

JANUARY 1995

CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS

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Boomerang Households

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The Pastor's Salary

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Amazing Grace

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Have You Exercised Your Faith Lately?

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The Time Thieves



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Editor-in-chief: Dr. Melvin Worthington
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Circulation: Dari Goodfellow
Printed by: Randall House Publications

Contact (ISSN 0573-7796), published monthly by the National Association of Free Will Baptists, 5233

Mt. View Road, Antioch, TN 37013-2306. Address all correspondence and subscriptions to Post Office Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Phone 615/731-6812.

Annual subscription rates: Individual—\$12 per year, Church Family Plan—\$12 per year, Church Bundle Plan—\$12 per year. Second

Class postage paid at Antioch, TN and additional offices.

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USPS 130-660



Melvin Worthington

Start Your Support

The Executive Office functions as an administrative and service organization to implement the business of the National Association in organizational, governmental and legal matters. With a staff of six full-time employees, the Executive Office touches every Free Will Baptist at some time.

Established in 1941, this office serves the national body in a variety of ways: oversight of the National Offices Building and property, publishing the *Treatise*, *Free Will Baptist Yearbook*, *Denominational Digest*, *Rejoice: The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book*, *Digest of Reports*, *Contact* magazine, planning the national convention, promoting stewardship through the Together Way Plan and planning the annual Leadership Conference.

Consider the following facts and figures regarding the Executive Office Ministry.

Its Service

The Executive Office role is not always highly visible, but its ministry is vital to the smooth operation of the National Association. While not the largest nor the most important agency, it makes a distinctive contribution to denominational life.

The Executive Office exists for the specific purpose of encouraging cooperation and effecting continuing unity among denominational assemblies, associations and agencies.

This office stands at the crossroads of denominational activities gathering data, disbursing funds and correlating programs while encouraging statistical, stewardship and service growth. One word sums up the ministry of the Executive Office—service. It exists to serve those assemblies, associations, agencies and

ambassadors who comprise our denominational constituency.

Its Support

Cooperative contributions have undergirded the Executive Office ministry since the early 1950s. This has placed a disproportionate financial burden on those states which give cooperatively.

This problem was addressed during the 1990 national convention. Delegates at the 1991 convention recommended a Stewardship Summit during the December 1991 Leadership Conference. The Stewardship Summit authorized a committee to design and develop a new denominational financial plan.

This committee presented the new plan—The Together Way Plan—to delegates at the 1992 national convention. Delegates adopted the Together Way Plan and authorized its implementation January 1, 1994.

The Together Way Plan is one plan with two methods of support—cooperative and designated. For the first time in history, Free Will Baptists put on paper a financial plan which reflects the way we give. The plan calls for churches to give 10 percent of their general offerings to outside causes. It also provides the freedom

and flexibility to give cooperatively or designated or a combination of both. The bottom line calls for equitable distribution of this 10 percent to all denominational ministries—district, state and national.

The Together Way Plan further provides a gradual decline in the percentage of cooperative gifts which the Executive Office can receive beginning January 1, 1995. In previous years, the Executive Office administrative budget was underwritten above those gifts received directly, even if it took all the cooperative gifts.

Its Strategy

Beginning in 1995, the Executive Office can receive no more than 60 percent of cooperative contributions to underwrite its monthly budget. If this formula had been in place in 1994, the Executive Office would have had a deficit of approximately \$3,000 per month, which translates into an annual deficit of \$36,000.

The Executive Office needs your monthly support in order to minister effectively. Perhaps you or your church can begin financially supporting the office on a regular basis. Include the Executive Office in your individual giving and in your local church budget.

The 1995 Executive Office administrative budget is \$335,215.48. If every Free Will Baptist gave an annual gift of \$1.62, it would underwrite the 1995 budget. Pastor, take the total membership of your church and multiply it by \$1.62 to arrive at what the annual giving to the Executive Office ministry should be. Divide the total amount by 12 and put that amount in the church's monthly budget.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? It is. A little effort now will mean a lot in the months ahead. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

Dec. 30-	Panama Annual Association
Jan. 10	Republic of Panama
Jan. 10-13	Convention Planning Trip
	Charlotte, North Carolina
Jan. 19-23	Ohio Ministers and Deacons Retreat
	Big Prairie, Ohio
Jan. 31-	Religious Conf. Management Assoc.
Feb. 3	San Antonio, Texas

Boomerang Households

By Greg Hollifield

She left home to attend college at age eighteen. Four years later she graduated and set out to make her mark on the world. Three years after that she moved back in with her parents. Unhappily, she discovered that her degree was not sufficient insurance against joblessness.

He married his high school sweetheart two weeks after their graduation. Two years later they had their first child. Before his baby boy was a year old, his wife left them, and they moved back in with his mom and dad.

Sociologists have a name for the young people in the preceding scenarios. They call them "boomerangers." They left home to live independently but later returned, sometimes with significant others in tow.

The ranks of the boomerangers are growing daily. The reasons why are as numerous as the people victimized by them. Part of it has to do with the status of the American economy. Money is tight for everyone, but the people who feel the money crunch most are those who are just starting out in life.

My parents bought their first house 27 years ago for \$3,000. Two years ago they moved across town to another house costing \$60,000. In 25 years the cost of purchasing a house went up 2000 percent! How many young couples can afford that?

Aside from the cost of housing there is the difficulty of finding a job; not just a good-paying job, any job.

No one can survive independently for long without work.

Factors such as these are beyond anyone's control.

Then there are other factors

which

can be controlled.

Poor financial management has forced some boomerangers to turn homeward.

Broken marriages have sent others in the same direction. Neither time nor space nor imagination permits room for all the other possibilities.

Most anyone living in a boomerang household will admit it's a bad living arrangement. It's one which can be made worse or better depending on how it's handled. While more will be written on this subject by sociologists in the future, the Bible has already lifted the shade on the subject. Looking through scripture's window into three boomerang households, a number of helpful observations present themselves.

A Bad Situation Made Worse

(II Samuel 13:23-18:33)

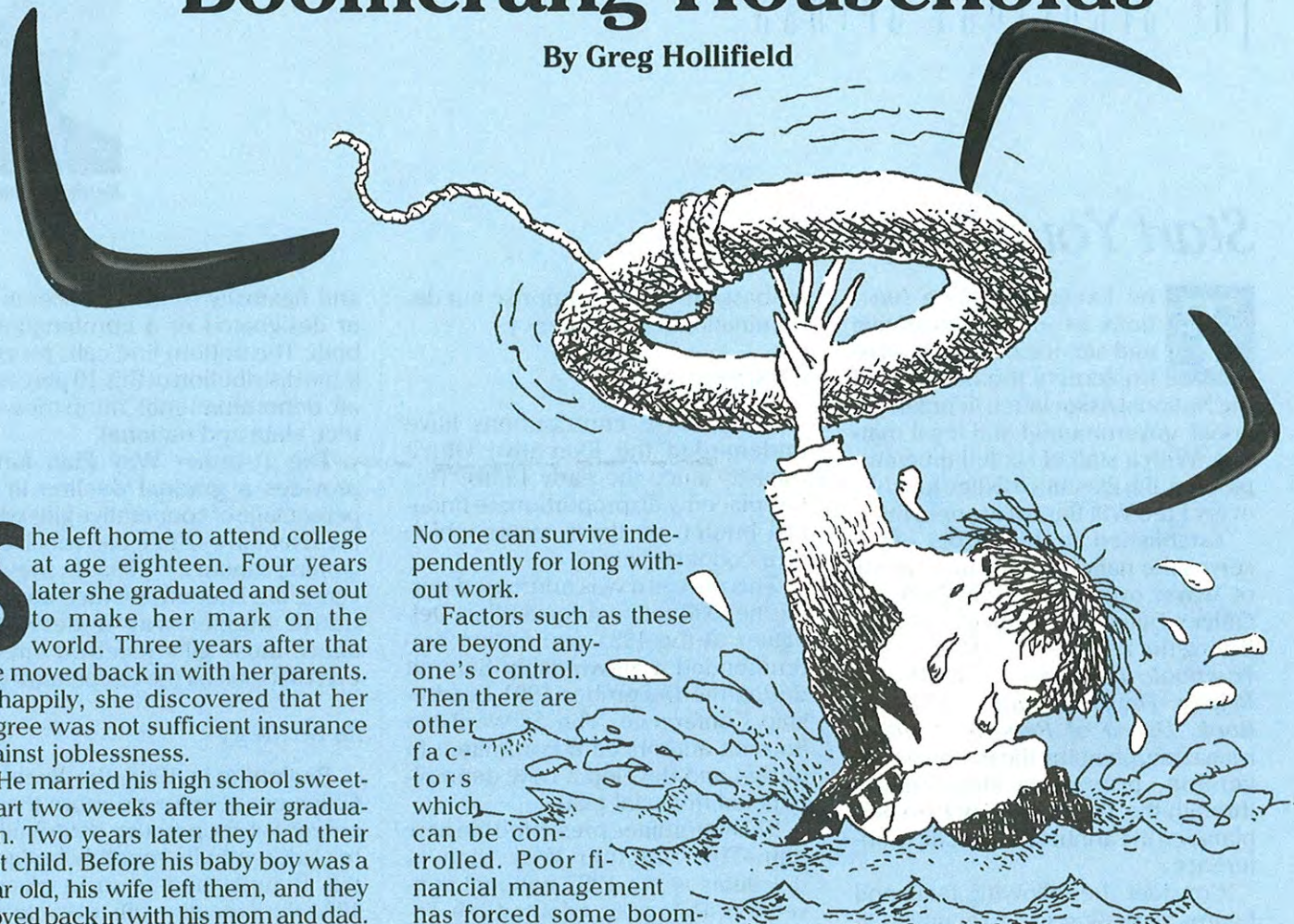
The first home is the palace of a king. The man who lives inside and occupies the throne has been deemed "a man after God's own heart." Does

this make him a perfect parent and entitle him to a trouble-free family? No, there are no perfect parents, and even Christian homes can experience the boomerang effect. David's did.

