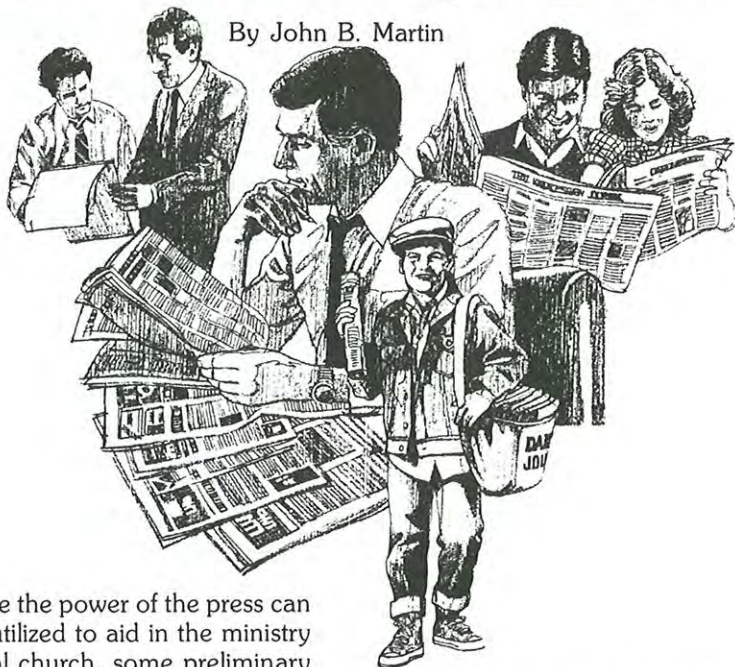
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The Church's Tool— The Newspaper

By John B. Martin



Before the power of the press can be utilized to aid in the ministry of the local church, some preliminary steps must be taken by the person responsible for church news.

Determine What is News

Some suggested guidelines:

1. Routine church activities are NOT newsworthy.
2. Create a feature angle or a personal approach to a routine activity and it IS news. Example: awarding attendance pins for Sunday School attendance is not ordinarily something that goes in the newspaper. However, if a 93-year-old person gets a 15-year pin, it is news!
3. Any special activity in the church. Examples: Ordinations, a new pastor, film series on hot topic; business meetings are not news (They can become news if the church votes to support the community food bank or clothes closet, picket a store selling pornography, etc.).
4. Names make news. Long lists of names may look boring in print but parents, grandparents and fellow church members love them.
5. Youth news. Youth activities tend to be more community oriented, therefore, usually more newsworthy. Car washes, rummage sales, rock-a-

thons, bike marathons, special programs can all be a statement to the readers that your church is doing something. Also, this invites community participation.

6. Activities that involve the community (especially other churches). Examples: Revivals, visiting music groups, blood drives, food drives, special study series on timely topic, VBS.
7. Keep it current. Although old news makes for good clippings in a scrapbook, it is of little value to the newspaper man and more likely to get altered or eliminated when the newspaper has to use priorities. Ideal time for release is about a week prior to the event. If it is about an honor or a person, within a week of the happening is a good timetable.
8. Keep it accurate. Nothing is more discouraging than to see your name in the paper—incorrectly spelled.

Who is Responsible

Once the decision has been made concerning what news should and should not be reported, it must be determined who will be responsible for composing the article and delivering it to the proper source.

1. Will it be the pastor, a volunteer, church secretary, newspaper person in your church; someone who can spell, type and drive and who has a phone?
2. Someone who is regular in attendance. He can't tell about the news if he isn't there.
3. Someone familiar with all aspects of the church.
4. The better qualified and capable the reporter, the better the story and the response will be.
5. Never assume that the newspaper will write your story for you. They are just as busy as you. If a release is neatly (preferably typed, double-spaced) and reads well with pertinent information, it is more likely to get in and get good position on the page than if it needs to be rewritten. Exception: When church editors in larger papers do rewrites of all articles.
6. It doesn't take a genius.

Determine Market / Readership

The way a story is written is often determined by who will be reading it. Newspapers aren't interested in opinions or personal preferences, what is needed is facts.

1. If members of your church live in several different communities, it may be necessary to prepare more than one copy of news article and/or pictures.
2. Eliminate use of personal pronouns (Our church, We wish you well, Everyone here invites you, etc.)
3. When writing about people, list their hometowns even if it is the same as the one where your church is located.
4. If writing about school-age members, give grade and name of their school.
5. Clip copies of articles about your church and others in which your members might be interested and put on a bulletin board.
6. If the church has money to spend for advertising, spend it with newspapers that run news concerning your church. That always makes them look upon your releases more favorably.

Establish Contact

Determine who at the newspaper is responsible for getting church news into

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The Five Tall Writers

Briefcase



"Red" Smith might not be right, but he wasn't wrong by much. The former sportswriter for the *New York Times* said he had a simple formula for writing, "You just sit down and open up a vein."

All effective writing styles have several things in common: their roots in research, sensitivity, creative ideas and—best of all—something worthwhile to say. Good writers do not bore readers.

And, no, there is no one best way to write. A news release pumps all the verbal gold into the first two paragraphs. But that style of writing would ruin a novel that needs 350 pages to weave a multi-layered plot. An encyclopedia entry sacrifices pizzazz in order to explain global weather patterns. A writer must know both his subject and his intended audience.

For instance, do you know where most massacres, natural disasters, scalplings, bombings and attacks by wild animals occur? The sports pages, that's where. Check tomorrow's newspaper. You'll find Bengals clawing Bears, Yankees bombing Red Sox, a Crimson Tide drowning Commodores or Bulls goring Lakers. Sports writers discovered a colorful way to over-write on purpose, and we all like it. That is, if our Tigers pounce on *their* Longhorns.

While writing styles vary from dictionaries to novels to commentaries, professional writers share two traits: They are comfortable with written language and use it to communicate exact ideas. A skilled writer does with a verb what Sandy Koufax did with a baseball.

The Louis L'Amour style. Louis L'Amour wrote more than 125 books, the kind that make you want to curl up beside the fireplace on a cold winter day and read. Takes no more than two or three hours to digest one of L'Amour's fast-paced western novels. Whether you pick up *Bendigo Shafter*, *Guns of Timberlands* or one of his Sackett series, you can smell the wood smoke blowing on the prairie air and hear the creak of saddle leather.

L'Amour's heroes are wide-shouldered and true. They take them-

selves with a dash of humor but keep their six-guns tied down. When you read a L'Amour book, grab the saddle horn from page one and hang on. He doesn't waste words, yet never seems rushed. L'Amour's flair for authenticity does for the American West what Paul Harvey's rapier wit does for current events in his news commentary.

The James Michener style. In sharp contrast to L'Amour's terse, biting style, novelist James Michener churns out tomes that stretch to 1,500 pages and frequently turn into television mini-series. Michener drags readers back into history and forces them to watch grass grow and glaciers melt. He moves through hundreds or thousands of years in unhurried leisure.

While L'Amour's books may have four or five fully-developed characters and one basic plot, Michener's historical novels introduce dozens of characters and tie plots to sub-plots in an ever-deepening, intricate pattern. His book names such as *Texas*, *Chesapeake*, *Alaska*, and *Centennial* suggest sprawling themes and centuries of time.

The Albert Barnes style. Albert Barnes is best known for his 27-volume commentary on the Old and New Testaments. Barnes did not write for entertainment but for exposition. While his deliberate style and focus on original languages would doom L'Amour or Michener, Barnes has become one of the most trusted names in biblical exposition.

Barnes, who did his writing from 4:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. in order to pastor his church, opens up scripture verses with the same ease that a farmer's wife hulls peas. No pretense. No guesswork. Right to the point. While Barnes doesn't worry about developing a plot or fleshing out characters, he does what few writers can do: He explains the Bible in clear, simple language.

The Stan Mooneyham style. When he's on a roll Stan Mooneyham is without peer as a wordsmith. The former editor of *Contact* sweeps across pages with the energy of a mountain road grader clearing snow from a highway. He writes with majesty and authority.

Mooneyham stockpiles anecdotes

and possesses an uncanny knack for selecting the precise illustration to drive home his point. Reading Mooneyham's *Traveling Hopefully* or *Dancing on the Strait and Narrow* is like standing in front of a Gatling Gun. Every few pages I have to stop and catch my breath.

The Robert Picirilli style. Nobody writes better magazine articles and booklets than Robert E. Picirilli, dean of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He has the rarest gift of all—the ability to write big truths in small words.

Picirilli has the most unassuming and non-threatening writing style of any author I've read. When he wrote the controversial booklet, *What the Bible Says About Tongues*, he came across as an open-minded seeker of truth, not an anti-Charismatic zealot. While I relish the excitement in Mooneyham's books and long to saddle my horse when I read L'Amour, if I could write with the simplicity and power of Robert Picirilli I'd die happy.

Five styles of writing. All different. All good. But with a common thread. Each author writes out of the saucer, for his cup runneth over.

What is your writing style? A clever postcard from the Writers Institute recently tried to lure me into a free writing aptitude test with this hook: "This is a warning. We have reason to believe that you harbor certain deep, dark secret yearnings, . . . and it's time you confessed to that writing urge."

While I didn't take the free writing aptitude test, I do confess my yearnings to write. Do you long to write? Develop your unique way of combining verbs, humor and principles. Glean from many writers but mimic none. Always be yourself. You can tell it like no one else. Perhaps you'll join me as we take "Red" Smith's advice and "just sit down and open up a vein."



10 Ways to Improve Your Writing

By Bert Tippet



These are not rules; they are suggestions—offered hesitantly. Some were gleaned from *The Techniques of Clear Writing*, a classic in the field by Robert Gunning. Others are personal.

1. Vary Sentence Length.

The operative word is “variety.” I would not campaign for all sentences to be 10 words or less. But some should be. Even non-sentences are sometimes appropriate.

The Apostle Paul illustrates this principle. One of his sentences in I Thessalonians 4 is 85 words long, but he closes the book with a series of short sentences, one only two words long.

A worthy goal would be to keep the average sentence length to 20 words. As former *Newsweek* editor Chet Shaw says, “Use periods. They take no more

room than commas and less room than ‘which’s.’”

2. Use Descriptive Verbs.

To make a narrative powerful, amateurs use adjectives; professionals use verbs. Verbs are the most dynamic parts of speech. They describe the action. Choose them wisely and you will increase the power of your writing.

For instance, an abridged thesaurus lists 54 different verbs for “eat.” They include devour, bolt, dispatch, gulp, snap, gormandize, bite, champ, munch, crunch, nibble and gnaw. (If you don’t have a thesaurus, get one.)

Note the verb-power in this sentence from my local newspaper: “The Lebanon war *plunged* toward a full-scale conflagration yesterday as waves of Israeli jets *streaked* into Lebanon’s missile-studded Bekaa Valley, *battled* Syrian MiGs and *swept* Syrian anti-

aircraft sites.” The adjectives aren’t bad either.

3. Build Your Vocabulary.

How many words do you know? The average high school student knows 10,000-15,000 words. Your interest in writing indicates that your vocabulary may be nearer 20,000 words. However, in conversations, most people rarely exceed the use of 3,000-4,000 words.

The purpose of a good vocabulary is not to enable you to use *big* words, but to use the *best* words. I remember reading the commendation a corporate officer wrote about an employee. He said the employee had rendered “yeoman’s service.” The term was new to me, but I sensed what it meant. (I still looked it up, just to be sure I was right.)

The *Reader’s Digest* section, “Improving Your Word Power,” should be required reading for aspiring writers. It will teach you new words and clarify your understanding of words you think you already know.

4. Use Illustrations.

As in sermons, illustrations in articles are windows that let in the light. Pepper your writing with illustrations that allow readers to *feel* what you are conveying. People often remember illustrations longer than observations.

When the federal debt hit \$1 trillion (back in 1981), reporters had a heyday trying to illustrate how much money that is. Saying it is 1,000 billion fell short. One reporter tried this: “A person counting a \$1,000-bill each second could count \$1 trillion in 133 years.”

Another did it this way: If you put that much money in a line of dollar bills end on end, it would stretch around the Earth more than 1,800 times . . . You could make every man, woman and child in Atlanta a millionaire, or you could buy everybody in Minnesota a \$115,000 Rolls Royce Camargue.

5. Check Grammar and Spelling.

I loathe grammar. I always have. But I learned that, if I am to be read, I must be correct. There are several English handbooks that will enable you to check your grammar easily.

For instance, in both prose and poetry, I have seen the word “trod” mis-

used. (Only Christians seem to use that word.) "Trod" is the past tense of "tread," yet I read:

Dear Lord, help me every day
As I trod the narrow way.
You "trod" it yesterday, but you "tread" it today.

For spelling, the little 40,000-entry *Word Book* published by Houghton Mifflin is a handy desk accessory. It contains no definitions, just correct spellings, so it is faster to use than a dictionary.

6. Keep Writing Simple.

Perhaps you have heard that popular magazines, like *Reader's Digest*, are written on a sixth or seventh grade level. *Roots*, by Alex Haley, is written at under ninth grade level. How do you determine the grade level of a piece of writing? You calculate a Fog Index.

Without going into detail, it will help you to know that a Fog Index calculates only two factors: average sentence length and the percentage of words longer than two syllables. Therefore, keep your average sentence short (see above) and prefer short, simple words. (However, if a longer word is more correct or descriptive, by all means use it.)

7. Write About Things You Know.

Beginning writers are advised to stick with the familiar. You will write best about the things you know. Hold off the heavily-researched subjects for later.

In *Effective Feature Writing*, Clarence Schoenfeld suggests you go for "APPLAUSE."

A—Appeal: Choose subjects that will help and interest people.

P—Plain Facts: State facts, not your opinions.

P—Personalities: People are interested in people.

L—Logical Angle: Look for a twist that will hook readers.