Absalom was the boomeranger. Three years earlier he had left home to preserve his life after having killed his brother, Amnon. David received him back reluctantly. For two years after his son's return, David refused to sit down and have a talk with him. A hostile confrontation became inevitable.

It cost the king's military commander a field of grain, but David and his son eventually had their talk. Not much was resolved, though, and civil war erupted. Absalom lost his life; David lost his son.

We feel sorry for David, but we must realize that he had a hand in the sad conclusion. He had paved the way for his son's violent death by not communicating with him.



This wasn't a one-time failure in David's life. It was a pattern. He just didn't like the unpleasant task of confronting his wayward children.

There's no record of him confronting Amnon for having raped Tamar, of him immediately confronting Absalom for having murdered Amnon, or of him confronting Adonijah for trying to steal the throne from Solomon. The scripture indicates that David went out of his way to avoid this final confrontation (II Kings 1:6). It seems to have been a life-long habit.

In this is a lesson for those living in boomerang households to learn if they haven't learned it already. Old habits die hard. Parents shouldn't expect their returning children to have dropped all those bad habits of which they disapproved while they were living at home the first time. Nor should children expect Mom and Dad to be drastically different from the way they were when they left.

This should seem obvious, but we need the reminder because over time we idealize the way it was when we were all together years earlier. If we don't prepare for the inevitable disagreements over our habits, a very uncivil war may erupt.

Peering through the palace window at David weeping over his loss, we also learn the importance of good communication. Problems shouldn't be allowed to simmer to a boil. They should be dealt with as quickly and as patiently as possible. By not expecting perfection from one another and being quick to deal with problems as they arise, the boomerang household can keep a bad situation from growing worse.

A Bad Situation Made Better

(Luke 15:11-32)

The second house with raised shades belongs to a father who recently received back his son from a trip to the far country. The boy hadn't planned on returning, but his money ran out and he just couldn't find a good-paying job. Complicating this whole episode were the conditions under which he left: tense, to say the least.

The neighbors thought this old man foolish for being willing to take him back. *Their* sons had never come crawling back looking for help. But this dad was more than willing

to throw open his arms and give him back his old room.

The story is familiar but what of its lessons? Have we learned them? What are they?

First, there's something to be said about the way the father received his son. He didn't make him crawl like a snake over broken glass before letting him step onto his property. He didn't lecture him about his failures. He didn't make him feel like a charity case. Instead, he ran out to greet him, kissed him, and gave him gifts to let him know he was willing to forgive the past. He not only told him he was welcome home, he showed it.

Are we to assume then that there was never a time when the father spoke to his son about managing his money wisely or enrolled him in an economics course? Certainly these would have been good for him; and what we observed earlier about the importance of confrontation and open communication should make it clear that a failure to deal with this issue would have been detrimental. All I want you to see at this point is the father's generous spirit.

The boy already knew he had blown it. He sensed his failure from the bottom of his bare feet to the bottom of his empty stomach. He had just left a world which had repeatedly reminded him of his shortcomings. He needed a place where he could feel loved, appreciated and find someone who believed in him. His father gave him that place. Boomerangers today need such a place as much as the prodigal son.

Second, it's good to notice the returning son's attitude toward his dad and what he was asking his dad to do. He realized he did not *deserve* a second chance. If he were accepted back, it would be by grace, grace that he would gratefully accept but wouldn't abuse. He would prove himself worthy by working for his father. It would be a fitting token of gratitude, plus give him a way of building back his self-esteem.

Boomerangers today need to let their gratitude be known in word and deed. Sitting down with Mom and Dad to make a list of "chores" wouldn't be a bad idea either. It would be good for their parents as well as themselves.

Complicating this second home's

situation is a brother who hasn't yet moved away and is jealous for his father's attention. Should he be made to suffer for his brother's failure? What should the father do? He confronted him and tried to teach him a lesson about love he might never learn anywhere else. Here again communication is the key to improving a bad situation.

A Bad Situation Resolved

(Acts 12:12; 13:1-13)

Ideally, the day will come when the boomeranger can leave again, this time for good. This is a time that must be worked toward. Past failures and difficulties must not be allowed to annihilate the possibility of future success.

Consider a third home, the one belonging to John Mark's mother. She was so proud of her son for going to work with the Apostle Paul on his first missionary journey. But before her tears over his departure had time to dry, he was home again. The trip hadn't gone as he expected and he needed a place to clear his head. He found it at home.

Months later, we don't know how many, he left again. It appears he never returned because he finally found lasting success. The man he had earlier deserted came to find him a valuable asset and commended him as such for all history in II Timothy 4:11.

John Mark became a boomeranger of a second sort. He gave up his independence to return home briefly but was eventually able to return to his independence. May his ranks increase. Until they do, let all of us who live in boomerang households remember what we've learned by looking through scripture's windows. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Greg Hollifield pastors Randall Memorial Free Will Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee.

In over 30 years of ministry I have encountered many different attitudes about paying the preacher, some good, some bad. The interesting thing about it is that I remember them all. And so does your pastor. Here are a few. . .

Attitudes

"He should not be paid at all; he should be a tentmaker like Paul and support himself," some declared. Strangely preacher's kids sometimes expressed the same attitude something like this: "My daddy always worked to support himself. Other preachers should do the same. I'm against paying any of them."

It is true that Paul did sometimes work to support himself, but that is not normally God's plan for the support of His preachers.

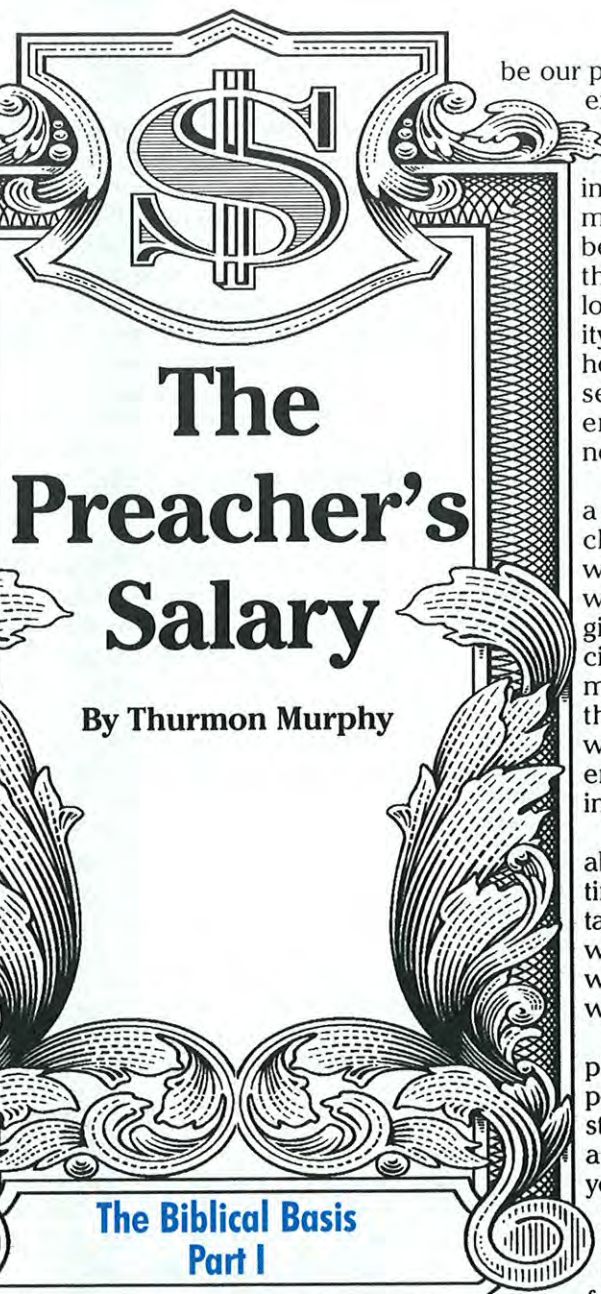
Poor and Humble

Another attitude is expressed in the words: "Lord, send us a poor humble preacher. You keep him humble and we'll keep him poor." Dr. L. C. Johnson spoke in chapel one day at Free Will Baptist Bible College on that attitude trying to prepare us preacher boys for what was ahead. In later years I learned that those words were not a joke; they reflect a real attitude in some congregations.

Let God Provide

Shortly after I became pastor of one church, a lady took my family and me out to lunch after the morning service. For some reason the subject of pastors' salaries came up in the conversation. I remember well the attitude she expressed in these exact words: "We don't have to worry about the preacher's salary; God will supply his needs."

She sincerely believed that it was not the church's responsibility to be concerned about how much the pastor was paid. Since he was God's special servant, God would miracu-



lously supply his needs whether the church paid him or not.

That was a very pious sounding attitude, but an attitude which was, and is, hypocritical and unscriptural. It was hypocritical in that she concerned herself with the church's other financial responsibilities, and she certainly was concerned about her own financial needs. It was unscriptural since God's plan involves His people taking responsibility for providing adequate financial support for their pastors.

Tight-Fisted Churches

"What is the smallest amount we can pay you and still get you to come

be our pastor?" This attitude, subtly expressed in veiled words, is frequently heard when a prospective pastor is being interviewed by a pulpit committee. The preacher should beware: this church will pay the absolute minimum allowed, regardless of their ability to pay, and regardless of how much the preacher deserves based on his experience, training, abilities and needs.

Several years ago, I gave a gift to a young couple in the church I pastored. The gift, which cost less than \$100, was for their home, and was given as a token of my appreciation for them. One of the men of the church later saw the gift and remarked, "If we're paying our preacher enough to do that, we're paying him too much money."

Over the years I've thought about that comment several times, and it has always irritated me. Would his employer, who paid him more than I was making, care what he did with the salary he earned?

Can you imagine his employer calling him on the carpet and saying, "Mister, I understand you gave your grandson a present which cost \$75. If you can afford to do that, we're paying you too much money. I'm cutting your salary."

No, when a man has done a fair day's work, and received a fair day's pay, he's entitled to spend it as he chooses. What bothers me is the attitude that a pastor should be paid so little that he cannot have and cannot do many things.

Those Who Care

Over the years I've also seen some good attitudes portrayed. It's always pleasing when someone says, "We want to pay our preacher properly. How much should we pay him?"

I remember with great fondness the deacon of years ago who would occasionally come by and ask, "Preacher, are we paying you enough? Do we need to give you a raise?"

I always appreciated the Advisory

Committee that would say, after I had told them how much money I would need to attend the National Convention, "But, Preacher, that's not enough. Let's add a hundred dollars to that."

I'll always remember the time the deacons in one church said, "We must provide insurance for the pastor and his family."

Biblical Basis

In any discussion of paying the preacher, the starting point always has to be what the Bible says on the subject. Since the New Testament teaching is given against the backdrop of the support of the Old Testament priesthood, we will begin there.

Old Testament Model

From the 12 tribes of Israel, God chose the tribe of Levi to serve as the priestly tribe. They were not to have an inheritance in the Promised Land, were not to engage in agriculture, commerce or other trades, but were to be a tribe set apart for ministry.

How then were they to live? God Himself gave the answer in Numbers 18:21: "give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting."

When Israel walked with God, the priests were well supported and thus were able to fulfill their ministry. However, during times of spiritual decline, when the people didn't give their tithes, priests sometimes resorted to hiring themselves out, against God's will, to make a living (Judges 17:10-11).

Lack of support was not a financial problem, it was a spiritual problem. The principle is well established in the Old Testament that those involved in ministry are to be fully supported by the recipients of that ministry. And they are to be able to live on a par with other people—to live the way normal people do.

Jesus' Teachings

We learn more about the principle of ministerial support from the practice and teaching of Jesus. When the Lord made His second preaching tour of Galilee, working out of Capernaum, His entourage included the Twelve and a number of women converts. Luke tells us that "These women were helping to support them out of their own means" (Luke 8:3). Jesus accepted their financial support.

When He later sent out the 72 on a training mission of ministry in Judea, He instructed them to stay in one house, rather than moving around, to eat and drink whatever they were given "for the worker deserves his wages" (Luke 10:7). Thus He verified that those involved in ministry should be supported by those who benefit from that ministry.

Paul's Principles

Now we come to the practice of the Apostle Paul and the principles

Then in verse 12 he says, "If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?"

In verse 11 he says, "If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?"

"Spiritual seed" refers to the spiritual work he had done among the Corinthians, particularly the work of sharing with them the priceless gospel of Jesus Christ. "Material harvest" refers to the material things necessary for sustaining life. The idea is that if he ministers to their spiritual needs, they should minister to his physical or financial needs.

He taught this same concept to the Galatians: "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor" (Galatians 6:6).

Paul further states the right of ministers to financial support in verses 13-14. In verse 13 he reminds the Corinthians of the Old Testament practice of support of the priesthood. Then he adds, "In the same way, the

Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (v. 14).

In I Timothy 5:17-18 Paul gives us another principle about ministerial support. In verse 17 he says, "The elders [pastors] who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of

double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

The principle is that those who are specially gifted in the ministry, in areas such as administration, but particularly in the areas of preaching and teaching, are worthy of "double honor." The word which is translated "honor" means "a price paid or received" and is the word from which we get the word "honorarium."

That "honor" refers to financial support is made clear by the two quotations in verse 18: "For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox

**Those who preach the gospel
have a right to expect
remuneration from
the church.**

he taught. First, let's consider the principles. One of the primary principles he taught was that those who preach the gospel have a right to expect remuneration from the church. This principle is well established in I Corinthians 9:4-15.

Paul states his right to financial support with the words: "Don't we have the right to food and drink?" (v. 4). "Food and drink" would include all the physical necessities of life, and these at the expense of the church. Verses 5 and 6 indicate that the other apostles, the Lord's brothers and Peter exercised that right.

while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'" The first quotation is from Deuteronomy 25:4, quoted by Paul in I Corinthians 9:9 where it clearly refers to ministerial support. The second quotation is from Luke 10:7 where Jesus also speaks of ministerial support.

[to Corinth] from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ" (Acts 18:5).

How was it he was able to give himself full time to the ministry after the arrival of Silas and Timothy? He gives us the answer in II Corinthians

again when I was in need." Even while in prison in Rome he received support from the church in Philippi "... I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent ..." (Philippians 4:18).

Perhaps one more observation should be made about the church in Corinth. Later Paul evidently believed that his not having taught them to live up to their financial responsibilities, in the area of ministerial support, had caused them as a church to be inferior to other churches. He apologized to them for this: "How were you inferior to the other churches except that I was never a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!" (II Corinthians 12:13).

The idea that Paul worked all the time as a tentmaker is a myth. The idea that it is God's plan today for ministers to work in secular work to support themselves is a myth. It is God's plan, and always has been, that those involved in the Christian ministry should be fully supported by the recipients of that ministry.

In some circumstances, as was sometimes the case with Paul, it is God's plan that ministers work temporarily to support themselves. Temporarily can sometimes be quite a while. But the ideal is for them to be full time in the ministry of the gospel. ■

(Next issue—Part II: How Much?)

.....

Paul apologized to the Corinthian Church for not teaching them financial responsibility toward their pastor.

Paul's Practice

Now we will give consideration to Paul's practice in this matter. We have seen that he has stated his right to financial support, the same rights exercised by the Old Testament priesthood, the apostles, including Peter and the Lord's brothers. We also see that Paul did not use this right, at least in some circumstances.

After forcefully stating his right to financial support from the church in Corinth, he said, "But we do not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ" (I Corinthians 9:12). He had recognized that a claim for support from new converts might become a hindrance to the preaching of the gospel.

Let's look at the whole picture of Paul's overall practice in this matter of accepting financial support from the people to whom he ministered. It is commonly known that in Corinth he worked as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3). We know that he also worked in Thessalonica (I Thessalonians 2:9) and Ephesus (Acts 20:33-35) to support himself and others.

But there are some other truths we must see to get the full picture. For instance, though he worked for a while in Corinth as a tentmaker, this was only temporary. We are told that "When Silas and Timothy came

11:9: "And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed."

Silas and Timothy brought him an offering from Macedonia, which included the churches in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Earlier he had worked for a living while establishing the church in Thessalonica, but now accepts their support since the church is established. With the arrival of the offering, he was able to devote himself full time to his ministry.

Paul's Reality

Some other verses throw light on the subject of Paul and his financial support. We learn that he accepted financial support from already-established churches, while working in a new field. We have already seen that he did this at Corinth. He refers to this again in II Corinthians 11:8: "I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you."

But he also did it in other places as well. While working for a living in Thessalonica, endeavoring not to be a burden to them while getting the church started, he repeatedly received support from the church in Philippi.

We learn this from Philippians 4:16: "For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Thurmon Murphy serves as clerk of the Texas State Association and as editor of *The Texas Challenge*. He pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Wichita Falls.



Good Intentions

By Greg McAllister

I recently spent a week doing what my big-time executive sister calls "benchmarking" (visiting different churches and urban centers, observing programs and methods, and listening to pastors and staff describe their ministries) with a group of people who were largely unexposed to ministry and very idealistic, full of good intentions.

They got me thinking—why aren't good intentions enough to get us through the ministry to which God has called us? There are at least four reasons why God requires more than good intentions.

Good intentions can make you willing to substitute success for principles.

I have a plaque with a quotation from Groucho Marx: "These are my principles, and if you don't like 'em, I have others."

We often hear that love is the only important thing—we shouldn't let orthodoxy stand in the way of fellowship. A denominational executive rightly pointed out that often our doctrine has held us together when our love failed.

A reporter once asked the owner of the old Brooklyn Dodgers why his pitching staff was so bad. He answered, "We do that for the fans. You see, fans like to see home runs, and so we have put together a pitching staff which will give the fans exactly what they like."

What I want can take the place of what's right. There ought to be some things I'm not willing to give up in order to win a battle or succeed in my ministry—the fruit of the Spirit.

Good intentions can let you substitute personal interest for the vital.

Back in the 1960s, Johnny Carson hosted Conrad Hilton, philanthropist, philosopher and hotel magnate, on his program, and gave him the op-

portunity to tell the American people the most important thing on his mind. He looked into the camera and said, "Please! Put the shower curtain in the tub!"

Preachers mount the highest platform in the world weekly, and so often we throw it away addressing what we happen to be mad about at the moment. It's a shame—the frivolous stands we preachers take just to let people know that we don't think we're getting enough attention. If we don't walk with Christ, even if we reach the top, there won't be anybody there. We will die spiritually, alone and unmissed.

Good intentions can justify hating people in the name of purity.

Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem about the sudden realization the British Empire had when it faced the fact that the efforts it had made to civilize the world weren't appreciated:

"It was not part of their blood. It came to them very late

"With much in arrears to make good, when the British began to hate."

James and John offered to call down fire from Heaven to rebuke those who refused Christ. How often do we feel compelled to punish those who refuse Christ's words—or more often, when they refuse *our* words?