A—Action: Struggle and conflict are basic to life.

U—Uniqueness: Look for the off-beat and distinctive.

S—Significance: What will this do for your reader?

E—Energy: Write with enthusiasm!

Where do you find such stories? Freelancer Evelyn Witter sold five stories in a year based on things she saw out her kitchen window: a wisp of hay in the barn loft, the old dinner bell, her 12-year-old son doing push-ups, etc.

And, she says, there are 22 more windows in her house!

8. Keep a Journal.

Write down your experiences and observations. Keep a small notebook in your purse or pocket.

Some time back I thumbed through an old journal and recalled my son's first communion. He had been recently saved and I had tried to impress upon him the meaning of the Lord's supper. I was so proud as he took the bread from the communion plate—until he turned, gave me a puzzled look, and asked, "Are you sure this is Jesus?" Keep a journal. It will be a gold mine of memories and illustrations.

9. Attend Conferences.

Writers' conferences are helpful in two ways. They are a source of infor-


mation. They are also a source of encouragement.

The Randall House Writers' Conference is held in Nashville every May. Consider adding it to your calendar.

10. Then, Just Do It.

There is no substitute for just writing. And rewriting. Jot down thoughts for stories. Browse your journal for material. Observe people and events that surround you. Then write.

Put your scribbles aside for a day or two, then re-read them. Mark the changes you want. Ask an honest friend to give you an honest evaluation.

But don't quit. If the pen is mightier than the sword, it's because it is harder to master. 

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bert Tippet is director of publications at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Newspaper . . . (from page 4)

print, whether it's a reporter, a receptionist, an editor or a part-timer.

1. Make an appointment and meet this person to find out:

- Who to send/bring/phone news releases to.
- What the deadlines are.
- What format they prefer.
- What is the policy about pictures.
- How to become a subscriber (if you're not already).

2. Be consistent. Don't send in 14 articles at once and then wait three weeks for another. Determine if you need to submit weekly, twice monthly or as the need arises.

3. Invite this person to visit your church or your church services.

4. Have people in the community thank him when articles appear.

5. Don't get pushy!

6. Keep in touch even when you don't have news. (Don't leave him holding the bag, waiting for a story that isn't coming.)

7. Offer to help in other areas of the newspaper's sphere of operation (circulation, advertising, etc.).


Remember: This person holds the key as to whether or not you will be able to get anything in the paper.

Just Do It!

Now it's time to write. Once again, you don't have to be a genius, just willing. Follow six simple rules:

1. Use correct spelling.
2. Use correct grammar.
3. Use good sentence structure.
4. Be neat (double-spaced, typed if at all possible).
5. Be concise.
6. Don't try to write a book.

Determine Who, What, When, Where, How and Why. Which is the most important? By the end of your story, all these questions should be answered or the answer implied.

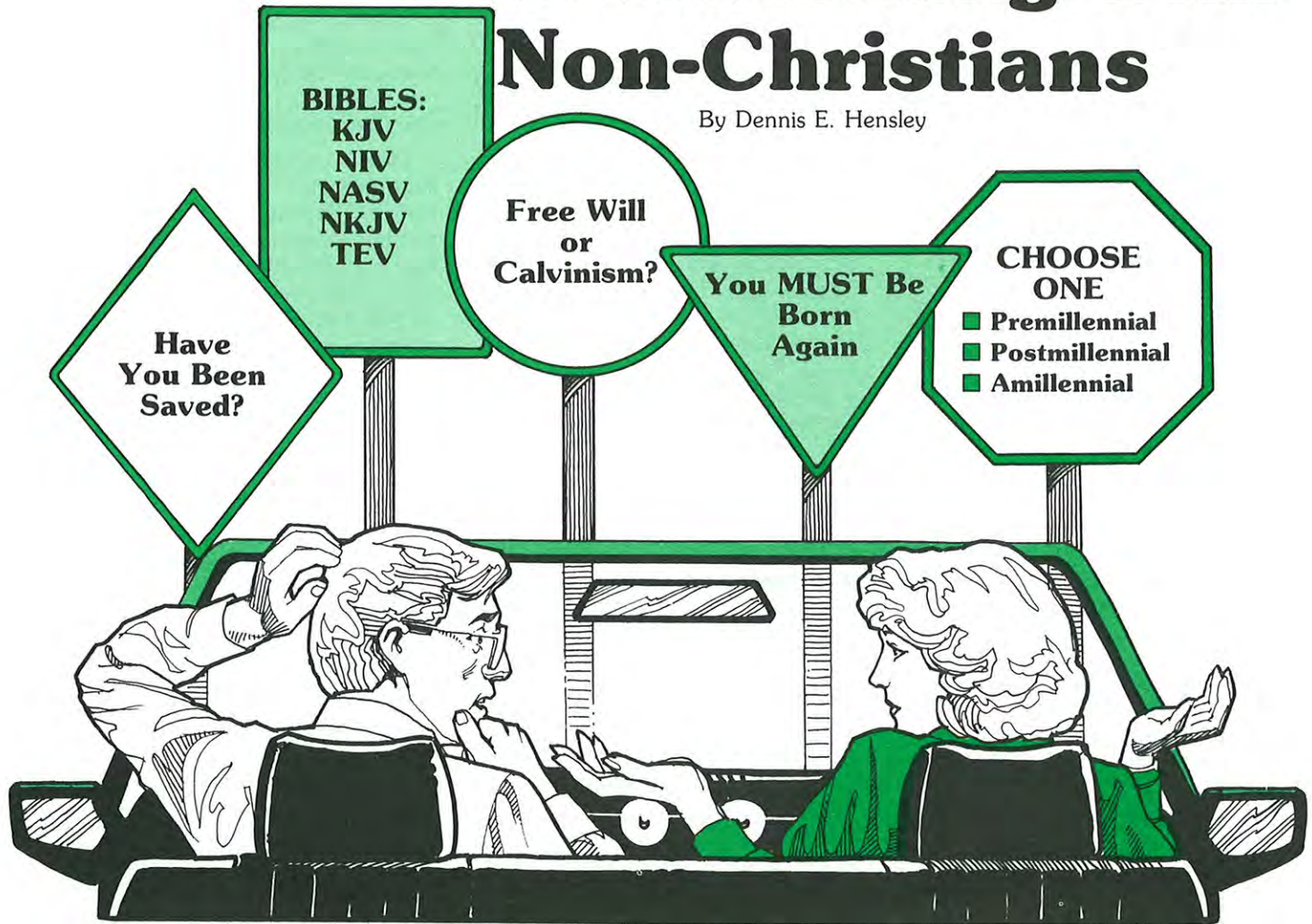
And finally, when you get through, put a -30- at the bottom center of your story. That means you're through! 



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. John B. Martin is managing editor of The Midwest City Sun newspaper. He also teaches English at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. Dr. Martin is a member of Harrah Free Will Baptist Church in Harrah, Oklahoma, where he directs music and Christian education.

Communicating with Non-Christians

By Dennis E. Hensley



When I was studying to become a doctor of linguistics, I used to tutor foreign students who wanted to master English. I was forever emphasizing to them that they should expand their vocabulary range by studying the dictionary and the thesaurus. "Try new words," I would insist. "Experiment with different phrases."

Then one day one of these students stormed into my office, glared at me with flinty eyes, and bellowed, "Much trouble! You get me much trouble!"

"What?" I said, "What do you mean I got you into trouble? How?"

"Last month I ask you what to say to girl on first date," he explained. "You told me to say to girl, 'You look like a vision.'"

"So? What's wrong with that?" I demanded.

"Nothing," he agreed, shaking his head. "But last night I have date with

new girl. I use same phrase, only first I check thesaurus for new words like you always say to do."

"Uh-oh," I said, anticipating the problem. "What did you say instead of, 'You look like a vision?'"

"I said to new date, 'You look a sight.'"

Looking back on that incident I can now smile over this young man's problem. He was saying something he felt would be perfectly appropriate to his date, yet it was completely misunderstood. It was an innocent mistake, yet a mistake that was costly to him.

Sometimes those of us who have been Christians for many years are guilty of this same mistake. We assume that what we are saying to non-Christians will automatically be understood. But that's not true. As a result, our conversations sometimes sound something like this:

"Excuse me, friend, but are you saved?"

"Saved? Why should I be? I'm not even drowning."

"No, no, what I mean is, are you born again?"

"Me? Naw. I don't believe in that reincarnation stuff."

"No, you're misunderstanding me. I want to know if you've been washed in the blood of the Lamb."

"Oh, yuk! What kind of savage ritual is that? Get away from me, you maniac!"

We see then that no matter how honest our intentions are, if our language isn't appropriate, we won't succeed in our witnessing. I like the way *The Living Bible* interprets I Corinthians 14:8-11 regarding this problem:

"If an army bugler doesn't play the right notes, how will the soldiers know that they are being called to battle? In

the same way, if you talk to a person in a language he doesn't understand, how will he know what you mean? You might as well be talking to an empty room.

"I suppose there are hundreds of different languages in the world, and all are excellent for those who understand them, but to me they mean nothing. A person talking to me in one of these languages will be a stranger to me and I a stranger to him."

That passage of scripture reminds me of a time years ago when I went out on a neighborhood visitation canvass with a church friend of mine. My friend was eager to impress on people that they needed to attend church and get right with God. His method of doing this needed some polish, however. When we knocked on the first door an elderly gentleman answered.

"Have you heard the Good News?" asked my companion.

"No," admitted the gentleman. "What is it?"

"You're on you way to Hell!"

"Well, if that's the good news," the man responded, "I don't want to stick around for the bad news." And with that, he slammed the door in our faces.

Since that incident, my friend has learned to be more gracious and less shocking when meeting people for the first time. The Bible has many excellent suggestions on how to overcome the language barrier when trying to communicate with non-Christians. It's worthwhile to review these tips.

Listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that you can be His spokesperson.

When young Samuel was communicated to by God, he closed his mouth and opened his ears to listen carefully to what God wanted to share with him. His only speech was the submissive phrase, "Speak for thy servant heareth" (I Samuel 3:10). David also inclined his ear to God and said, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak . . ." (Psalm 85:8).

In communicating with lost souls, our role is very similar to that of an interpreter at the United Nations. First, the interpreter hears the words of one speaker and then she translates them into a language that eager listeners will understand. Through prayer and Bible study, we can hear the words of God and then we can relay them to others,

too. The important rule to remember, however, is to listen first, speak second.

Communicate on the maturity level of the listener.

Paul wrote in I Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

During the Vietnam War I served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army in Long Binh. I worked as a chaplain's assistant in a military prison for eight months and every Thursday night I led a Bible study group. Many of the prisoners who attended these sessions had never attended a home church, nor had they ever read the Bible.

These men were in their 20's and 30's, yet they had never heard of David's battle with Goliath or Daniel's night in the lion's den or Christ's sermon on the mount. This amazed me, for I had been raised in a Christian home and had attended church all my life. I thought everyone knew about David and Daniel and Jesus. But that wasn't so. As such, even though I was teaching grown men, I had to teach them as babes in the Word.

It's important to be sensitive to another person's level of comprehension. We must be patient and share ourselves first and then our testimonies and then, eventually, our knowledge of the scriptures. Pacing our presentations is crucial.

Be open, honest, humble and loving.

We all hate to phone a store and hear an operator answer with the flat unemotional phrase, "Thank-you-for-calling-how-can-I-help-you?" Even though the words are polite, their monotone blandness reveals the fact that there is no personal commitment behind them. We don't really believe the operator is pleased that we phoned that store.

Christian witnessing also needs sincerity and genuineness. You can mouth the right words, but if the personal belief is not evident, the listener will not be swayed. As Paul explained in I Corinthians 13:1, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."


A man on our block sprained his ankle last spring, so his neighbor spent a Saturday afternoon tilling his garden

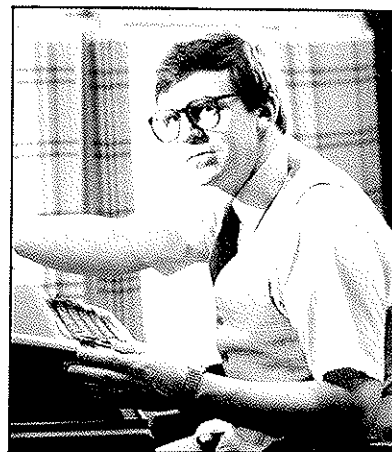
spot for him. When the ailing man tried to pay his neighbor, the man said the only thing he wanted in return was for the man to attend his church with him one Sunday. The man with the sprained ankle put his wallet away and said, "I've never had anyone be so concerned about me before. Yes, I'll go with you next Sunday." The neighbor's work for his friend had verified the concern of his words.

Use yourself as an example.

One of the most effective forms of television advertising is the personal endorsement. People are paraded before a camera to tell how XYZ shampoo made their hair fluffy and tangle-free or how ABC dog food made their pets live an extra ten years. The TV viewer thinks, *Well, if it worked for them, it just might work for me. I'll try that product.*

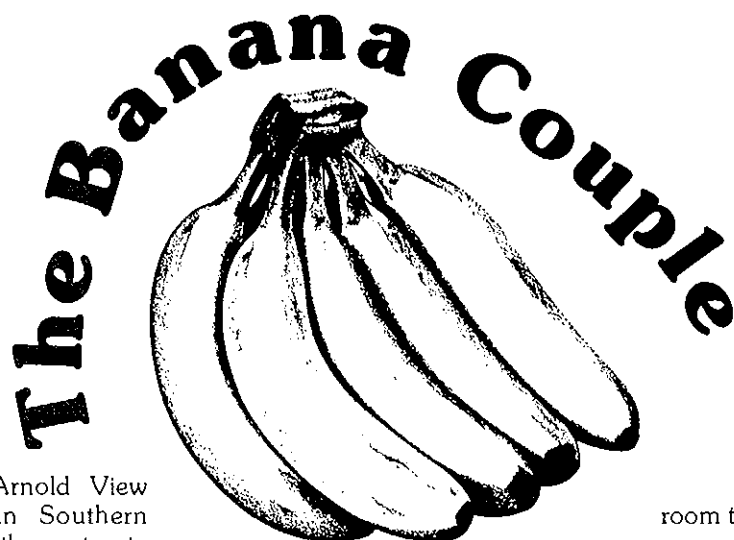
Witnessing must be personalized, too. You need to endorse your belief in Christianity by telling of how God has touched your life, how He has blessed your family, how He has changed your daily walk. Jesus told Nicodemus, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen" (John 3:11).