Tim Eaton, vice-president of academic affairs at Hillsdale FWB College, commented on the tendency to discount Hillsdale because it wasn't as good as alumni wanted it to be: "One thing I learned in biology class—once you get done dissecting that frog, *he don't hop no more.*"

It's time Christians learned a valuable lesson about criticism—it's not a spiritual gift. In fact, it kills. And it often hides more than it exposes. Some people scream so much you have to wonder what they're trying to hide. Hypocrisy is the price for

setting self up as the standard.

We forget that *all have sinned and come short*: We've all seen people bluff their way through seminars, challenging the speakers, for the sake of refusing to admit that there's something they themselves don't know.

Rex Stout wrote, "I always enjoy making a mistake—it spares me the burden of omniscience."

Good intentions can let you justify giving up.

It's easy to quit when people don't cooperate, or when things don't go as well as you think they should. I once heard a story (and if it isn't true, it ought to be) about Ho Chi Mhin's summit conference with the commanding officer of the French occupation forces, back when France was stuck with Viet Nam. Ho was outgunned, outmanned, outsupplied, out-everythinged. The French commander offered to discuss terms of surrender, and Ho refused. He explained the facts again, and Ho still refused. The commander was dumbstruck, and wanted to know why Ho wouldn't surrender.

Ho replied, "You have won most of the battles, but I'll win the war. Because you'll get tired, and I won't."

We have an enemy who never gets tired. Good intentions aren't enough to stop him, and difficulty is no proof that God isn't in what we're doing. Remembering that the sinner is me, and the priority is apprehending Christ, and that those Christ loved are worthy of our love, and that our enemy is on the prowl, not only in the worldly systems but in our own hearts, is about the only way I can think of to faint not. ■

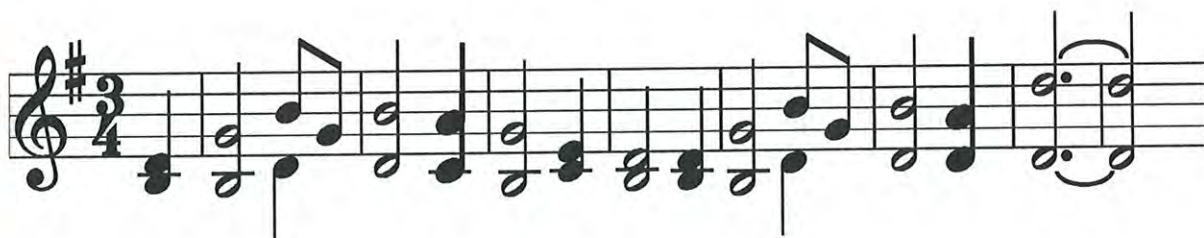


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Greg McAllister is academic dean at California Christian College in Fresno, California.

Personal Testimony

Amazing Grace

By Tammy Mott



It is impossible to give our testimony without first recognizing how the Lord has had His hand in our lives all along, protecting us and preparing us for His service. We can truly say, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

In the summer of 1989, my husband, Bill, and I took a brief vacation to Mesa, Arizona. We decided that this would be a much better place to raise our children away from the fast-paced madness that the San Francisco Bay area had become. We put our house on the market and began to prepare for the move.

Then came the devastating earthquake in October

measuring almost 7.2 on the Richter Scale. The epicenter was no more than seven miles from our home, and the evidence that we had lived through a major disaster was more than apparent. All around us homes were demolished from not only the initial shock but also the aftershocks measuring between 4.0 and 6.0 that continued for the next three weeks.

Our 45-year-old home was one of the few that survived with limited damage: two cracked windows! Not only were we kept safe through the many dangers, the Lord allowed our home to sell in a real-estate market that had been completely shut down.

We later learned that the foundation of our house was miraculously kept in place. The house we had was over a ravine and stood in part on pillars. The buyers informed us that the house had not even been bolted down on the pillars.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. . ." (Revelation 3:20).

The Lord was seeking us, but we did not respond to Him. We believed

in God, but we felt that religion was a superficial social behavior. Besides, we knew too many hypocrites to even consider getting involved in a church.

After settling in our new home, we ventured out to a neighborhood yard sale where I met John Satre. Out of nowhere I found myself asking, "I wonder if there is a good, Christian preschool around." It just so happened . . . his daughter Jaimie went to one in nearby Gilbert.

Before I knew it, I was calling to get prices. After hearing all the family activities they offered, I found myself making an appointment for the following Tuesday to meet the pastor in person and see the facilities. When I shared with Bill the events of the day, he surprised me with his response. He felt this would be a good thing for the children.

Later that same day, an

incredible job offer came to me. There was only one drawback: I would have to travel to California. I decided to try it. I flew out on Friday morning leaving Bill and the children to fend for themselves. By Friday night Bill was calling me asking me to come home!

I knew something was wrong but was committed until Sunday night. Bill believed that we needed to drastically change our lives. He did not know what direction to go. When Sunday morning came, he decided to take the children to the "Something" Baptist Church.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saves us" (Titus 3:5).

We believe the enemy made one last ditch effort to stay in control of our lives as Bill wandered into a Mormon church, thinking he was in the right place. He had no idea what he was walking into, but the minute he was inside he felt desperate to get out. He grabbed the children from a woman who was leading them away and rushed out without looking back!

He left so quickly that he did not even see another Baptist church across the street, and drove right to Heritage Free Will Baptist Church immediately. During the service, he found himself crying as the Holy Spirit spoke to his heart.

"As far as the east is from the west, so

far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

Just as scheduled, we met Pastor Paul Thompson on Tuesday, April 10, 1990. While the children visited a classroom, we went into his office to talk. He simply presented the Gospel to us by reading the "Four Spiritual Laws" tract. We knew at once that we wanted the Lord to be in the center of our lives.

We prayed a brief sinner's prayer, asked the Lord into our hearts and were saved. The following week, soaked with tears of repentance, we made a public confession and were lovingly taken in by the people of Heritage FWB Church, and thus were welcomed into the family of God!

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

We were new creations all right. Just ask all our relatives and past friends. They had resolved that we had joined some weird cult and had been brainwashed. That was the only way they could explain the change in our lives.

Well, we were a bit zealous. Just as the woman in Luke 7:47, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much." We can't give anything less than 100 percent.

At the start we were like hunks of metal that needed heavy equipment to knock off large chunks and smooth our edges. As we daily fed on the Word of God and committed to be in church every time the doors were opened, He worked and molded us. With peace that passes all understanding, we gladly yielded our lives.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some

strange thing happened to you" (I Peter 4:12).

Something strange happened, that's for sure. Suddenly I was very weak and began to experience pain like I never knew before. After months of testing, the doctors came up with Chronic Fatigue Immune Dysfunction syndrome, a chronic illness that can not be treated and has no cure.

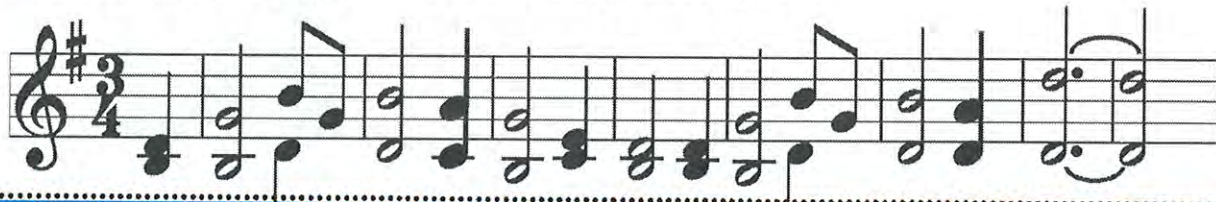
After many months of total dependence on the Lord, we were able to understand, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Had it been any other way, we would have never learned, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (Psalm 1:3).

We've been able to lead both our children to the Lord. We're thankful for a church that believes God did not call the qualified, but qualifies the called. Indeed, He has given us exceedingly, abundantly more than we could ever hope for or imagine. It is consolation for now to know that we will have all of eternity to properly praise Him and give Him our love. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Tammy Mott and her husband Bill are members of Heritage Free Will Baptist Church in Gilbert, Arizona.

Reprinted from *Heritage Highlights*, August 1994 issue.



Let's Keep it Simple

By Matt Pinson

Free Will Baptists have always believed in freedom, simplicity and order in worship, in worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. Thus we have been opposed to the employment of set forms and liturgies, as well as to undue emotionalism, in worship.

While some Free Will Baptists have expressed themselves in worship in a more emotional way, and some in a less emotional way—and while we have given each other that freedom—we have always agreed in our belief in the freedom, simplicity and order of Christian worship.

This belief arises from our concern to be as close to the New Testament as we can. While some denominations believe it is proper to add to the New Testament picture of Christian worship, Free Will Baptists see no need, and believe they are on safer ground to imitate the New Covenant worship exemplified in the ministry of Christ and His Apostles.

In this, we agreed with the Anabaptists, who in the 16th century sought to rid themselves of the accretions of extra-biblical tradition over the centuries. Since they acknowledged that the Bible was the only rule of the faith and practice of the church, they thought that it was best, therefore, to attempt to stay as close as they could to what they saw in the New Testament about worship. Our forefathers agreed.

Free Will Baptists have hence looked to the ministry of Christ, with His unencumbered and unceremonious mode of teaching and worship, which strikes the reader of the Gospels with a singular simplicity and spontaneity. We have also looked to the ministry of the Apostles and their

early New Testament churches, which were characterized by a pure and simple freedom and congregational participation in worship which was balanced by a sense of sincerity and order and a lack of confusion (see, e.g., I Corinthians 14:26-33).

Free Will Baptists believe it is incumbent upon them to try to emulate this mode of worship. Thus we have shied away from liturgical forms and appurtenances which would make worship a rote practice, hinder the free moving of the Spirit of God, and obstruct the clear communication of the Word.