All you need to do to communicate with people about the love of Christ is to learn it, live it and lend it. People will read you before they will read the Bible. Knowing this, make sure you "carry your message" in all that you do. 



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Dennis E. Hensley is the author of *The Gift* (Harvest House) and *Writing for Religious and Other Specialty Markets* (Broadman Publishers). He is a deacon and Sunday School teacher in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

What does a minister do when bad health locks him out of his pulpit?



By Jerry and Bea Presley

While pastoring Arnold View FWB Church in Southern Illinois, I was forced from the pastorate because of bad health. The problem started in December 1974 after a heart attack stopped me for four months. Then came another heart attack in 1977, heart surgery for six blockages in 1983, and then the climax of leaving the pastorate in September 1987.

Throughout the day of Wednesday, September 9, 1987, I suffered brief chest pains. I went to church that evening and while in the pulpit took three nitroglycerin tablets. An hour after church a severe attack hit.

After two weeks in the Marion Hospital I was transferred to Methodist Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. I had only one major artery opened to the heart and that was down to 15 percent. Doctors informed me that I had less than six months to live.

Faith that Works

All that day it seemed that I had no faith. About noon the next day, my mind drifted to I Corinthians 6:19-20, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost . . . and ye are not your own?" I found victory in the matter when I fully realized I was God's property and He had every right to do whatever He pleased with me. A great peace flooded into my life from that moment.

I cannot say that I had perfect peace about everything. There were so many unanswered questions. In almost 35 years of being married to Bea, the only employment I had known was teaching school and pastoring churches, and now I was unable to do either. How

would we live? Where would we live? How were we going to make it financially with more than 75 percent reduction in salary?

It's difficult to explain the sadness I felt when the doctor told me that he never, never wanted me to be back in the pulpit again. That was like telling a fish to never go near water again. Was I now un-called as God's man? I was still an ordained minister with a love for souls. What could I do to yet feel of service in God's Kingdom? There were many unanswered questions.

The Open Door

God did not leave us groping in the darkness for long. While Bea and I are short of finances, it's amazing how God supplies our needs time and time again. Is this not what Paul said in Philippians 4:19?

As a pastor I had a monthly nursing home ministry. In March 1989, Bea and I started having sing-a-longs and a short sermonette in two nursing homes near our home in Olive Branch, Mississippi. Then in June 1989, God opened the door to work with Christian Mission Concerns.

Bea and I have become known in area nursing homes as the "Banana Couple." On Tuesdays we go to the market and pick up bananas. We then proceed to the nursing homes where we weave our way down hallways from

room to room with a Bible verse and a prayer.

We go to the nursing homes to witness, to encourage, and we use the banana as our calling card. Residents in nursing homes die unexpectedly because of illness and old age. Bea and I always pray before going, because we realize that we will see some of these folks for the last time.

Financial support from Christian Mission Concerns covers our expenses: car expenses are met and an estimated \$80-\$100 each month for bananas. The financial support does not cover the heartfelt commitment to this work. Bea and I often pray that God will give us servants' hearts.

The Chance to Help

Our ministry helps fill one of the largest voids in the lives of most nursing home residents—loneliness. Many residents have been forgotten by their families. They tell us their sons or daughters will come to see them that day. Every day they look and long, but many of them never come.

If people realized how a short visit once a week would encourage their mom or dad, would they then visit? Do folks really care? The most vacant spot in the world is a nursing home parking lot.

Most Thursdays you will find Bea and me at nursing homes singing the great hymns of faith with the residents and sharing a short sermon. Some residents still wrestle with their relationships to God.

Although I can not carry the load of a pastor, God has blessed me with a

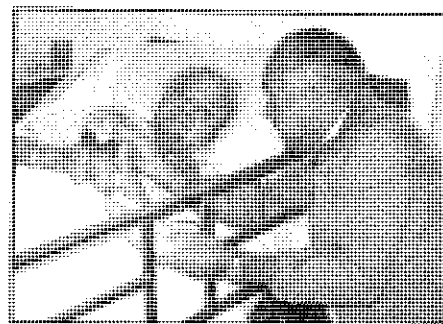
reasonable amount of health for this ministry. Most months I fill vacant pulpits two or three times in area churches while the pastors are out of town on business or vacation. I have preached weekend meetings.

What You Can Do

Pastor, lay person, I encourage you to find a nursing home and begin a monthly service with them. Remember the words of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." If you go in the right spirit you will be blessed more than you ever dreamed.

Whether you are disabled, retired or whatever, I offer this advice. As long as God gives you something to serve Him with, whether it is physical or material things, find a way to use it in His service. You will find peace; you will find great joy there. Don't delay. Start today!

I like to feel that I have a similar outlook on our circumstances as the Apostle Paul had with his thorn in the flesh. Paul prayed three times for release, but God didn't grant it. However, God did reveal to Paul that divine strength is made perfect in human weakness. That settled it for Paul, and he found complete perfect contentment. Paul no longer complained, indulged in self-pity



Jerry Presley hears testimony from 103-year-old Jennie Tarplay.

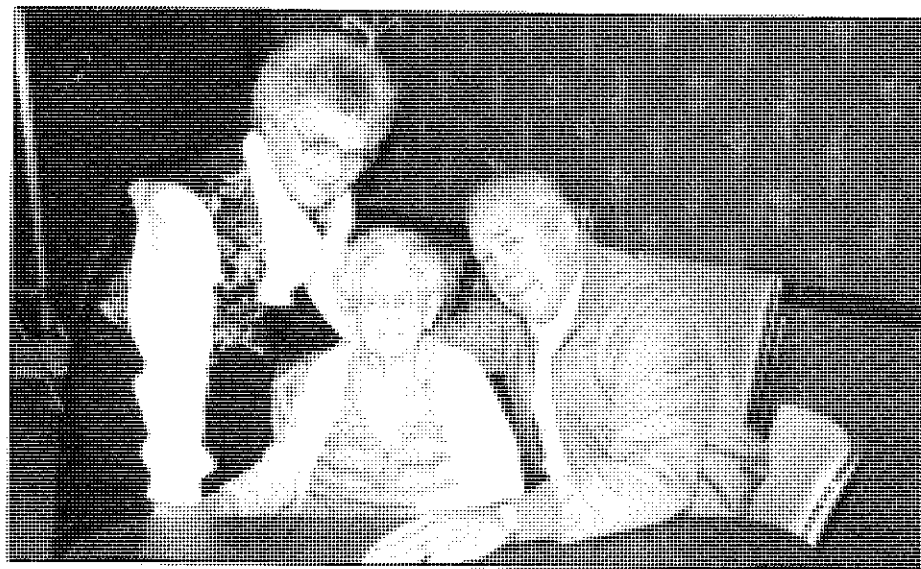
or used his weakness as an excuse.

What was Paul's secret? It should not be a secret any more. Paul went through a "garden experience." Jesus set this example for us as He prayed, "Take this cup from me," and then He added "nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

Regardless of your circumstances, get away from self-pity; rise above your circumstances and begin to praise and honor God with what you have. What is in your hand? Give it to God. Is it something physical? Material? Give it to God along with *all* your weakness, and your weakness will be made perfect in His strength.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jerry Presley pastored Free Will Baptist churches in Tennessee and Illinois from 1962-1987 when declining health forced him to resign. Jerry and Bea Presley attend Grace Free Will Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee.



Jerry and Bea Presley visit with 98-year-old Eula Fitzhugh.

Health Food Junkie

By Doug Little

Like most kids, I had an inborn aversion to healthy foods like liver, spinach and Brussels sprouts. If it couldn't be dipped in ketchup, smothered with butter or buried under chocolate syrup, food just wasn't fun.

But like most parents, mine refused to allow me to destroy myself by over-indulging my preferences. They insisted that I eat some food simply because it was good for me. Even if it tasted bad. They wisely overruled my immature perspective.

As a Christian, I began my walk with Christ with a similar aversion to healthy

spiritual disciplines. If it could be done without sacrifice, standing alone or self-control, I was quite willing and obedient. But the healthy Christian life isn't just a matter of fun.

My spiritual parents—the Holy Spirit, pastor, teachers, family—refused to allow me to destroy my soul by caving in to the preferences of the flesh. I was confronted with biblical disciplines and encouraged to obey them. Not because they were fun but because they were good for me. My spiritual immaturity was regularly challenged to obey God's Word. Even if I didn't understand it, agree with it or like it.

Today I'm a healthy adult, thanks in large part to the nutritional principles instilled in me at an early age. In fact, now I not only choose healthy food for myself (once in a while I even take a bite of liver!), but I find myself insisting that

my daughter eat right, too. Even when it tastes bad.

I also see myself as a healthy Christian. That, too, is largely due to consistent (not perfect, but consistent) obedience to biblical principles of Bible study, prayer, tithing, church attendance and ministry that were taught me early in my Christian life. That's why nowadays I not only eagerly choose to practice them, but preach and teach these disciplines to those depending on me for spiritual health.

Be faithful to church services. Study God's Word. Give at least the tenth of your income to God. Pray daily. Get busy in the work of the Lord. Do these and you'll be a healthy Christian. Even if they taste bad.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Doug Little pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Russellville, Arkansas.

Making 'Special Music' Special

By Randy Sawyer



The order of service goes like this: hymn, prayer and welcome, hymn, offering and announcements, choir, hymn, special music, message. This or something similar happens in the average local church Sunday after Sunday, service after service. Music directors struggle each week to prepare special music that will indeed be "special." Yet, the average special is anything but special. Why?

The reasons are many. On one hand we have poor planning, poor preparation, poor performance and poor performer. Or on the other hand, we have proper planning, preparation and performance, yet little or no praying and depending on the Holy Spirit's power. Therefore, that which is meant to produce receptivity for the Word and worship of God does just the opposite.

With music so integral a part of the local church service and so vital to the service, how can we make special music "special"?

Select Wisely

A great deal of music offered today under the label of "sacred" is inappropriate for special music in the worship service. Both the message and the music must be examined.

First, the music director must make sure that the message is scriptural. No matter what else a song may have to commend it, unscriptural music has no place in the church service. Churches that would never allow heresy from the pulpit do allow it in song lyrics.

Second, the music director must make sure that the message is clear. Some song writers, propelled by the noble motive of reaching the lost, have watered down the message to make it less offensive. Songs that communicate the gospel must be clear.

Third, the music director must make certain that the selected music is suitable for a sacred message, that it is not simply the world's song with a few

Christian phrases attached.

Fourth, the music director must make sure that the music fits the performer. Nothing is more distracting than hearing a singer attempt a song that is too high or low for his voice range or one beyond him musically.

Fifth, the director must maintain a balance, a variety in the song selection. Special music should reflect the spectrum of Christian experience. Just as the pastor must provide his congregation with a balanced diet, the music program should offer a variety of spiritual food.

Finally, the director must coordinate the music with the service. For example, up-tempo numbers should be performed early in the service to help create an exciting evangelistic atmosphere. Slower numbers should be performed prior to the message to focus minds on the preached Word.

Prepare Musically

Next, let's look at the preparation of the music. All of us have endured those specials that were not special because of poor preparation. The performers must be prepared, first of all, musically. This, of course, involves practice. Nothing takes the place of careful and thorough practice. A good idea is to plan a special music night. The various special groups could meet once a week

for a coordinated, supervised time of rehearsal.

If several accompanists are available and if there is more than one piano, groups could rehearse simultaneously. In this case, a group leader should be chosen to oversee the rehearsal. The director could move from group to group or work with the group that will perform next Sunday.

If only one accompanist is available, then each group could rehearse with the accompanist and the director at scheduled times during the evening. This confines rehearsals to one evening and still allows the director to supervise them.

During rehearsal, each group should rehearse three or four numbers. By doing this they will be prepared well in advance of their scheduled performance, and also could be ready for those spur-of-the-moment occasions.

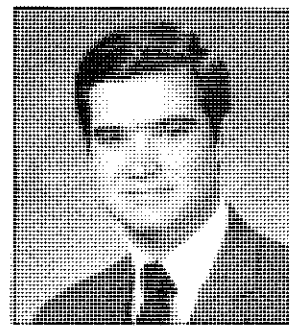
Prepare Spiritually

Performers must be prepared spiritually as well. This note is seldom sounded even in churches which stress musical preparation. The performer who honors God and empowers his talents by the Holy Spirit is one who will see the importance of spiritual preparation.

Spiritual preparation begins with personal commitment to God, followed by

thorough examination of one's motives and by prayer for God's blessings. Without the power of God the most carefully prepared musician becomes but "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Music can be made special by preparation both musically and spiritually.

The ministry of music is an unending challenge. Few things that we do compare with singing the songs of Zion. Music forms and styles have changed through the years, but good music carefully selected and performed by spiritual people continues to invigorate the church. Such music is indeed "special."



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Randy Sawyer chairs the music department at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in Wendell, North Carolina. He is a 1978 graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College.

**Where and when did Free Will Baptists begin?
Who were our early leaders and what were they like?
How did our brothers of the last century react to issues like
slavery and temperance?**

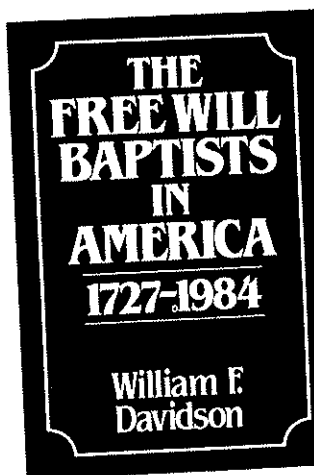
These and many other questions are answered in the pages of *The Free Will Baptists In America (1727-1984)*. Dr. William F. Davidson traces the denomination's roots from colonial days to the present time. This hardbound volume, containing over 450 pages, is filled with interesting and sometimes dramatic accounts.

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A Voice from the Other Side

By Jonathan K. Riggs



Most adults readily admit that being 17 today is quite different than when they were teenagers. Different problems, different pressures and different temptations face us. For a youth program to be effective, today's church must adapt to changing times to meet the needs of today's teenager.

One does not have to look far to see that local Free Will Baptist youth programs are inadequate. In a recent survey among teenage leaders in 11 states, I found that many teens are dissatisfied with their youth programs. I don't have all the answers, nor a formula of five easy steps to an effective youth group. But I can suggest some ideas about youth ministry from the other side of the table—the teenager's side.

Let Us Be Us.

One of the biggest problems in many youth groups is that teenagers are not

allowed to be teenagers. We are either treated like rebellious kids who can handle nothing or conservative adults with full responsibility and seriousness. There is little time to just enjoy our youth and let our hair down. Everything must be coats and ties (or dresses in the girls' case).

This tension can make church activities undesirable for the teen. The scriptures teach that there is a time and a place for everything. Coats and ties are fine in formal worship service. But there are times for casual attire, such as at cookouts or in a van in the July heat.

Sometimes we should be serious and reverent, but there are also times to relax and be ourselves. Bible study and meditation have their times and places, as do times of fellowship, which leads me to my next point.

Ram and Cram Bible Study Does Not Always Work.

I've learned enough to stay afloat
But not so much to rock the boat
I'm glad they shoved it down my throat!
I want to be a clone

—Steve Taylor

Please do not get me wrong. Bible study is important and I am opposed to turning the church into a social club. But I'm afraid that we sometimes get so cold in our gospel presentation that it stag-nates the teenager instead of stimulating his growth. We get trained on a Bible Bowl question / answer technique when we need more principles on how to live right.

Tradition vs. Conviction

"For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience?"

—I Corinthians 10:29 NIV

Traditions are not the gospel. Traditions that are not scripturally solid should be disregarded. Strict, man-made rules prevent teens (or anyone else for that matter) from thinking for themselves and listening to their own consciences. This causes Christianity to get out of perspective. It's been put like this: "Rules without reason lead to rebellion."

For instance, a boy's hair grows over his ears. The boy's father makes it a moral issue and demands that his Christian son have a godly hairdo—like his. Other rules come and go, one thing leads to another, and rebellion starts. The boy sees Christianity as a hypocritical game—traditions and rules passed down to give us something to do. His clean-cut appearance masks a heart of confusion, frustration and bitterness. He is not excited about church and rarely attends anymore. His witness is void, but that's all right—he has a clean-cut appearance.

This is just one illustration of "rules without reason," and I wish it were an exaggerated example. This teen is easily found in churches everywhere. The boy's happiness evaporates because of rules without reason. Youth leaders, the local church and our denomination should evaluate what's behind our "rules" to see if they are worth the rebellion they might bring. When we confuse convictions with traditions, God-made principles get confused with man-made preferences.

God made each of us in His image, giving us special personalities. Inside each of us is a conscience. And inside every Christian is the indwelling Holy

Spirit. No one can—nor should—force personal preferences that are not scripturally solid. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to convict where He will.

Keep Adults at Home.

Recently I attended a district youth rally that registered more adults than youth. This is a problem. Sure, some adult counseling and supervision are necessary, but a youth activity should be just that—a youth activity. After all, we do not crash Woman's Auxiliary or Master's Men meetings. It's just as appropriate for non-youth to stay away from youth activities.

Another example occurred at the 1989 National Youth Conference in Tampa. Numerous adults attended the evening youth activities. My date and I had a difficult time finding a table at the banquet—many adults who arrived before we did had no trouble being seated. Though they had the best of intentions, adults at a youth function created tension that could have been avoided.

Keep Your Word.

I have seen this happen in more than one church, and perhaps it's happened in yours. The principle is simple: If you say you will do something—do it! I wish I had a nickel for every time a church has promised me or my colleagues a trip or to put up a basketball goal or a youth service or some youth activity that went unfulfilled.

Mere talk is frustrating for us all and the results can be ugly. It does not take long until teenagers realize that adult words are empty. Then, when teen help is needed to really get something going, it can be difficult to excite them. Even worse, adult examples might persuade

them that the scriptures are all talk and no action.

We Need Full-Time Workers.

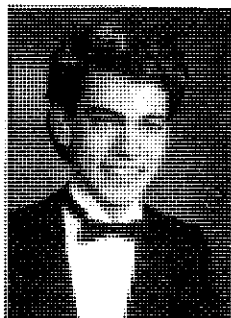
In order for a youth program to be effective, full-time workers are necessary. Some churches cannot afford a full-time paycheck, but I believe that to minister effectively to youth, someone needs to be there for youth at all times—devoting as much time as possible.

This mission field demands attention and must not be taken lightly. Our denomination wouldn't settle for all part-time missionaries or pastors—as well it shouldn't. Likewise, youth outreach is important enough to justify full-time workers.

Until the local church has a full-time, dedicated youth minister—with or without a full-time paycheck—that church will not have full-time dedicated youth.

Youth: Do Your Part.

This article is primarily written to churches, pastors and youth workers.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Jonathan K. Riggs attends Donelson Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. Jonathan is a senior at Nashville's Hillwood High School and Tennessee's representative for the new teen congress TEAM (Teens Equipped and Active in Ministry).

But some excellent youth workers still have poor youth groups and it's not the youth workers' fault. To my fellow youth, I say:

Cooperate with Your Church and Related Activities.

The best activity or class is useless without your cooperation, and especially without your presence. Your youth worker can only do so much. The rest is up to you.

Cliques—Get Out and Stay Out.

Youth groups grow both spiritually and numerically only when we work at it. Go out of your way to speak to someone you do not know. Most youth workers will tell you that your excitement, kindness and presence can do far more for the unsaved, unchurched or stagnant teenager than any effort made by adults.

The church must start and maintain a stable youth program, but the fact remains that it is the youth who make their group effective or ineffective.

It is time to take both our youth and youth ministry seriously. We've heard testimonies of people who were saved in childhood, then strayed from God during their teen years.

A friend once said to me: "Have we heard this so many times that we have now accepted it? Have we decided just to let them go and sow their wild oats, hoping they will come back? I certainly hope not, because the scriptures teach otherwise. The youth of today are the church of tomorrow. But not only that, they can and *should* be a vital part of the church today!"



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FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

173 ATTEND BIBLE COLLEGE'S WELCOME DAYS

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College welcomed 173 visitors from 15 states to its fall Welcome Days, Nov. 30 - Dec. 2, 1989, according to Dr. Charles Hampton, registrar.

The visitors came from 47 churches. First FWB Church, Wichita, KS, sent the most people (14); followed by Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville (13).

By states, most came from Tennessee (30), followed by Illinois (28), North Carolina (18), Kansas (17), Missouri (14), Virginia (13) and Michigan (10). Other states represented were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, South Carolina and Texas.

The visitors sampled classes, enjoyed a music/drama service, and watched the FWBBC Flames beat previously unbeaten Southeastern Bible College from Birmingham. Welcome Days closed with a service of songs and testimonies on Friday night, in which both students and visitors shared how God is leading in their lives.

The next Welcome Days is scheduled for April 5-7.

Directory Update

CALIFORNIA

Ron Burrow to Lindsay Church, Lindsay

SOUTH CAROLINA

Harry Cooper to Camp Branch Church, Scranton from Tabernacle Church, Coward

David Aycock to Fellowship Church, Florence from Bloss Memorial Church, Arlington, VA, as assistant pastor



JAMES HEFLEY TO LEAD WRITERS' CONFERENCE

NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. James C. Hefley, a nationally known author and speaker, will be featured at the Tenth Annual Randall House Writers' Conference, May 18-19, on the Free Will Baptist Bible College campus.

Hefley, the author of over 40 books and hundreds of magazine articles, is publisher of Hannibal Books.

His most recent books are *Life Changes* (facing traumatic transitions in life), *Way Back in the Hills* (the autobiography of his boyhood in the Ozarks) and *The Truth in the Southern Baptist Convention* (a documentary on the current conflict in his denomination).

Dr. Hefley served eight years as a pastor in New Orleans and two-and-a-half years as editor of *Sunday Pix*, a church youth periodical with 850,000 weekly circulation. For the past 25 years he has been a full-time writer.

While researching books he traveled to Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. The book *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the 20th Century* received the Gold Medallion Award from the Association of Christian Publishers for "best biography" of 1981. All his books relate in some way to faith and morality.

In 1973, William Cameron Townsend (the subject of a major biography by the Hefleys) asked Dr. Hefley to accompany him on a visit to the White House at the invitation of President Nixon. "We talked about the role of the Bible in education. I suppose the conversation was recorded!"

FWBBC STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL HONORS BAND

NASHVILLE, TN—Five students from Free Will Baptist Bible College were selected from among Christian colleges across America to participate in the 2nd National Christian College Honors Band sponsored by the Christian Instrumental Directors Association. The 85-member Honors Band rehearsed for three days at the National Conference of C.I.D.A. held February 8-10 in Westerville, Ohio. They concluded their activities by presenting a concert to the Conference of Christian Instrumental Directors.

The FWBBC students selected to the Honors Band included Missy Patton, clarinet, from Betsy Layne, Kentucky; Rachael Burgess, flute, from Powhatan, Virginia; Melinda Lewis, oboe, from North Little Rock, Arkansas; Brad Williams, trumpet, from Nashville, Tennes-

see; and Jeff King, percussion, from Pine Bluff, Arkansas. They participated with students from 14 other Christian colleges.

Dr. Hefley has talked with several celebrities in the process of gathering material, though none as well-known as President Nixon. Among the most interesting, he says, was Chief Tariri of the Shaphra tribe of Peru, who before his conversion to Christianity was one of the most feared headhunters in South America. Chief Tariri's story is told in *Dawn over Amazonia*, authored by Hefley and his wife, Marti.

Dr. Hefley wrote two books based on research during wartime in Vietnam. On one occasion, he and three other missionaries were flat in a ditch "while bullets zinged just above our heads," he recalls. "We were in a refugee camp when a battle broke out between two different groups of South Vietnamese soldiers."

In another foreign situation, he was surrounded by a crowd of unfriendly leftist students in the Dominican Republic. "A campus Marxist," he says, "sought to persuade them that I was a CIA agent. I challenged him to a debate on the question of what is the greatest power for good—Christianity or Communism."

Write to Randall House Publications for a descriptive brochure on the Writers' Conference. In addition to Dr. Hefley's three general sessions, seven workshops will be offered by other personnel on subjects such as "The Art of Interviewing," "Fine-tuning Your Manuscript," "Writing and Rewriting with Clarity and Brevity" and more.

"We are very proud of our students and their accomplishments in instrumental music," said Rodney Whaley, chairman of the music department at FWBBC and director of the FWBBC Concert Band. "Our students represented our college well."

Whaley also said, "Christian Instrumental Directors Association is dedicated to promotion and development of instrumental music in Christian schools, Christian colleges and local churches. I recommend that any minister of music or school music director become an active member of C.I.D.A."

BIBLE COLLEGE TO LAUNCH EXTERNAL STUDIES PROGRAM

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College is gearing up to take biblical and ministerial courses out to Free Will Baptist preachers or laymen who have not had opportunity for formal biblical and theological training. The new program will be headed by Rev. Harrold Harrison who has been named director of external education, according to President Charles A. Thigpen.

Each extension school will provide instruction in units of 15 class hours each at locations where preachers and laymen may attend. Actual scheduling will depend on the students' circumstances. For example, in an area where those interested work during the day, classes might meet three nights a week and one Saturday morning over a two-week period.

Subjects will include biblical and doctrinal studies as well as ministry skills like preaching, counseling or church administration.

Rev. Harrison will be the primary teacher, although the administration

plans to involve other members of the faculty from time to time, as schedules permit.

Rev. Harrison retired as assistant director from Randall House Publications in February. During his 26 years there, he issued nearly 24,000 Evangelical Teacher Training certificates and 3,800 Sunday School Workers' Training Course certificates. Dr. Robert Picirilli, academic dean, recommended Rev. Harrison for this position for two reasons. "I know he shares the burden for this need," he says. He then adds, "He is an excellent teacher/communicator, particularly gifted in the area of teacher training."

Rev. Harrison commented, "The programs offered will be practical so that application can be made to immediate ministry functions in the areas of biblical knowledge, organization and other ministry skills."

Those interested in hosting such a program, please contact Mr. Harrison at the college.

FWBBC ANNOUNCES BIBLE CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

NASHVILLE, TN—The administration of Free Will Baptist Bible College says that the speakers for the spring Bible Conference, March 11-15, will be Dr. Jim Mercer, Dr. L. C. Johnson, Rev. Herman Hersey and Dr. Robert Woodard.

Dr. Mercer last spoke at the conference in 1979. A popular evangelist and conference speaker, he has been preaching for a half century in the United States and Canada. He was called to preach at the age of 21. He presently lives in Florida.

Dr. Johnson is well-known among Free Will Baptists. The Georgia native was Free Will Baptist Bible College's first president and served for 34 years in that capacity. His practical insights have left their mark on thousands of FWBBC alumni.