We find no need to improve upon the scriptural example, and thus have avoided adding our own renovations or refinements to it, as had been done by the Roman Catholic Church as well as some Protestant churches. As one of our English forefathers, Thomas Grantham, said,

It cannot be supposed that the Apostles (or however Christ Himself) would leave the churches without necessary instruction, how to perform this great duty; which they press with Greatest vehemency. . . . Yet we find no such forms or liturgies instituted by them, nor to be instituted by others in pursuance of any trust reposed in any of their successors by them.

By the same token, we have avoided too much emotion. While Free Will Baptists have placed great value on the role of emotion in Christian worship, we have sought not to give it such a place that it could lead to confusion and hinder the worship of God, but have sought to worship “decently and in order,” as the Apostle Paul instructed.

The emphasis of the Apostle was always on rationality and intelligibility in worship—in allowing the un-

fettered Word to work, by the power of the Spirit, in the minds and hearts of worshippers. Paul saw that freedom and simplicity need not be accompanied by a feelings-based worship which would guide our raw instincts with pure emotion, but rather is most truly characterized by the Word-directed mind and heart responding in worship to God, the Creator, Redeemer and Preserver.

Free Will Baptists also see that, even after the death of the Apostles and the writing of the New Testament, the earliest Christians worshipped in the same spirit that is seen in the New Testament. And while this is not authoritative for them, they believe it further confirms the picture they see in the New Testament.

We do not always emulate as we should the pattern of worship we see in the New Testament. Yet we believe that if we seek to emulate this pattern which the Holy Spirit has seen fit to put before us, we will truly be able to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, thereby learning more of the grace of God in Christ, being led by the Holy Spirit, and most of all giving glory to God almighty. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Matt Pinson pastors Colquitt Free Will Baptist Church in Colquitt, Georgia. He holds the M.A. degree in church history from Yale University. He began his doctoral work in church history last fall.

She's Not Dead!

By Bill Crank



Over the years, she had become a favorite target of many. Men began to sneer at her. They watched almost with glee as she deteriorated right before their eyes. She who was once so proud was now the object of scorn. Children no longer feared her presence as they had in years gone by. Gossips fed off her misfortunes. Her beauty was gone, weathered by time.

Even those who loved her and adored her presence now peered sadly at her worn, aching skeleton. Some of her own even talked almost in a gloating manner of how she was no longer what she once had been.

One suggested that the name *Ichabod* be hung over her door. No longer did men glow at the mention of her name. No longer did they defend her honor to skeptics and critics.

What has happened to the church? some would ask. It is just not the same anymore. All that she has left are those precious memories.

Yes, there she stands. She looks tired from the battles she has witnessed over the years. Just think of all those who passed through her doors. She witnessed many a preacher stand and preach. Many of her

members have come and gone. Some died. Some moved. Some backslid. Many left because they no longer agreed on some item of business.

There she stands weary and worn. Her outward appearance weathered the storms better than her reputation. There she stands saddened as if the glory were all but past. She has the look of some aged person on her way to the cemetery for the final benediction. If she had arms, they would be hanging from fatigue and discouragement. If she had feet, they would shuffle in the dirt.

Then it happened! One Sunday night the faithful gathered to pay respects and show their love. The service proceeded in a most normal way. No one present had any knowledge of what was about to happen. Without warning, the service began to take on a new meaning. The ordinary became the extraordinary. The hum drum turned to excitement.

Hardened men walked the aisle to the altar and knelt to pray for forgiveness. Shouts of praise and victory echoed throughout the sanctuary. Hands lifted in praise to the Master and Head of the Church. Life returned to a place where it seemed there

was no hope. No one knows for sure the how or even the why. But all are thankful for the overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit in the church.

As I drove by her on Monday morning, I looked at her again. There was a smile. She stood taller and looked younger than she had the previous day. She called out to me as I passed her on my way to a meeting. There was life. She was saying "I am alive," and I could see it. After all these years, the reports of her death are no more than fabricated lies of the enemy of men's souls.

Thank You, God, for letting me see once again how You make a difference in the church. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bill Crank pastors West Wayne Free Will Baptist Church in Wayne, Michigan.

Have You Exercised Your Faith Lately?

By Paul Alexander



Are you satisfied with your faith as a Christian? Are you seeing God work in and through you as you hoped He would when you first came to Christ? As a sophomore in college, my answer to these questions was a definite *no*. I was involved in Campus Crusade for Christ (a parachurch organization on campus) and had good fellowship, but I felt that my relationship with God was stagnating. My understanding of the Bible was frustratingly weak and my faith seemed to be dwindling.

To make matters worse, many friends I hung out with were having the exact opposite experience. They went on summer missions trips (called Projects) with Campus Crusade, for which they had to raise monetary support, usually around \$2,000. They recounted how faithful God had been to raise the money and get them to Project, and seemed to trust Him completely.

Furthermore, there always seemed to be much talk about getting out of our "comfort zones" and taking on challenges that would push us to depend on God's faithfulness for their outcome.

Project Branson

I looked around at these young college guys and girls, and their experiences made me hungry for the faith, zeal and love in their lives.

"I want God to work in me and I want to see Him be faithful to me personally as He has been to my friends," I thought. "I've never really done anything that required me to go so far out of my comfort zone that it required me to put my full trust in God to make it happen."

I had always played it safe—protecting myself from failure and doubting that God would do something so radical and meaningful in my life.

After deliberation, I prayerfully decided to go on Project, almost as a challenge to God in order to see how He would respond. It seemed like so much work though—\$1,540 in only five or six weeks, and I had never raised monetary support in my life. Somewhat overwhelmed, I turned it over to God by choosing to trust His faithfulness for the summer of '93.

"If you want me to go, Lord," I began praying, "You'll have to get me there. I'm willing, and I trust that You are able." The results blew me away.

Instead of raising the \$1,540 I had asked for, God raised around \$1,900, probably to show me how foolish I was for ever doubting His ability in the first place. Then, when I arrived in Branson, Missouri (where I was placed), I met a guy who needed just the amount of my surplus in order to complete his support.

Monetary issues notwithstanding, I learned more about my relationship with God that summer than I had known before. The most general, and perhaps most important principle, that I carried away from that summer was that God is worthy of our full trust and dependence.

When we quit depending on and trying to find security in our own strength and influence over our circumstances (i.e., willing to get out of our comfort zones), He is perfectly faithful and competent to protect, teach and reward us, revealing to us bits and pieces of His own character along the way.

Project Nashville

Last summer, I was offered the challenge of working with men at the Union Rescue Mission in downtown Nashville, Tennessee. I was given opportunity to teach them spiritual truth in a class format.

When the idea was first presented, I cowered, thinking "I'm just a 20-year-old guy who has never even come close to dealing with the problems these guys are coming through—drug addiction, alcohol abuse, divorce . . . will they respect or even listen to me?"

I was outside my comfort zone again, guilty once more of doubting God. But He proved my questions unjustifiable in light of His omnipotence. Much to my surprise, the men got involved in discussions with me during class, showing genuine interest, asking questions, and listening.

There were numerous occasions when men approached me and told me that they were learning from and enjoying my class. God worked in ways I never expected or imagined. No one could have told me a year ago that I would ever work at a mission with recovering drug addicts, alcohol abusers and divorcees, most of whom are two or three times my age.

Your Turn

How does all of this apply to you? That depends on how content you are in your Christian walk. Are you happy with the strength of your faith in God and in His power to radically change your life while at the same time protecting you in His right hand? Many are frustrated, seemingly stunted, in their Christian faith. Why is this so?

The answer lies in the fact that we (i.e., Christians in general) don't seem to enjoy exercising the most important member of our spiritual bodies—our faith. We are content to remain inside the pleasant, self-protective bounds of our comfort zones—those social, relational and religious lines over which we many times refuse to step because of personal fears, biases or dislikes.

We may refuse to take on certain challenges because we doubt our personal adequacy to finish them. We may shy away from being as bold as we ought because of a fear of social consequences. But whatever it is, we sell God short by staying inside because, in doing so, we express our doubt in the perfection of His faithfulness to us as individuals.

What's more, we fail to realize in our cowardice that our faith will never grow unless we exercise it. We seem to think that going to church consistently and taking part in extracurricular church activities will make everything okay between us and God.

While it is true that faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word, and that we have peace with

God once we believe His message, it is equally true that our growth from babes in Christ to mature men and women of the faith takes some hard exercise. The analogy of physical fitness comes to mind here—if a person doesn't



exercise, but keeps on eating, his stomach gets bigger and his muscles begin to deteriorate. In the same way, if the church as a body of believers stays within the confines of individual preference and comfort, our spiritual muscle atrophies and we become weaklings trying to do the work of God.

If we never accept challenges or tests of faith outside our comfort zones, we will inevitably go on assuming that we, in our own strength, are sufficient to handle our lives, knowing Christ as little more than a helper rather than as life itself. As disconcerting as it may sound, the weaning from self only occurs when we step outside the self-imposed boundaries of our comfort, within which we feel self-sufficient.

George Mueller puts it boldly when he states that "trials, obstacles, difficulties, and sometimes defeats, are the very food of faith" (quoted from *The Green Letters*, p.5; Miles J. Stanford). There are probably very few trials, and most assuredly no defeats, in our comfort zones.

Break Out

"For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Do you want to know God as well as the Apostle Paul knew Him? Then I challenge you as a fellow heir with Christ: refuse to continue leaning on the comfort of your own surroundings and circumstances and

allow God to put you out on a limb of faith where He is the only One on whom you can depend.

Do you feel afraid? Inadequate? So did Moses after God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and into Canaan. "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt? . .

. . . What shall I say to them?