Rev. Hersey, born in Chicago, has served Free Will Baptists for most of his life. He was a pastor for 20 years and has been director of the Retirement and Insurance Department since 1968.

Dr. Woodard is FWBBC's pastoral studies director, with a love for pastoral ministry and preachers. He graduated from FWBBC in 1969 and earned his Ph.D. Degree at Bob Jones University in 1978. He has been on the Bible College faculty since 1978.

Alumni will use the occasion to observe their annual homecoming. Alumni Association President Fred Hall is laying plans for the gathering.

The Music Department will present an assortment of instrumental and vocal music, directed by Chairman Rodney Whaley.

The Evangel Players, directed by Joseph Jones, will be featured in one service as they present their entire drama tour program for conference guests.

All Free Will Baptists are invited to share the fellowship and preaching at the 1990 Bible Conference. A list of area motels is available from the College.

EXECUTIVE CHURCH BONDS ENDS 28 YEARS' SERVICE TO FREE WILL BAPTISTS

NASHVILLE, TN—After 28 years and 350 building programs, the denomination's bond program has been phased out, according to Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. The vote to terminate Executive Church Bonds, Inc. came December 6, 1989, when Executive Committee members agreed with Trustee Harold Critcher that the program had fulfilled the purpose for which it came into existence.

Executive Church Bonds, approved in 1961 by the National Association, came into existence for the sole purpose of aiding Free Will Baptist churches and institutions with building programs. Over the years, Executive Church Bonds issued some \$18 million in bonds throughout the United States.

Trustee Harold Critcher told the Executive Committee, "According to our information, no one has ever lost any money invested in a program supervised by Executive Church Bonds."

Four men served as director of Executive Church Bonds before Mr. Critcher was named as Trustee. Bob Hill, the first director, worked out of his pastorate in Nashville before moving to an office in the old headquarters building on Richland Avenue. Jake Creech served as interim director before Billy Melvin assumed responsibility for the program. Francis Boyle became the first full-time director in 1967.

In a March 1970 article in *Contact*, Francis Boyle said about Executive Church Bonds, "Practically all the programs I have handled are designed to meet the churches' most essential needs. And most financial agents find it unusual that none of our programs have failed to be carried to satisfactory completion."

Trustee Harold Critcher told the Executive Committee in his summary letter, "We have continued to serve the churches that needed assistance with details on existing programs. All of the first mortgage programs that we are aware of have been released. I feel that it is proper to conclude the operation of Executive Church Bonds."

**CONVENTION
HOTELS**

**Look For Reservation
Form in April**

Lay extension courses at the Free Will Baptist Seminary in **Cuba** continue to operate and prosper, according to Master's Men president **Pedro Alsaro**. Since houses on the seminary campus need repairing, each Cuban church agreed to repair a house. **Maribel Reyes**, a civil engineer who works with youth said that some 50 FWB youth (ages 11-14) attend camp sessions.

Pastor **Claudie Hames** set a goal to baptize 100 converts in 1989 at **First FWB Church, Bakersfield, CA**. By mid-December, he had baptized 101.

Tennessee promotional secretary, **Raymond Riggs**, summarized his 1989 activities in this fashion: Preached 23 revivals, traveled 13,000 miles, visited eight states, edited the Tennessee state paper, witnessed 200 decisions for Christ.

Bethel FWB Church, Woodbridge, VA, publishes a four-page, 8½" x 11" paper titled *The Link*. Pastor **Dave Nobles** writes a column in the publication titled "From the Pastor to You."

Reverend **J. E. Blanton** turned in his ministerial credentials to officials in the state of **Georgia**. Rev. Blanton explained in an open letter to Georgia Free Will Baptists that he is no longer in agreement with the Free Will Baptist doctrinal position.

Grass Roots Evangelism began a radio broadcast December 16, 1989, over station KWHN in **Fort Smith, AR**. The program is titled, "It Happened That Way Going Home." Grass Roots Evangelism is an outreach of Evangelist **Wade Jernigan** of **Lexington, OK**.

Former National Association Moderator **Ralph Staten** suffered paralysis in his left vocal cord in late 1989. Undaunted, Brother Staten continues his journalism outreach through the *Congregational Crusader*, a publication mailed from his **Knoxville, TN**, home. Brother Staten traveled from Arkansas in 1935 to attend the organizational meeting of the National Association of Free Will Baptists in Nashville.

Moderator **Sam Henderson** presented a plaque to Rev. **Wallace Malone** from **Illinois' North Central District** in honor of Malone's years of service. Henderson said, "Brother Malone served as district moderator for many years and has labored diligently for the cause of Free Will Baptists in Illinois."

Part of the **Tennessee State Master's Men Retreat** included a work day at Free Will Baptist Bible College, according to state Master's Men President **Edward Hall**. The men divided into work crews and proceeded to paint buildings, repair desks, rake leaves and perform other chores.

South Carolina minister **Allen Lemons** died November 3, 1989, in **Union, SC**. Reverend Lemons pastored three South Carolina churches, including 11 years at Calvary FWB Church in Union prior to his retirement in 1987. He also served 20 years as postmaster at Lockhart, SC, and was elected Postmaster of the Year in 1978 and South Carolina Retired Postmaster of the Year in 1986.

Thirty-six **South Carolina** churches participated in a FWBBC Friendship Tour in October 1989. Some 41 FWBBC staff, faculty and preacher boys participated in the weekend crusade. **Ronald Creech**, director of development at the college, said the group reported 98 decisions that weekend including 11 conversions. The South Carolina churches responded with gifts of more than \$6,000 and a prospective student list of 225.

After six months and \$125,000, members of **Mt. Trolly FWB Church, Galivants Ferry, SC**, conducted dedication services for a new sanctuary. Pastor **Billy Jones** preached the dedication message with more than 200 in attendance. The new structure gives the church a 300-seat sanctuary, six classrooms, pastor's study, church office, soundproof nursery and other facilities.

Hurricane Hugo had a silver lining for one **South Carolina** pastor. **Dennis Keen**, pastor of **Landmark FWB Church, Charleston, SC**, said that attendance at Sunday and Wednesday evening services doubled after Hurricane Hugo. "Since the storm, folks have been receiving us and our witness better. Not a single person has refused to talk to me," reported Pastor Keen.

Members of **First FWB Church, Florence, SC**, honored Mrs. **Norma Baxley** for 33 years as church secretary and treasurer. The church gave Mr. and Mrs. Baxley a three-day, all-expense-paid trip to Gatlinburg, TN, as well as a generous love offering. Mrs. Baxley was a charter member of the church in 1954.

Members of **New Life FWB Church, Conway, SC**, invested a great deal of time improving their church property. The church now has an attractive steeple including chimes, a paved parking lot and a lighted sign at the church entrance.

Pastor **Ray Cribb** preached the dedication message at **Socastee FWB Church, Socastee, SC**, for their new 3,000-square-foot facility. Located on 3.75 acres on Highway 707, the all-metal building cost \$30,000 to complete. It includes a 150-seat sanctuary, three classrooms, nursery and storage area.

Contact welcomes *The Good News Mes-*

senger, publication of **First FWB Church, Garland, TX**. The well-designed, four-page publication includes computer artwork as well as major articles. **Keith Stewart** pastors.

Members of **Hammock Springs FWB Church, Donalsonville, GA**, conducted dedication services on a 200-seat sanctuary, according to Pastor **Gary Smith**. The \$120,000 structure also includes a nursery, office complex and a covered passageway connecting it to another building.

The effort took 21 months and cost more than \$172,000, but Pastor **Rex Lynn** said members at **Pine Level FWB Church, Alma, GA**, have a new building. The structure includes a 200-seat sanctuary, 10 classrooms, a church office and a 1,500-square-foot social hall.

Pastor **Ernie Lewis** baptized six converts at **Blue Point FWB Church, Cisne, IL**. The church also celebrated its 92nd anniversary.

Members of **Oak Valley FWB Church, Geff, IL**, burned the mortgage on their building in a special service last fall. **James Boggs** pastors.

The February 26-28 Bible Conference at **Hillsdale FWB College, Moore, OK**, featured more than 14 sessions. Conference speakers included Pastor **Lynn Wood** of Tulsa, OK, Pastor **Will Harmon** of Pine Bluff, AR, and Associate Pastor **Curt Gwartney** of Flat River, MO.

What did your church give the pastor on Pastor Appreciation Day? Here's an idea for next time. Members of **First FWB Church, North Little Rock, AR**, gave Pastor **Ben Scott** a Remington 1100 automatic shotgun!

Allen Chapel FWB Church, Batesville, AR, became a member of the "200 Club," according to Roger Reeds, general director at Randall House Publications. A plaque was awarded certifying that the church averaged at least 200 in Sunday School for 13 weeks. Allen Chapel Church averaged 205 in Sunday School during August, September and October 1989. **James Forlines** pastors. **Cecil Magouyrk** serves as Sunday School superintendent. Congratulations!

Pastor **Wayne Wagner** reports a \$5,100 offering to pave the church parking lot at **Heads FWB Church, Cedar Hill, TN**.



MINI GRAMS

Department of Home Missions and Church Extension
of the National Association of Free Will Baptists

The Department Pages

Report from the Mexican Convention

By Roy Thomas

The Mexican National Association of Free Will Baptists convened at First FWB Church in Altamira, Tamps., Mexico, December 14-17, 1989. It met at the same church as last year because the auditorium is large enough to handle the crowds.

This year's attendance was the largest in the history of the association. The reasons for this are because it is usually warmer in that area of Mexico in December and because many Free Will Baptists in Mexico had never visited the Free Will Baptist Bible Institute located near there.

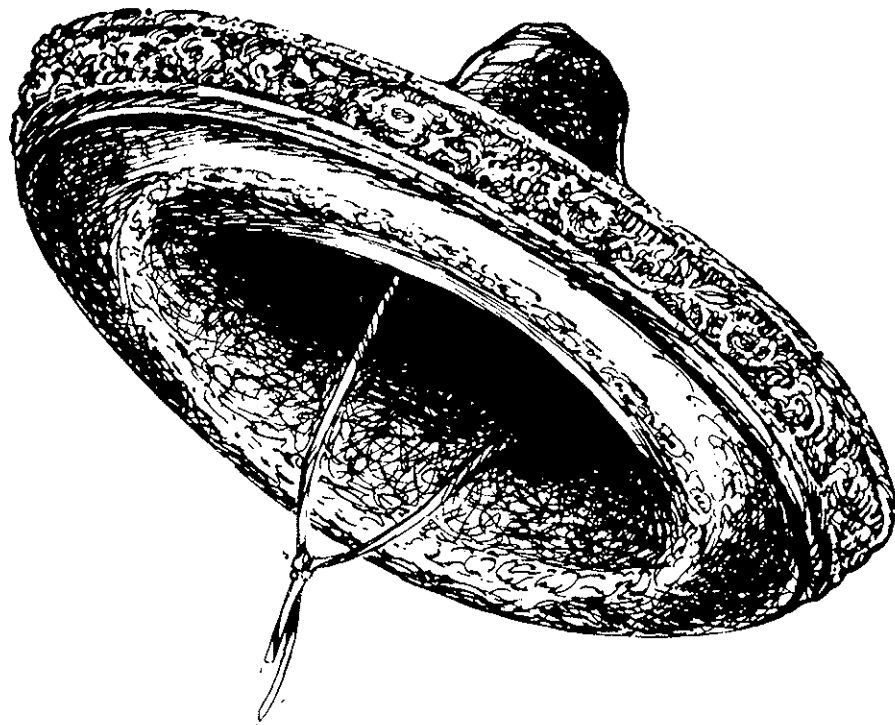
The convention began Thursday evening, December 14, with a meeting of national pastors. Friday morning the youth conference convened, and the Woman's Auxiliary convention met that afternoon. The national convention itself began Friday evening.

The convention theme was "The Relationship Between the Pastor and the Church," based on Hebrews 13:7. This theme was developed in four sermons by Dr. Wade Jernigan, an evangelist from Oklahoma.

I was accompanied on the trip to Mexico by Dr. Melvin Worthington. Others present included Rev. Billy Brown from Randall House Publications, Dr. Thomas Marberry of Hillsdale FWB College and Rev. Bob Thomas, an evangelist from Oklahoma.

This was the first convention since the two associations in Mexico united. A spirit of unity and cooperation prevailed throughout the business sessions.

Two new churches were introduced. One national pastor, Reuben Munoz, announced that his church is now able to support its pastor and is self-supporting. He recommended that the



salary Home Missions has been sending him be switched to another pastor to start a new church.

Part of the Sunday morning service was graduation for the Bible Institute. Three young preachers were graduated. They will each work under one of the seasoned pastors in Mexico for one year, after which they will start new churches.

National pastor Pablo Salazar reported that property for his church had been purchased from funds given by First FWB Church, Florence, Alabama, where Tom Malone pastors. The remainder of the money will go toward construction of the church building. Construction was begun in January.

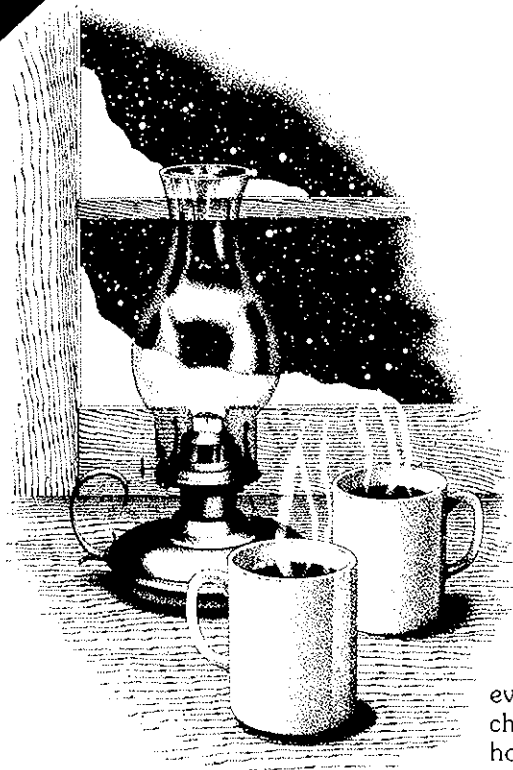
The president's house on the Bible Institute property should be ready for

occupancy by March. Cramerton FWB Church, pastored by Rev. Doug King since the death of his father, gave \$10,002 on their annual Mexico Day, November 19, 1989, for construction of the president's house.

The Mexican convention was a delightful experience. The churches in Mexico are growing and souls are being saved. Institute President Fred Jones and Coordinator James Munsey are to be commended for their leadership and dedication. The Home Missions Department also expresses appreciation for the national pastors of Mexico. Additional funds are needed to support these faithful workers:

Woman's Window on the World

By Mary Wisehart



To some, change is unsettling and even frightening. To some, change is challenging and exciting. No matter how you feel about change, it's coming. Let's all face it with our hands in His—the hands of the Unchanging One.

From My Window

The March winds are blowing. So are the winds of change. Changes in Rumania, Hungary, Germany—all over Europe. Changes in our world—economic, political, philosophical and spiritual.

Everywhere the winds of change seem to be blowing. They blow through Free Will Baptists and through the WNAC office also. Change is inevitable. The challenge for us is how we meet the change.

Woman's Auxiliary should meet the needs of women, especially Free Will Baptist women. Basic needs remain the same, but our women must cope with this changing world. Part of our ministry is to help women shine as lights for God where they are in their time. Must we change to help the women of the 90's and the women of the next century? If so, what changes do we need to make? What should remain unchanged? And when do we begin?

Now is the time and we must answer these questions as we pray and plan for the future.

Personally Yours—Retreat '90

The 1990 WNAC retreat at Ridgecrest, September 20-22 is planned especially for you.

If you haven't registered, forms are available in the January/February issue of *Co-Laborer*, the January issue of *Contact*, or write WNAC, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, TN 37202.

Get Acquainted with June Rolan

In July 1989, the convention elected June Rolan as vice president of WNAC.

Most people know June well because she served WNAC 12 years. She came on the executive committee in 1975 as a member at large, serving two terms in that position. In 1979 the women elected her vice president. After serving two terms as vice president, she was elected president in 1983. WNAC honored her for 12 years of service at Kansas City in 1988.

June was born in Featherston, Oklahoma, to George W. and Winnie McLain. She graduated from Shawnee High, Shawnee, Okla., and attended Fresno City College and California Christian College.

When she was 12 years old, she was attending a meeting where her father was preaching. As she attempted to witness to an older girl, the Holy Spirit whispered that she herself needed salvation. Later at the family altar, she asked Christ to come into her heart.

Since that time June has served faithfully. She is a 25-year member of Ashbrook FWB Church, Fresno, California. In her church she has served as treasurer, teacher, pianist and pastor's wife. She has held almost every office in either the local, district, state or national Woman's Auxiliary.

In 1979 she was honored for nine and one half years' service to California State Association as clerk-treasurer.

June is married to Lonnie, retired pastor. They have two children, Janice and Tim, and two grandchildren, Brant and Chad Rolan.

Presently, June serves as coordinator of financial services at Link Care Center, a Christian organization in Fresno. Recently she was honored as Employee of the Year.

She likes to travel and spend time with her grandchildren, and sometimes manages to combine the two.

Eunice Edwards Fund

December 31, 1989—\$24,363.60

WNAC Office Needs

In 1989 WNAC received \$1,047.50 for office equipment and furnishings.

At least \$2,952.50 is still needed for computer and bookkeeping software, copier and typewriter.



Board of Retirement *AT YOUR SERVICE*

Herman L. Hersey
Director



You and Your Aging Parents Part III

In this age of longevity, parents are more and more living into the pre-retirement and retirement years of sons and daughters. Once those in their late 40's and 50's could breathe easier when the last of their children went out on their own; responsibilities were lessened and planning could be concentrated more on preparations for retirement.

It is often different now. Many in their mid-years have parents alive and healthy—but getting old. One set of family responsibilities, a couple's children, may in years just ahead be supplanted by another, their own parents who might need care. This is particularly true of mothers who have a life expectancy seven to 10 years longer than fathers and who, as widows, are likely to require even more care.

Questions arise: What do we do? How can we plan for our own retirement while we must face possibilities of parents needing help? Retirement plans might have to be reviewed. Moves you've been considering might not be practical if they mean leaving aged parents behind. Extended trips might have to be put off. Other sacrifices might have to be made.

An estimated one of five employees of a major company have reported they are caring for an elderly parent. Their work records generally have suffered. Medical studies have found more symptoms of depression (three to one) among those who regularly care for older relatives. Financially they are more hard-pressed.

Efforts are being made to assist those who care for the elderly, but progress has been slow.

Once aging parents moved in with adult children when they no longer

were able to live alone. Times have changed; houses are smaller and there are fewer spare rooms. There are more working couples with less time for providing needed care, and today's society makes demands—and offers opportunities—that make home care difficult.

The result has been a boom in nursing homes to help with Eldercare. Often they aren't a happy alternative but a necessary (and expensive) solution to elderly parents' needs.

It's a good idea not to rush parents who'd prefer continued self-care into a nursing home. Keep them with you, possibly, as long as you can. Better for them and for you, help them settle into Senior Citizen housing where they can be more on their own but, in most such projects, have help almost immediately available in crises.

If it comes to nursing home care, choose the home carefully, matching it as much as possible to the needs and interests of parents. In some, those registered continue to enjoy activities provided for them; in others, last years can be deadly dull.

Costs are shocking, commonly \$100 to \$200 or more a day. Medicare does not pay for custodial care. However, in many states once those registered have almost exhausted their assets, Medicaid may take over, diverting Social Security benefits to nursing home care. It's a real problem.

There are now offerings of nursing home insurance policies. If you foresee a need for nursing home care, and if you are in mid-years, you might investigate these. However, questions have arisen recently about their real value, so we suggest: Be careful.

—Ready or Not—

Free Will Baptist Bible College

3606 WEST END AVENUE
P.O. BOX 50117
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37205-0117
(615) 383-1340

An Open Letter To Our Pastors

Dear Pastor Friend,

Research indicates that pastors are among the chief influencers of young people with respect to college choice. Our own experience confirms that finding, generally. However, our research also shows some ups and downs in that influence as it relates to Free Will Baptist Bible College.

For 12 years we have surveyed freshmen enrolled here. Two items deal with influences on their decision to attend FWBBC. For the first six years of our surveys the pastor was the first to *introduce* FWBBC to a majority of our students. (One of those years parents tied with the pastors.) Since then (7th-12th years), parents have been the major agents for introduction. (I realize that pastors are sometimes the parents!)

In terms of *influencing* or recruiting students to FWBBC, parents and campus visits usually led pastors in the first six years. In years 7-12 pastors slipped to fourth place (four years) and even to fifth and sixth places for a year each. In those same years, parents and campus visits were generally first and second in influencing youth to attend our college. It is *important to note* pastors fell to the lowest level for them in 1987, then came back to fourth position in the last two years. That's good, but I would like to see pastors in the top three every year for mentioning the college to their young people *and* recruiting them for the college.

We are looking for young people of Christian character and commitment, and you know who those are in your church. We want to help as many of those young folks as possible to find the will of God for their lives, then help them prepare for the ministry that God gives them!

We must stand together in combating the materialism of our age, which may even cause Christians to place more emphasis on "the good life" than on *God's best* for their lives. We must learn how to conserve our young people for the kingdom of God and our denomination. I cannot help but feel that we can do a better job if we really work together. As we do so, I am convinced it will make a positive difference in enrollments at FWBBC and some other Christian colleges as well. To be sure, this college exists to serve our young people, so we do *need them*. I am also very sure *they need* the kind of preparation offered here as well. Certainly, the denomination must retain all its young people if we are to grow as we ought.

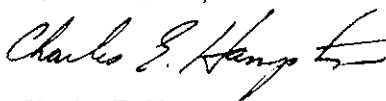
Some commitments are in order! Your college is committed to continue its emphasis on clean, holy, separated living; preaching for commitment to Christian service and soul winning in particular. (We have maintained strong standards of Christian life and conduct despite current trends and continuous pressures to the contrary.) This college is also committed to stand with our pastors in meeting the spiritual needs of our people and reaching out to the lost world. The Word of God is central to all we attempt to do.

In addition to the above commitments, the college is now engaged in a research project to determine how it can better minister to the educational needs of our young people and the denomination. We already offer graduate training for our pastors who have undergraduate degrees. In the near future we will be initiating a program of external education whereby FWBBC may come to your area. This ministry will be directed by Rev. Harrold Harrison.

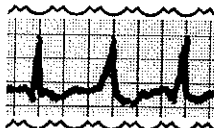
In closing, let me echo Brother Shockey's theme: *Together We Can!* We can do more than ever before to meet the spiritual and educational needs of our people! I am appealing to you to use your influence, your personal testimony, and your good will for the good of FWBBC. Step up your prayer efforts on behalf of the ministry of the school. Recommend with conviction FWBBC to your young people. The greatest single indicator of a man's support of a ministry is when he directs his own children to it: Send your children to FWBBC. We are counting on your commitment!

You are a valued friend and we appreciate what you have been doing. Feel free to share your thoughts, feelings, impressions, needs, etc., with me. Best wishes as you labor where God has placed you!

Your co-laborer,



Charles E. Hampton
Registrar

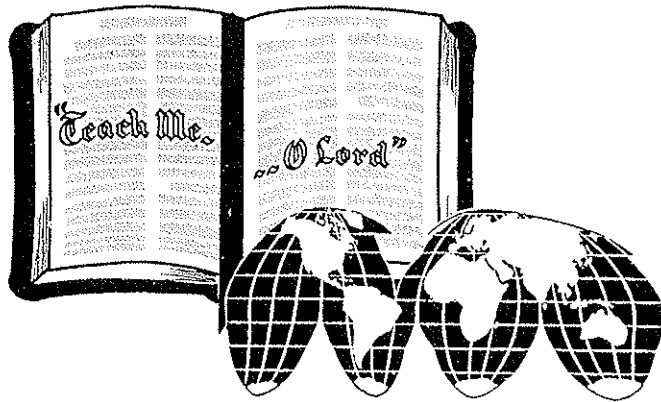


PULSE of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions



A growing Sunday school is missions minded. Concerned members seek to win the lost of their community to the Lord. But Sunday school students must also reach beyond their city limits. Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth beckon.

Education is vital to the success of the missionary enterprise. Believers must be instructed in God's plan for



eign Missions.

Filmstrips and videotapes on the countries where Free Will Baptist missionaries are

to train your Sunday school students to be missions intercessors.

Prayer requests are recorded each week on the Missions Hotline. For the price of a long distance call to 615/361-5005, your Sunday school students can know the needs of our missionaries.

Your class should ask God to call members from your Sunday school to serve Him on the mission field.

Remember, too, April is Foreign Missions Month! Each year churches across the denomination are asked to receive a special offering on **Foreign Missions Sunday** which falls on **April 29** this year. Why not challenge each class in your Sunday school to participate in the **World Missions Offering**? Every Sunday school student from preschooler to retiree should be encouraged to give to missions.

The Sunday school provides an ideal opportunity for your church to focus its attention on the needs of a lost world. Are you making the most of this opportunity? If not, start now!

Larry Hampton serves as advertising manager for Randall House Publications in Nashville, Tenn. His wife, Kay, works in the foreign missions office.

The Sunday School and Missions

By Larry Hampton

world evangelization. They must be equipped to fill their role as evangelists—good news bearers. The Sunday school plays a key role in this education process.

The foreign missions staff has prepared a special lesson for adults to be used during the Sunday school hour. This supplemental missions lesson will be shipped with your spring Sunday school order. Pastors, Sunday school superintendents, and teachers should pick a Sunday in April to teach this lesson.

Brochures on each of our mission fields are also available. These, as well as prayer cards and profiles for each missionary, and directories which contain facts about all of our missionaries, are free from the Department of For-

laboring are loaned on a free will offering basis.

All Sunday school classrooms need a missions map. Maps showing where missionaries are serving are available upon request.

Every church should have a library, and it should be well stocked with missions books. Every Sunday school teacher should encourage his or her students to read these works.

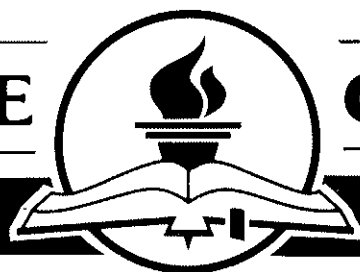
April is Foreign Missions Month!

The work of missions is undergirded by prayer. Sunday school students should pray for missionaries regularly. "Why and How to Pray for Missionaries" is an excellent tool provided by the foreign missions department

To Order Materials

Send requests to **Foreign Missions**, P. O. Box 1088, Nashville, TN 37202, or dial 615/361-1010.

HOUSE



CALL

Best Christmas Gift Ideas

Would you like to give your church a special gift next Christmas? If you want to get a head start on Christmas shopping, read on.

Dr. Win Arn, director of the Institute for American Church Growth, compiled a list of four priceless gifts for members to give their church.

Here is Dr. Arn's list.

1. Discover and use your spiritual gifts.
2. Influence your "web" of friends and relatives.
3. Keep your circle open.
4. Keep before you a vision of the possibilities.

Let's look at each of these gifts more closely.

Discover and use your spiritual gifts.

The first gift recognizes that God "gave gifts unto men." The purpose of these gifts is "the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The only way for this purpose to be accomplished is for believers to discover and deploy their gifts.