. . . What if they will not believe me, or listen to what I say? . . . Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue. . ." (Ex. 3:11,13; 4:1,10).

And what did God say? "Certainly I will be with you. . . Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind?

Is it not I, the Lord? I, even I, will be with your mouth and will teach you what you are to say. . . and do" (Ex. 3:12; 4:11-12,15).

Do you feel too young to take the challenge? So did Jeremiah when God called him to be a prophet.

"Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth." But the Lord said, "Do not say, I am a youth, because everywhere I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you" (Jer. 1:6-8).

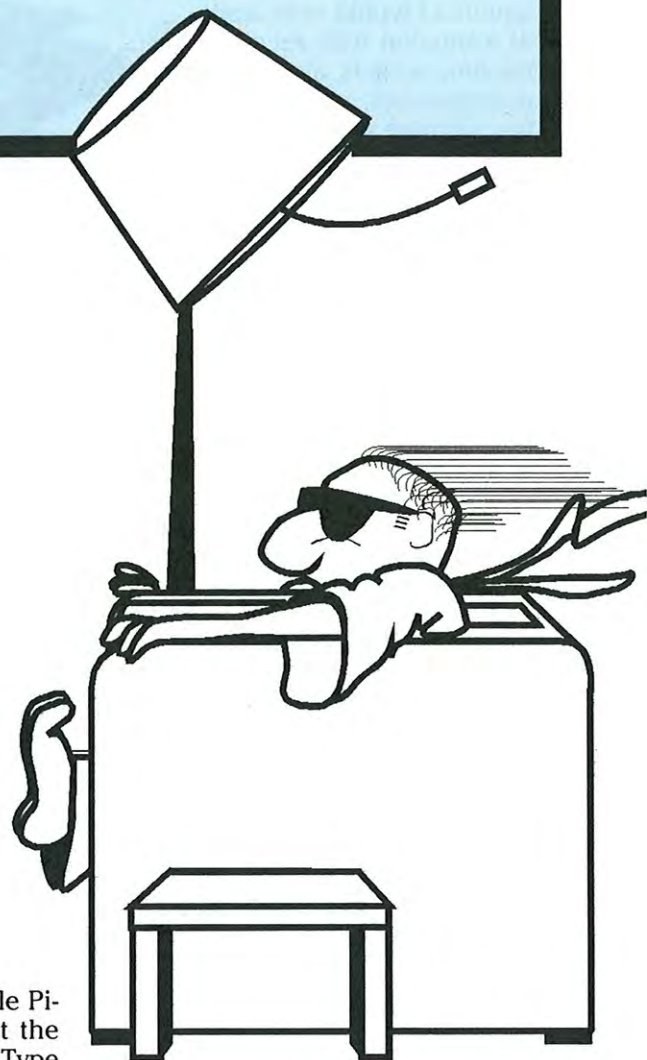
Let's break out of our stagnation. Let's stop doubting God and start trusting Him enough to let Him pull us out of our comfort zones. Then let's watch what He does with our availability, and continue to offer ourselves up to Him in faith as instruments of righteousness. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Paul Alexander is a 21-year-old senior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He graduated from Trinity Christian School, a ministry of Trinity Free Will Baptist Church in Greenville, North Carolina.

What's *Wrong* with MTV?

By Richard Tippet



Good grief! It would be easier to ask, "What is right about MTV?" The truth is, there is nothing MTV offers the Christian that would be considered good.

Tune in just about any time and you will find half-naked men and women and even children doing things your parents taught you were wrong. The music videos promote pre-marital sex, drugs, the occult, rape and violence—all of the things that rock music has always encouraged.

Examples? The Stone Temple Pilots sing internationally about the joys of rape in their video, "Sex Type Thing." Snoop Doggy Dogg raps about how great drugs are. Janet Jackson and Madonna will gyrate through their "creative and artistic" dance routines that are simulated sex acts.

MTV has been called by secular publications "a cultural force." And it is, indeed, more than just another television station. People don't just watch it; they live it. It has affected the way an entire generation thinks,

sings, talks and buys.

Parents who really care about their children are *foolish* to think, "Oh, this is just another generation-gap thing. Let the kids have their fun."

Did you know that MTV is in some 75 countries, being watched by 231 million households? (CNN is only in 100 million households worldwide.) I believe that MTV and the rock mu-

sic industry are the leading contributors to cultural decay in the world—and they are proud of it!

And church kids are *not* immune to its power and influence. According to the Barna Research Group, Christian baby busters were more likely to have watched MTV during the past week (42 percent) than their non-Christian counterparts (33 percent).

The latest craze is Beavis and Butt-head. As Bob DeMoss said in an article on the dangers of MTV, "... the cartoon characters make Bart Simpson look like an overachiever."

Just how bad are they? These misfits of society get excited about lesbian sex, watching people urinate, and joking about perverted sex. Even the occult gets a thumbs-up from these two. They enjoy playing with fire, flicking a lighter under an aerosol spray can—pyromaniacs of the first-order.

Stories are coming in from all parts of the world where children are imitating B & B. Fires have been reported from Ohio to Australia. A two-year-old girl from Moraine, Ohio, died in a blaze set by her five-year-old brother mimicking B & B. In Australia 12 families lost their homes when an apartment complex burned down after several teens tried the lighter-and-aerosol-can technique in their living room.

When Bob DeMoss contacted MTV for comment, the spokespersons dismissed any claims that the network should be held responsible. Kurt Loder, anchorman for MTV News throws the problems back to the parents. He said, "I think a child that did something like this would have a problem anyway. I'd be wondering, 'What were the parents doing?'"

But does MTV *really* have a philosophy that can affect people? Isn't it just entertainment? No one really takes it seriously, do they? Regarding marriage, Mr. Loder said, "There's definitely a feeling in the media today that marriage is square, it's over—that we should be talking about non-traditional marriages or something." Is that how you are training *your* children to think?

A number of years ago a young boy, about 12 years old, lived next door to me. He came from a good family. We always enjoyed his visits to our house and our talks together.

He attended a Baptist church in the area when his parents went. We lost contact with Brian (not his real name) when he got his driver's license.

One night we got a call from his parents that Brian had been involved in a terrible car wreck, along with some other teenagers. Brian had been thrown from the car, hitting the pavement, and sustained terrible head injuries. One rescue worker found drugs and alcohol in the floor-board of the car.

When I got to the hospital, Brian was in a coma and the family was broken emotionally. Following many days of prayer, Brian regained consciousness, but his injuries affected his body and his speech. Much of the damage was permanent.

Months following the ordeal, Brian came over to my house one night to talk about his life. That night he accepted Christ as his Savior.

Later, I asked Brian what happened that led him into such a life of sin. He indicated that he had cable TV in his room, and that he watched MTV into the early hours of the morning many nights, hooked on the music and the videos.

Bob Pittman, one of the network's creators and former chairman, has long understood the power of this medium. He said, "The strongest appeal you can make ... is emotionally. If you can get their emotions going, [make them] forget their logic, you've got 'em. At MTV, we don't shoot for the 14-year-olds, we own them."

I believe him. Do you? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Richard L. Tippet is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, and administrator at Raleigh Christian Academy.

Reprinted by permission from the October 1994 issue of *Eagle Eye*.

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When Heaven Down-Sizes

By Dennis E. Hensley



I had been trying to witness to my neighbor, Wade, about his need for Christ in his life. But because things were going well for Wade, he paid little attention to me.

"Hey, I go to church on Easter and at Christmas," Wade would say, chuckling. "My wife and daughter go even more often than that. No lightning bolts have fallen out of the sky on me. I'm doing okay."

I shook my head. "You're just 'playing church,'" I said. "You may be appeasing yourself, but you're not fooling God."

"Look," he said, "I work hard all week, lots of overtime, so I'm exhausted by the time Sunday rolls around. God isn't going to begrudge me a little shut-eye."

"I'm not talking about church attendance," I responded. "You have no day-to-day relationship with Christ. All you care about is putting in extra hours so that you can buy a motorcycle and a fishing boat and a large screen TV. None of that will redeem your soul."

Wade yawned. "Me and God, we're cool," he said. "I ain't robbing

no banks or killing anybody. God knows I'm pretty decent. When my number comes up, my record will get me through those pearly gates. It's like merit pay at the factory—the harder you work, the more valuable you are to the Boss."

"You can't 'earn' your way into heaven," I argued. "Only by accepting Christ as your Savior and living daily for Him can you. . . ."

"Thanks," said Wade, cutting me off. "I'll give it some thought."

But I knew he wouldn't.

I made Wade's situation a con-

stant matter of prayer, asking the Lord to show me a way to open Wade's eyes to his need of Christ. Then, unexpectedly, it was Wade who came to me.

"Got a minute?" he asked, as I answered my front door one evening. "Can we talk somewhere in private?"

We found lounge chairs in my home office and sat down. Wade pulled a piece of paper from his shirt pocket, unfolded it and passed it to me.

"That was in my pay envelope today," he explained. "It says the company is bringing in a line of robotic assembly units. This will help them down-size from 900 employees to 425."

"You lost your job?" I asked in amazement.

"No," he answered, "I was one of the lucky ones who had enough seniority in the union to be kept on. But it means the end to all the overtime I've been getting. And even worse, I'm being cut to 30 hours a week."

"But . . . that's *part-time* status, isn't it?"

He nodded. "It means my benefits package will be cut. I'll have to pay for my hospitalization myself, and they won't match me dollar for dollar any longer on my retirement fund. I'll have less money coming in but higher bills than ever."

"What're you going to do?"

Wade shrugged. "Nothin' else I *can* do but put ads in the paper and try to sell my motorcycle and boat and all that other stuff I've been buying the last couple of years. I never thought the company would treat me like this. I've worked hard for those people and now they act like they don't even know me. Man, this is the worst thing that could ever happen to me."