Larry Gilbert, president of Church Growth Institute, describes several gift-related problems. The first, "gift ignorance," pervades the church. Too many

members know little or nothing about spiritual gifts.

"Gift blindness" keeps individual believers from discovering their spiritual gifts. Gift blindness grows out of gift ignorance. It is a specific expression of a general problem.

Another concern Gilbert addresses is the practice of "gift imposing." In this instance, a believer tries to force his particular gift on everyone else. This is due to a lack of appreciation for the entire range of spiritual gifts.

A growing church requires members working together, each exercising his own spiritual gift.

Influence your "web" of friends and relatives.

Arn's second suggested gift is based on the premise that a person has more influence on his friends and relatives than on strangers. Arn asked more than 8,000 people how they came to Christ and the church. Some 70-90 percent listed friends or relatives as the reason they came to Christ and their church.

Arn is convinced that "church growth is related to present members influencing their friends and relatives. Since biblical days the church has grown most effectively through natural 'webs' . . . people with some social or family ties to each other."

Keep your circle open.

The third gift takes into account the fact that people will not attend a church where they are not welcome. A congregation that doesn't freely accept new members will not grow. People may visit a church that is not receptive to newcomers. They may even attend regularly for a while, but they will eventually leave that church. Hopefully, when that time comes, they will look for and find a congregation that integrates them into its fellowship.

Keep before you a vision of the possibilities.

This fourth gift focuses on the relationship of vision to growth. Unless a church believes it can grow, it will not grow.

The success of any church is dependent on this gift. Until church members are convinced that their church can and must grow for God's glory, their church will not grow.

Although these four gifts are priceless, any church member can afford to give them. To be exact, no church member can afford not to give them. But don't wait till Christmas. Give these gifts to your church now, and watch it grow.





Foundation

Herman L. Hersey
Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Stewardship and the Tithe

By Carl Cheshier

It has been said that a man's money, in a sense, is the man himself.

Society sets on a pedestal the self-made, self-sufficient person. Many are obsessed with getting ahead, enjoying the good life and preparing for security in retirement. Most people think of what they have as being theirs because of right. "I have earned it," they say.

But the scripture reveals that all we have comes from God. We are created and dependent beings and, as such, are stewards of all we have. Man is not the owner; he is the manager, the administrator of that which he holds in trust from another.

As a result, man must put to use all he holds in trust according to the will of the owner, or in such a way as to bring to the owner the greatest returns. God has placed in the hands of His stewards their whole lives, abilities, energy, time, money and opportunities. He wants these things used to spread the gospel of Christ.

One of the most prominent scriptural teachings is man's accountability to God. "... we must all appear before the

judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body ... whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10). Self-sufficient or God-dependent, man is a steward whether he wants to be or not.

Malachi the prophet was called by God to cite the failures of religious leadership to proclaim and maintain the laws of God. God's house was being robbed of its glory and its tithes and offerings. Malachi's message to them was one of exposure, rebuke, challenge and hope.

First, he charged the people with departure—"Even from the days your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances ..." (Malachi 3:7a). Their fathers brought on themselves the Babylonian captivity by a departure from God's ordinances, and they were doing the same thing.

Malachi's second charge was dishonesty—they were robbing God of what was rightfully His.

His third charge was denial. The people had lost all sense of obligation to God in the matter of the tithes. They

were insensitive and indifferent to the Divine's claims without any sense of wrongdoing. "Wherein have we robbed thee?" they asked. Sinful habits had blinded and deadened their consciences to their duty.

He laid down a basis for blessings. He called for repentance—a change of mind leading to a change of heart. Their sin was a departure from righteousness and God. Therefore, their repentance would be a return to God.

Secondly he called for reform. True repentance would lead to a life of obedience, and obedience would be the link to blessings. "Bring ye all the tithes ... prove me now ... if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing ..." (Malachi 3:10).

Today we too must fulfill the conditions of repentance and obedience if we want the windows of heaven to be opened to us.



Adapted from the sermon, "Stewardship and the Tithe," by Reverend Carl Cheshier, assistant moderator of the National Association and pastor of Cavanaugh Free Will Baptist Church, Ft. Smith, Arkansas.

TEEN Scene

Oklahoma Lock-In

Oklahoma's Center Association Christian Education Board sponsored a Lock-In, December 1-2, 1989, at the Ardmore YMCA. Seventy teens enjoyed all-night activities including basketball, volleyball, racquetball, swimming and track. The Christian film, "Ordinary Guy," challenged the young people to be useful in God's service. The discussion after the film ended just as Dominos delivered 25 large pizzas.

The TEAM program was introduced and adopted by the youth. Each church youth group will select a representative to serve in the District TEAM Congress. Officers will assist the Christian Education Board in planning future youth activities. The group plans to publish a district youth publication.

Texas Rally

"It was a first and it was great!" The Texas TEAM Youth Rally met at Fellowship FWB Church in Bryan, Texas, December 2, 1989, and attracted 100 youth.

The afternoon events featured games, chorus time and pizza. Afternoon seminars for youth and youth workers were presented by Len Davenport and Jim Lauthern from the Youth Division of Randall House Publications.

The evening session started with a concert featuring Hillsdale's New Life Singers. Host youth pastor, Mark Brawley, concluded the rally with a challenge from the Word. Mark also gave a musical concert.

Jamie Harris, Texas' TEAM Representative, did most of the planning and promoting for this rally. The youth adopted a project to raise financial support for a home missions work in San Antonio.

Tennessee Youth Conference

Three hundred youth and their sponsors crowded the Grand Hotel in Pigeon Forge December 28-29, 1989, for Tennessee's first state youth conference.

The conference theme was "Truth or Consequences."

Excitement began Thursday evening with a pizza buffet. Fun-filled group games followed the pizza feast. Next the youth chose between several seminar topics. After the seminars everyone took a 15-minute break and then gathered for a youth rally featuring the film "They Lied To Us."

Kevin Riggs, pastor of the Franklin FWB Church, challenged the young people to know the truth of Jesus Christ. Several made decisions for Christ. Fun-time activities continued until midnight.

The second day of the conference allowed youth groups to participate in the activities and sights Pigeon Forge offers.

Dean Stone and Michael Hollifield planned and coordinated the conference.



There's nothing worse than a day-old newspaper. Many people refuse to read yesterday's paper, not wanting to read impertinent information. We live in the age of information.

Less than eight hours after the Berlin Wall began toppling, we here in America knew about it. Baseball fans saw the beginnings of the San Francisco earthquake while awaiting game three of the World Series.

In yesteryear, news spread mainly by word of mouth. Most news was community related. Births, marriages and deaths were headline subjects. Only major news items made the history books.

With the shrinking of the world by telephones, computers and satellites, we require more information sooner. We

become less interested in our own community and more involved in bizarre news from afar. Each breaking story must surpass yesterday's main headline. We rush to hear the next news highlight or special news bulletin.

We have been conditioned to accept only the extraordinary, which almost eliminates religious news. Sad to say, the greatest news of all does not make the news. The miraculous transformation of a life by Jesus Christ should be in the headlines. If it makes an impact in Heaven (Luke 15:10), it should on earth too.

Let's saturate this world with the Good News!



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Paul Creech is an associate short-term missionary to Ivory Coast.



Thomas Marberry



J. I. Packer, General Editor, *The Best in Theology, Vol. 1* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Christianity Today, Inc., 1987, 439 pp., paperback, \$13.95).

This collection of some of the best articles published in recent years by outstanding theological journals includes articles on Old Testament, New Testament, church history, theology, ethics, pastoral counseling, missions, homiletics and Christian education.

Theological journals are a valuable and often overlooked source for information in these important subject areas. The articles published in leading theological journals represent the latest research done in given subject areas. Some theological journals specialize in one subject such as Old Testament, New Testament or church history. Other journals include articles on a variety of subjects.

The editors of this volume have selected the most outstanding for inclusion in this work. We do not have space in this review to summarize each article, but let me say a few words about three of them.

Douglas Moo's outstanding article, "Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law," examines in detail the relationship between Jesus and the various laws given in the Old Testament. He analyzes how Jesus regarded the law as well as how He taught his disciples to regard it. The author presents a detailed linguistic and theological study of the key passages in the synoptic Gospels which relate to this important subject. This article presents serious, in-depth Bible study at its best.

James M. Houston's article, "A Guide to Devotional Reading," is the best article I have read on this subject. He outlines the importance of good devotional reading in Christian growth and development. He lists outstanding devotional books of past centuries as well as current literature in this area. He even recommends devotional reading designed to help Christians overcome specific problems in their lives.

This volume includes three articles on missions. One of them is "A Vision for Evangelizing the Real America" by C.

Peter Wagner. The author reminds us that our country is no longer composed of one homogeneous culture (if, in fact, it ever was). Our country is a mixture of different ethnic, racial and linguistic groups and sub-groups. The Christian church must seek to evangelize many peoples with different needs. This article represents the kind of missiological

research for which the Church Growth School is famous.

Christianity Today, Inc., has done evangelical protestantism a real service by publishing this volume. It presents some of the best research and writing available in one convenient (and inexpensive) volume.

Cooperative Channel Contributions December 1989

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	COOP (Undesignated)	Total	Dec. '88	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 57.97	\$ 1,020.00	\$ 1,077.97	\$ 1,081.88	\$ 7,145.95
Arizona	.00	70.00	70.00	346.61	1,398.20
Arkansas	.00	3,919.74	3,919.74	4,233.79	58,086.06
California	.00	1,159.68	1,159.68	2,407.81	17,556.43
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	2,522.14	2,522.14	3,717.15	22,061.90
Georgia	7,199.79	912.50	8,112.29	10,097.23	118,631.84
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	270.82	618.73
Illinois	8,562.96	1,379.17	9,942.13	76.87	114,952.91
Indiana	1,194.11	.00	1,194.11	1,890.44	6,309.77
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	38.69	694.74
Kentucky	.00	.00	.00	30.00	5,457.89
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	1,306.03	2,793.90
Michigan	2,397.65	.00	2,397.65	10,490.49	52,103.60
Mississippi	35.10	.00	35.10	401.14	5,513.02
Missouri	15,866.45	.00	15,866.45	8,055.27	102,215.28
New Mexico	16.55	8.29	24.84	.00	138.58
North Carolina	275.00	825.00	1,100.00	2,773.82	20,074.46
Ohio	586.00	2,614.00	3,200.00	3,929.65	34,058.33
Oklahoma	34,157.50	6,987.80	41,145.30	38,964.76	477,100.39
South Carolina	10,375.63	.00	10,375.63	10,440.15	123,232.76
Tennessee	913.48	914.62	1,828.10	2,544.51	27,265.85
Texas	4,796.87	253.94	5,050.81	7,611.30	93,326.10
Virginia	599.37	.00	599.37	453.98	5,235.83
West Virginia	2,284.23	.00	2,284.23	889.18	31,944.93
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	525.31
Northwest Assoc.	.00	47.30	47.30	9.81	728.67
Other (Computer)	.00	.00	.00	.08	.27
Totals	\$89,318.66	\$22,634.18	\$111,952.84	\$112,061.46	\$1,329,171.70

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 2,962.03	\$ 15,825.33	\$ 18,787.36	\$ 18,145.74	\$ 225,448.31
Foreign Missions	57,617.02	1,566.02	59,183.04	58,352.27	729,383.23
FWBBC	6,297.47	1,566.02	7,863.49	8,929.13	89,284.26
Home Missions	17,331.80	1,225.59	18,557.39	17,893.38	197,993.78
Retirement & Insurance	126.65	953.24	1,079.89	1,944.26	18,868.98
Master's Men	481.39	953.24	1,434.63	2,016.88	21,097.02
Commission for					
Theological Integrity	106.72	68.08	174.80	198.88	1,978.48
FWB Foundation	436.89	408.51	845.40	1,851.28	12,904.80
Historical Commission	106.59	.00	106.59	195.96	757.28
Radio & TV Commission	83.44	68.08	151.52	201.05	2,093.38
Hillsdale FWB College	3,381.71	.00	3,381.71	2,018.68	24,935.77
Other	386.95	.07	387.02	313.95	4,426.41
Totals	\$89,318.66	\$22,634.18	\$111,952.84	\$112,061.46	\$1,329,171.70



ON LITTLE LANES

BY DONNA MAYO

All in One

Marty was in his room packing his backpack when Megan came in. He looked over its contents one more time. Marty was about to zip it up.

"Are you sure you've got everything?" asked Megan.

"I reckon," answered Marty. Marty was about to complete the last requirement for his Outdoorsman badge. He had to set up camp and spend the night in the woods, alone.

Mrs. Lane came into Marty's bedroom and looked in the backpack. There was a hole about three inches square and one inch deep. "Marty you've got a lot of room in there," said Mrs. Lane. "Why don't you pack a map, a light, a sword, some food, some books, a bundle of letters and a mirror?"

Marty looked at his mother curiously. "What are you talking about?" he asked.

"It's just a little spot," added Megan.

"You'll need a map to give you guidance," said Mrs. Lane.

"Mom, I know Mrs. Douglas' woods like our own backyard," said Marty.

Mrs. Lane continued talking as if she had not heard Marty. "I wouldn't want to be out in those woods without a light tonight," she said. "It's going to get awfully dark."

"But, Mama, I've got a flashlight," insisted Marty.

"You'll need something to defend yourself with," Mrs. Lane added. "Maybe a sharp sword?"

"I've got my BB gun," answered Marty. "It will scare off anything in Mrs. Douglas' woods."

"You'll need adequate provisions," continued Mrs. Lane. "You will get very hungry and thirsty, you know."

"Mama, I've packed plenty of food, and my canteen is full of water," said Marty.

"You might get bored out there all by yourself," said Mrs. Lane. "Why don't you take a few books to read—some biographies, history, adventure, poetry."

Marty was getting impatient. "Mama, don't you see how full my backpack is? There isn't much room left," insisted Marty.

Ignoring Marty's protests, Mrs. Lane kept talking. "And if you get tired of reading, you can always sing. Better pack a songbook," said Mrs. Lane.

"That's a great idea," added Megan. "Marty's singing will scare off the wolves for sure."

"How about a few letters from home? Just in case you get homesick?" asked Mrs. Lane.

"Mom, I'll only be gone one night," replied Marty. "I don't think I'll have time to get homesick."

"You'll need a mirror to see how you look," added Mrs. Lane.

"I've really got to go," said Marty as he began to zip his backpack one more time.

"Not without packing this," said his mother, handing him his Bible.

"So that's what you've been talking about!" exclaimed Marty.

"It's got it all," answered Mrs. Lane.

Marty packed his Bible, tied his sleeping bag onto his backpack and flung his pack over his shoulders. "See you tomorrow," said Marty.

Mrs. Lane, Megan and Jeff watched as Marty disappeared in the direction of Mrs. Douglas' farm and woods.

Marty stopped at Mrs. Douglas' woodpile and began loading the wheelbarrow. He remembered when he and his daddy had cut this wood last fall. Mrs. Douglas came out when she saw Marty. "You can't push that wheelbarrow to your campsite," she said. "Load it into the truck and I'll drive you."

Mrs. Douglas and Marty bounced over the fields in the old pick-up. "Marty, I don't aim to scare you, but I've been hearing some wolves howling in these woods the last few nights. But your fire will probably keep them away," said Mrs. Douglas.

At the mention of wolves, Marty's heart skipped a beat. He swallowed hard.

"You just shoot your BB gun a couple of times and scare them off," said Mrs. Douglas. "They won't bother you."

Marty felt lonely as he watched Mrs. Douglas and her pick-up slowly vanish from sight. "What's the matter with me?" thought Marty. "I'm supposed to be having the adventure of my life. Oh well, I might as well get busy."

Marty began gathering sticks for kindling. Then he put rocks in a circle, arranged the bigger pieces of firewood tepee fashion, and put the kindling inside. Soon he had a fire blazing.

Next he took out his pocket-knife and began sharpening a stick to roast hot dogs. After supper, Marty made sure he had plenty of firewood. Then he hiked up the hill to the spring and refilled his canteen. There was nothing else to do.

This was so different from camping with other people. When he and his family camped, there was much talking and laughing. And when he and Tony camped out in the backyard, they always tried to scare each other with ghost stories. But what do you do when you're alone? Marty was bored. His mother had been right—again.

Marty took his Bible out of his backpack. He read the story of David and Goliath. He read about Jonah and the great fish. As it got darker, Marty scooted up closer to the fire and kept reading. He had never realized how exciting some of those Bible stories really were.

Then he tried to remember the things his mother had said about God's Word. He read in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." He read in the Gospels where Jesus said, "I am the bread of life," and "I will give you living water."

Marty had just found Hebrews 4:12 and was reading about the Word of God being sharper than a two-edged sword, when he heard something moving in the bushes. Marty dropped his Bible and picked up his BB gun. He stood very still and listened. A twig snapped. Then he saw two yellow eyes gleaming in the dark-


ness. Marty pumped his BB gun and fired. The wolf bounded away.

Marty waited, listening intently. He shot his gun again for good measure. When he was convinced nothing else was around, he sat back down. His heart was racing, his stomach queasy, his palms sweaty. He looked where he had dropped his Bible. Something had fallen out. When Marty picked it up, he saw that it was a note from his mother.

"Marty, I hope you are having fun tonight. It's hard for me to believe that my little boy is big enough to camp out in the woods all by himself. But then I remind myself that you're not 'all by yourself.' God is always with you. And He will take care of you. Before you curl up in your sleeping bag, you may want to read Psalm 4:8. Love, Mama."

Marty opened his Bible to Psalm 4:8 and read, "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." Marty's heart stopped racing. He read the verse again, and his stomach didn't feel so queasy. He read the verse again, and the sweat on his palms dried. In fact, Marty felt just fine.

Before going to sleep, Marty decided to have a snack. So he roasted marshmallows on the fire. He added wood to the fire and poked around in it like he had seen his daddy do. Then Marty curled up in his sleeping bag.

No more gleaming yellow eyes came back to haunt him, even in his thoughts. "I'll have to tell Mama something else I packed in that little three-inch square," thought Marty before he drifted off to sleep, "sleeping pills." 



NEWS OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

AMERICAN RELIGION TOO COMFORTABLE, NOT CHALLENGING, SAYS POLLSTER GALLUP

CAROL STREAM, IL (EP)—Leading pollster George Gallup Jr. says many "born again" Americans are practicing a religion that is comfortable and titillating, but not challenging. "That's the central weakness of Christianity in this country today," Gallup said in an interview published in *Christianity Today*. "There is a lack of awareness of Christian doctrines of atonement, redemption and grace."

Gallup says that while Marx predicted that with more education there would be less attachment to religion, "Americans are unique in that we have a high level of formal education and a high level of attested belief at the same time. . . . When we ask people, 'Are you born again?' one-third of the populace says yes."

His surveys show that the strongest believers are those who believe because they feel God has intervened in their lives, that there are miracles, that there are meaningful coincidences, that there is a pattern to their lives, that God has a plan for their lives, that they've had miraculous prayers answered. The church must say, "Here's how you build upon these experiences," he insists.

Gallup says one danger is that Americans tend to separate church participation from their own personal relationship with God. "We have a faith literacy problem," he says. "People are not solidly grounded in their faith, and therefore vulnerable to hedonism, materialism, and new spiritual movements that glorify the self. Evangelicals are in a good position to help."

CLINIC OWNER OPENS DOORS TO PRO-LIFE COUNSELORS

YARDLEY, PA (EP)—Pro-life "sidewalk counselors" can come in out of the cold to talk with patients considering abortions in Yardley, Pennsylvania. Dr. Vikram Kaji, owner of the Yardley Birth Center, invited pro-life counselors to speak with women considering abortions at the clinic.

Under the plan, patients entering the clinic are given a brochure with pictures of fetal development, and invited to speak to a trained pro-life counselor. Patients meeting with the counselor can discuss their situation and learn about abortion alternatives.

A member of Kaji's staff will attend counseling sessions to be sure that the client's identity remains confidential, and to see that no photographs of aborted fetuses are shown.

The Bucks County Pro-Life Coalition, which picketed Kaji's clinic for over a year, was asked to provide counselors for the experimental program.

JUDGE DISMISSES LAWSUIT AGAINST NASHVILLE CHURCHES

NASHVILLE, TN (EP)—A lawsuit seeking permission to tax church parsonages was dismissed by a county court judge in Nashville.

In 1988 the city of Nashville sought permission to tax 141 tax-exempt properties which it claimed were not being used for charitable or religious purposes. The suit challenged a 1984 state law which exempted church parsonages. Metro Tax Assessor Jim Ed Clary argued that parsonages serve residential purposes, not religious, and should therefore be taxed.

In explaining his decision in favor of the churches, Judge Irvin H. Kilcrease Jr. wrote that "Tax exemptions in favor of religious . . . institutions are liberally construed, rather than strictly."

Nashville pastors had argued that parsonages have always been considered part of a church's total ministry to the community.

HUNDREDS SAVED DURING FLORIDA CHURCH OUTREACH

FORT MYERS, FL (EP)—Over 900 people came to Christ during a missions convention at First Assembly of God in Fort Myers. Pastor Dan Betzer said a simple drama depicting heaven and hell was the catalyst that brought hundreds to their knees during a week-long missions outreach.

The play was scheduled to run twice, but after the remarkable response, other plans were canceled and the play was performed three more nights. Over 250 people came forward to accept Christ the first night the play was performed.

The play was written by Rudy Krulik, a Canadian. "The news of the play began to spread," said Rev. Ron Webb, associate pastor of the church. "And it wasn't just our church that was blessed. The whole Evangelical community was touched by the play."

Church staff stressed lay involvement and prayer as contributing factors to the success of the missions convention.

U.S. RELIGIOUS LIFE HOLDING STEADY

NEW YORK, NY (EP)—The vast majority of the American public continues to believe in God and pray, according to a compilation of a half-century of opinion polls by the Gallup Organization.

Religious faith in the U.S. has remained steady, despite the economic and social upheavals of the last 50 years, according to *The People's Religion: American Faith in the '90s*.

The book shows that 94 percent of Americans believe in God, 90 percent pray, 88 percent believe God loves them, and more than three-quarters of Americans describe their religious involvement as a positive experience.

The study found that 90 percent of Americans have never doubted God's existence. The Bible is read daily by 15 percent of Americans today, up from 10 percent in 1942.

In what co-authors George Gallup and Jim Castelli call "one of the most significant survey results ever uncovered," the Gallup studies found that during the 1980's a consistent third of the American public reported that they had a life-changing religious experience.

However, just 65 percent belong to a church or synagogue. That's the lowest figure since Gallup began keeping track of religious involvement in 1937.

BEYOND BELIEF





THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

Call It a Church



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Free Will Baptists

God's work today focuses on the church. Jesus declared He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it (Matthew 16). The letters to the seven churches (Revelation 2:3) point up the fact that historically God works through the church. Jesus loved the church and gave His life for it.

Efforts to redefine, rename, remove and renounce this biblical term indicate confusion regarding the name, nature and need for the church. Such attempts call for a gentle reminder to explain biblical terminology rather than changing it to something less offensive to unbelievers. The church must be the church. It is a divine institution with an eternal destiny.

The Name

The term. The word *church* means a calling out, a Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both. The church may be called an assembly. *Church* implies a broad, all-encompassing group. Jesus used *church* to denote that which He was building. This New Testament term distinguishes the redeemed, the reconciled and the ransomed ones. This term correctly designates the people of God—the called-out ones.

The truth. When the word *church* appears in the New Testament, one of three meanings may be true. It denotes the Lord's Church—the organism. When used this way it includes all believers regardless of their denominational tags.

It is used to designate the local church—an organization. This refers to a local geographical spot where people

of like kindred doctrines meet for services.

The term may also delineate the larger church—a group of local churches located in a specific geographical location. For example, the government refers to the National Association of Free Will Baptists as the Free Will Baptist Church, which in reality consists of over 2,500 local churches.

The threat. Other terms give a partial view of the church. For example, such terms as *fellowship*, *family* and *faithful* describe characteristics of the church, a church or a group of churches. Only the word *church* tells all that God intended. Other terms mask what the church is in order to remove offensive terminology, and do not present the proper concept.

The Nature

Several figures describe the church. The church is described as a building, a body and a bride (see I Cor. 3:9; Eph. 1:22; 5:24-25).

Several factors distinguish the church. The *founding* of the church can be traced to Acts 2. It was birthed by God. The *financing* of the church is done by tithes and offerings. The *future* of the church remains bright. It will accomplish its earthly task and attain its eternal testimony. The *Foundation* of the Church is Christ Himself.

The Secretary's Schedule

March 4-7	Friendly FWB Church Harrah, Okla.
March 11-15	FWBBC Bible Conference
March 16-17	Illinois State Assoc.
March 23-24	Copper Mine FWB Church Fredericktown, Mo.

Several features also distinguish the church. It is a divine institution which is glorious, godly and growing. It is a distinct institution with reference to its constituents and commission. It is a designed institution providing God's grace, government, guidance and guarantee. The church is durable. It will accomplish its purpose in this world in spite of apathy, adversity and apostasy. Do not settle for any term but *church*. Let the church be the church.

The Note

The need for the church cannot be dismissed. It remains a place for fellowship with saints, feasting on scriptures, funding God's work and fulfilling one's service responsibilities. Every believer needs to be fully involved in the church.

The neglect of the church cannot be discounted. Neglect of the church leads to spiritual barrenness, blindness, backsliding, bankruptcy and bitterness. The attitude of Christians toward the church reflects their attitude to Christ—the Head of the Church.

The nurture of the church cannot be disregarded. All members should fill their places utilizing their spiritual gifts for the good of the Lord's Church, local church and larger church. The church is more than a fellowship, more than a family, more than the faithful. While these terms may describe functions, only the word *church* presents a correct concept.

Let's call it a church however else we may describe it. The Almighty called it a church. The angels called it a church. The apostles called it a church. Can the ambassadors do less?



CONTACT

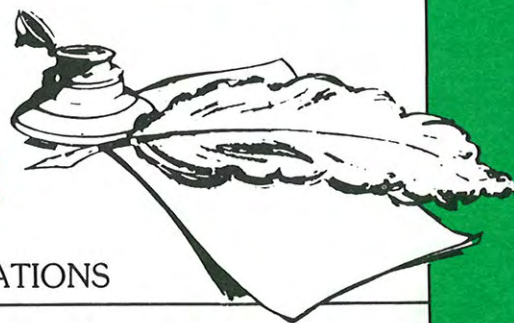
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Tenth Annual

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May 18, 19, 1990

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Author of over 40 books, hundreds of magazine articles, and publisher of Hannibal Books.

Writer-in-residence at Hannibal-LaGrange College and director of The National Mark Twain Writers' Conference.

Dr. Hefley's doctoral dissertation at the University of Tennessee was one of twelve Ph.D. writings nominated for the prestigious Nafziger-White Dissertation Award in journalism in 1983.



The book *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the 20th Century*, co-authored with his wife, Marti, received the Gold Medallion Award from the Association of Christian Publishers for "best biography" of 1981.

All of his books relate in some way to faith and morality.

His most recent books are *Life Changes* (facing traumatic transitions in life), and *The Truth in Crises: The Controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention*—a four-volume series, indexed and referenced with 47,000 copies in print.

In addition to three general sessions with Dr. Hefley, seven workshops will be offered by other personnel.

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