"No, you're wrong about that," I said gently, seeing an opportunity to make a point with Wade. "This will be rough on you, but you *are* a hard worker. You'll be able to find another part-time job to supplement your income. I know you. You'll survive."

Wade smiled weakly, trying to catch the fervor of my encouragement.

"Yes," I continued, "you'll survive this particular down-sizing. But you won't survive the next one."

Wade's eyes narrowed and his forehead wrinkled. He stared ques-

tioningly at me.

"I've been telling you about how you need to secure your eternal salvation," I explained. "You've ignored me, thinking that your casual church attendance and your law abiding life would be enough to get you into heaven. But it doesn't work that way. God does some down-sizing of His own."

"Down-sizing?" asked Wade, wondering if I was kidding with him. "What? In heaven?"

I reached to my desk and retrieved my Bible. I opened it to Matthew 7:21-23.

"Listen to this, Wade," I said. "It's

very real to him. He was scared, and rightfully so. I could see by the expression on his face that he wanted help.

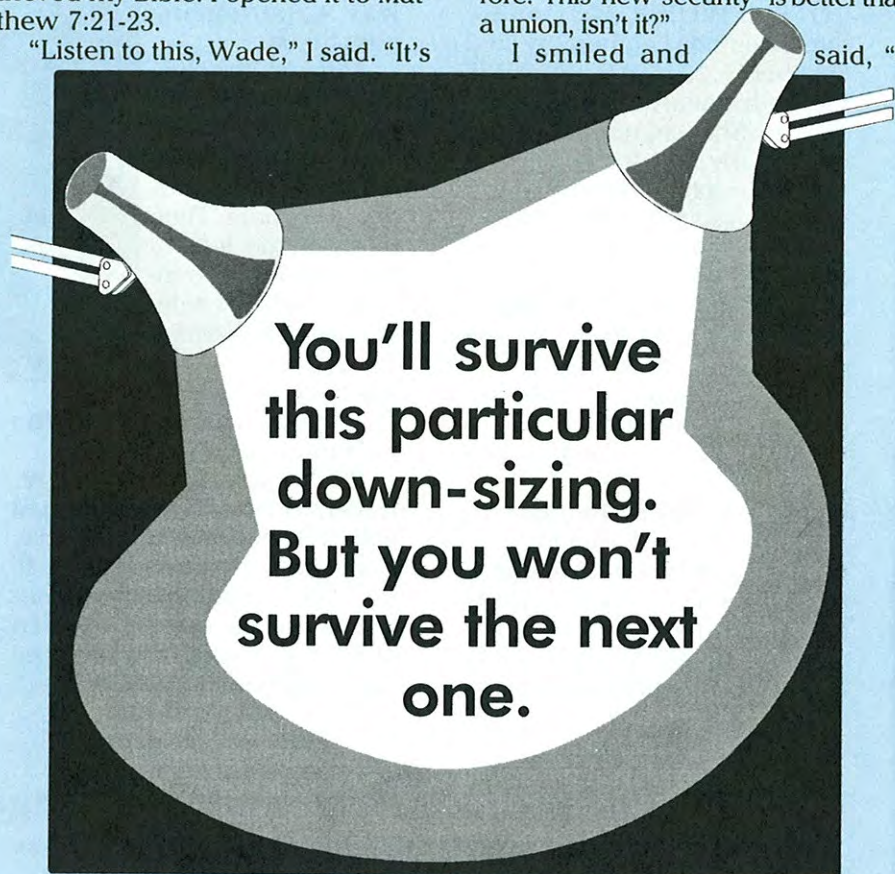
"There's time," I told him. "We can secure your place right now, this very minute, right here."

"Yeah, I . . . I want that," he stammered. "Will you help me?"

We bowed together and Wade asked Christ into his life. He prayed a sincere prayer and found salvation.

When we finished praying Wade said, "I wish I would've done this before. This new security is better than a union, isn't it?"

I smiled and said, "It



Jesus talking about people like you."

Then I read him this verse: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; only he who does the will of my Father in heaven . . . I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

"That . . . that's me?" Wade asked, gulping.

"It's the ultimate down-sizing, Wade, and right now you're on the cut list."

"No!" he protested.

The loss of his full-time job status had made the down-sizing illustration

is a union, Wade: you and Christ, now and forever." ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Dennis E. Hensley is a free-lance writer who lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

Missionary Glennnda Leatherbury Dies in Africa

CÔTE d'IVOIRE—Missionary nurse Glennnda Leatherbury died October 15, 1994, at the Free Will Baptist hospital in Doropo, Côte d'Ivoire. She had returned to Africa in early June for her second term after a furlough and a year of language study in France.

Glennnda had complained of dizziness Friday evening and was examined by Dr. Paul Gentuso. Shortly after lunch Saturday, she experienced another spell and blacked out. Some time later Dr. Gentuso was summoned to Glennnda's house where he found that she was not breathing and had no pulse. He performed CPR and she revived quickly. Dr. Gentuso and Dr. Kenneth Eagleton moved Glennnda to the hospital where they took an electrocardiogram which showed she had suffered a heart attack and

was experiencing arrhythmia.

Although the doctors administered oxygen, her heart stopped again. They revived her with CPR a second time. Then Dr. Eagleton left for Bouna, about 90 minutes south, to telephone field chairman Robert Bryan in Abidjan. They arranged for a helicopter to do an air lift the next morning.

By the time Dr. Eagleton returned to Doropo, Glennnda had suffered her sixth cardiac arrest. Both doctors worked another 45 minutes in an effort to revive her but were unsuccessful. She died at 11:00 p.m. Côte d'Ivoire time (5:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time).



At her request, Glennnda was buried in Doropo on October 28. Foreign Missions director Gene Waddell went to Africa for the funeral.

Glennnda was converted to Christ in 1973. She graduated from Hillsdale FWB College and Hutchinson Community Junior College. The 43-year-old Kansas native was appointed to the mission field in 1985. She is survived by her mother, two brothers and two sisters.

A Glennnda Leatherbury Memorial Fund has been established. Gifts should be sent to Leatherbury Memorial Fund, Foreign Missions, P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002.

Bob Shockey Launches "Operation Evangelism"

NASHVILLE, TN — Reverend Robert (Bob) Shockey entered full-time evangelism when he launched "Operation Evangelism" on January 1. For the past 10 years he has served on staff of Free Will Baptist Bible College as campus pastor, Christian service director and public relations director.

"I'm definitely not retiring," Bob said, "I'm just leaving the



college to pursue evangelism."

Shockey has been an ordained Free Will Baptist minister for 38 years. He pastored 20 years in Tennessee, Alabama and Kentucky. He served eight years with the Home Missions Department as promotional secretary and general director.

Well-known across the denomination for his revival emphasis, Shockey's ministry has ex-

tended throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Virgin Islands. His life has been characterized by a bold soul-winning thrust and teaching others to participate in church growth.

Reverend Shockey, a 1958 graduate of FWBBC, served two years as president of Bethel Bible Institute in Paintsville, Kentucky. In 1964, he was named Kentucky "Pastor of the Year."

He can be reached at:
3520 Thomasville Road
Chapmansboro, TN 37035
615/746-3498

Tennessee Welcomes Toe River Association

OAK RIDGE, TN—Delegates to the 57th annual Tennessee State Association voted unanimously to receive the Toe River Association into membership. Seven Toe River churches requested membership, according to promotional director, Charles Thigpen. Two other Toe River churches had previously petitioned the state association for individual membership.

Toe River moderator L. O. Berry and clerk Dexter Brummitt expressed hope that the 26 other churches affiliated with Toe River will in time request that their names also be listed as members of the Tennessee State Association. The Toe River Association, which celebrated its 145th annual session in August 1994, includes churches in North Carolina, Tennessee and South Carolina.

Registration officials reported 253 attendees at the Tennessee State Association. The November 14-16, 1994, session met at First FWB Church in Oak Ridge. Moderator Bill Gardner was re-elected to his second one-year term in leadership.

Delegates approved a constitutional change authorizing the children's home in Greeneville to operate under the umbrella name, Free Will Baptist Ministries, Inc. The expanded outreach will include the Trula Cronk Home for Children, P.A.T.H. Shelters (protecting adolescents and teaching hope), Foster Care/Adoption, and Family Conference Center.

In other business, delegates tabled a motion until 1995 that would allow the nominating committee to be appointed a year in advance. Consensus seemed

to be that moderators of each district association should serve on the nominating committee in order to expedite broader representation among nominees for boards and committees.

The Cumberland Association and its presbytery presented a plaque of appreciation and a \$250 check to Reverend Robert Crawford for 60 years of service to the denomination. Ill health prevented Brother Crawford from accepting in person. E. B. McDonald accepted in his behalf and read a response letter.

Promotional Director Charles Thigpen reported that Tennessee churches gave more than \$1.1 million to national ministries in 1994.

Sixty-five men attended the Tuesday morning Master's Men Breakfast and heard missionary Jerry Gibbs speak. The group gave Master's Men director James Vallance \$290 to assist the national department.

One hundred five guests attended the TWAC (Tennessee Women Active for Christ) dinner. Rhoda Creech, missionary to Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, addressed the group. Paul Creech preached during the TWAC worship service at noon Tuesday.

Associate pastor Rodger Castle, Sr. of Morrison City preached the state association keynote message. Chuckey pastor Oscar McAmis preached Tuesday evening, and Ashland City minister Charley Carmack preached the closing association sermon.

The 1995 state association will meet November 13-15 at Keystone FWB Church in Johnson City.

McCarty Retires After 34 Years

GAINESVILLE, GA—Reverend Bill McCarty, 68, retired from full-time pastoral ministry in 1993. He was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister in 1962, two years after answering the call to preach at the 1960 National Association which met in Fresno, California.

Brother McCarty's 34-year ministry was invested in two states—Ohio and California. He served 20 years in Ohio, pastoring Free Will Baptist churches in Urbana and Youngstown. His 13 years at the Youngstown church moved the congregation from mission status to an organized church.

During his Ohio tenure, McCarty served on the state Mission Board and as promotional officer for the

Central Ohio Conference. He was elected moderator of the Ohio State Association but resigned five minutes later when he learned that he could not serve on the Mission Board *and* as moderator.

McCarty began an 11-year pastoral ministry in California in 1969 when he moved to Salinas. Four years later, he became pastor of Pioneer FWB Church in the Los Angeles area. While there, he organized a Spanish Free Will Baptist church which grew to 130 members. He also worked with the local police department in an outreach to gang members.

He was elected to a four-year term with the California Drug and Alcohol Counsel to draw up mea-

sures which went before the state legislature concerning tobacco, drug and alcohol control.

McCarty pastored his last two years in California at Ashland FWB Church in Hayward. Declining health forced him to resign in 1993. He then moved to Gainesville, Georgia, and joined Liberty FWB Church where he now serves as associate pastor.

Brother McCarty was converted in 1948 in a one-room Free Will Baptist mission on the third floor of a building in Springfield, Ohio. He was ordained as a deacon in 1950, served 10 years and then answered the call to preach.

Bill and Nora McCarty have five children.

Oklahoma Adopts \$2.7 Million Budget

LAWTON, OK—Delegates to Oklahoma's 86th annual state association adopted a \$2.7 million budget for 1995, according to Clerk Keith Burden. The October 10-13, 1994, session met at McMahon Auditorium in Lawton with 23 of the state's 24 district associations representing.

A majority of the 1995 budget was allocated to Hillsdale FWB College. Budget allocations included: Hillsdale FWB College—\$1.6 million; Book Store—\$485,000; State Mission Board—\$380,000; Christian Education Board—\$129,500; Oklahoma Executive Office—\$116,000. The overall budget also included \$370,000 in cooperative funds, 76% of which underwrites state ministries.

Assistant moderator David McDougal moderated the business sessions in the absence of the moderator, Bob Thompson. McDougal, who pastors First FWB Church in Byng, was elected moderator. Oklahoma City pastor Kent Hubbard was elected assistant moderator.

More than 270 people registered for the four-day meeting. Some 115 ministers attended. Delegates passed a resolution strongly suggesting that members switch their long distance telephone carrier from AT&T to "Lifeline," since AT&T sponsors gay rights activities.

The state association theme, "His Commission: Our Mission," was developed by four ministers. Missionaries Jim Combs and Darrel Nichols joined Oklahoma pastors Leroy Holman and Doyle Baker on the preaching program.

In other action, delegates presented former executive secretary Connie Cariker with a plaque of appreciation for his years of service. Delegates also amended the Hillsdale FWB College by-laws so that any action by the college Board of Trustees to amend the constitution will be subject to the Oklahoma State Association of Free Will Baptists.

The state Master's Men met Monday evening, October 10, using the theme, "Tune in to God." Waymon Ray presided. Truett Smith, founder and president of Layman, Inc., addressed the men.

The Tuesday, October 11, Minister's Conference focused on the theme, "Holiness." Oklahoma ministers Johnny Bilby, Jerry Banks and Larry Haggard developed the theme.

Mary Alice Bridgman presided at the Tuesday Woman's Auxiliary session. They met using the theme, "Back to Basics." Shirley Combs, missionary to Brazil, was the keynote speaker.

The 1995 Oklahoma State Association will meet October 9-12 in the Oklahoma City area.

Southeastern Sets Spring Conference



Lassiter



Duncan



McCoy



Linton



Gibbs

WENDELL, NC—The annual spring conference on revival and soul winning at Southeastern FWB College will meet under the big top, according to President Billy Bevan. The April 17-19 conference will be patterned after old-time camp meetings both to attract attendance and to help recreate a revival atmosphere.

Preachers from five states will deliver 10 sermons in the three-day meeting. Tennessee evangelist John Gibbs will speak three times and provide special music for the conference. Gibbs has served as a pastor, a member of the Home Missions Department staff and as an evangelist.

Florida pastor Roger Duncan who leads the multi-ministry First FWB Church in Seffner, will preach twice. Oklahoma pastor Curtis Linton who pastors Northside FWB Church in Tulsa will also speak twice.

Reverend Dale McCoy, pastor of Cannon FWB Church in Lancaster, SC, will speak once. Pastor McCoy and his church are poised to launch a building program in Lancaster.

Southeastern College's promotional director Jack Lassiter completes the preaching program. He joined the college staff in February 1994.

Directory Update

CALIFORNIA

Jimmy McClelland to Northside Church, Stockton from First Church, Visalia

James Taylor to First Church, Visalia

GEORGIA

Gerald Brown to Pleasant Hill Church, Vienna

Ken Murphy to White Oaks Church, Macon from First Church, Jesup

MICHIGAN

David McGowan to First Church, Pontiac from Heritage Church, Hamilton, OH

MISSISSIPPI

Vern Gunnels, Jr. to Fawn Grove Church, Mantachie from Pearce Chapel Church, Smithville

Gary Kelly to Bethel Church, Richton

TEXAS

Mark Jones to Fellowship Church, Bryan from Pleasant Mound Church, Buffalo Springs

OTHER PERSONNEL

Chuck Lotz to First Church, DeSoto, MO, as associate pastor

Bill McCarty to Liberty Church, Gainesville, GA, as associate pastor from Ashland Church, Hayward, CA, as pastor ■

New Light FWB Church of Morgan, GA, did something different to express appreciation for Pastor **Terry Pierce**. They started a retirement plan for him with the FWB Board of Retirement. They made an initial \$650 deposit.

Home missionary **Ken Doggett** reports 15 first-time visitors, three baptisms and a high of 54 in morning worship services at **Heritage FWB Church in Springfield, IL**.

When **Fulton FWB Church in Fulton, MS**, had to borrow \$50,000 to finish a land project the week before their 12th missionary conference, Pastor **Bill Van Winkle** doubted that the congregation would hit their \$3,000 goal for the **Jerry Pinkerton** family. He was right. They exceeded the goal by \$250 and committed themselves to \$888 in monthly faith promises!

Pastor **Loy Counts** reports six conversions, three baptisms and two new members at **Rogers FWB Church in Rogers, AR**.

Members of **Thayer FWB Church in Thayer, MO**, celebrated their 40th anniversary with all-day services, according to Pastor **Cody Freeman**. Former pastor **Richard Robinson** preached to 245 people during the morning service. Fourteen of 51 charter members attended.

Some 360 people attended the 50th anniversary homecoming at **High Point FWB Church in Lancaster, SC**. Pastor **Stuart Snow** reports 19 conversions and 10 new members.

After four months as mission pastor at **Heritage FWB Church in Fremont, NC**, **Fred Crank** reports that attendance surged from four to the mid-20s. The church is sponsored by North Carolina's Palmer Association. The congregation meets in a 100-year-old building that needs repair.

Reverend **Walter Statzer** celebrated 22 years as pastor of **Shiloh FWB Church in Bristol, VA**. Members said, "Preacher Statzer has been our mainstay for the last 22 years. He never lets us forget that we have higher help and love. This man truly is our shepherd."

Members of **Heritage Temple FWB Church in Columbus, OH**, passed the 42-year mark as a lighthouse to the city

in 1994. The church organized February 21, 1952, as **South End FWB Church** with 15 charter members. It was later named **Second FWB Church**, then in 1954 relocated and changed its name to **Welch Avenue FWB Church**. After securing 16 acres and building a 2,400-seat sanctuary, the congregation moved in 1978 to its current location on South High Street and re-named itself **Heritage Temple FWB Church**. **Billy Sharpston** pastors.

The fall 1994 issue of *Rejoice*, publication of **First FWB Church in Owasso, OK**, reports 41 new members. **Leonard Pirtle** pastors. **Rejoice Christian School** opened its third year of operations with 119 students and a staff of 16. **Arilla Wode** directs the school.

Pastor **Dennis Darnell** said that members of **Madera FWB Church in Madera, CA**, made a \$90,000 bid on a new facility in which to worship. The church is 30 years old.

Mt. Olive FWB Church in Reynolds, GA, passed the century mark in 1994 as members celebrated 100 years of service, according to Pastor **Tim Hutchinson**. Former pastor **Russell Horne** preached the centennial message.

Pastor **Jeff Conner** is all smiles. That's because members of **Woodlawn FWB Church in Russellville, AR**, made a final \$23,500 payment on a \$77,000 loan. It took the church 19 months to pay off the mortgage.

Eleven baptisms and six new members at **Samantha FWB Church in Leesburg, OH**, were enough for Pastor **Wylie Perkins** to consider their Sunday School drive a success. Teachers conduct regular visitation. Men also meet monthly for prayer breakfasts.

She may be one of the youngest church news reporters in the U.S.A. Fourteen-year-old **Lydia Figuero**, an eighth-grader, volunteered to serve as news reporter at **Gulf Coast FWB Church in Gulfport, MS**. Pastor **Robert Dykes** said that Lydia excels in her school work and church work.

Gary Kelly is in his first pastorate at **Bethel FWB Church in Richton, MS**. Members welcomed the Kelly family to the church parsonage with a grocery pounding and Pastor Appreciation Day

gifts of money. The church also has a new fellowship hall.

Is she the oldest active Free Will Baptist? Her name is **Sadie Harrell**. She was born September 25, 1890, in Pyett, AR. She and her family began attending **Summer Chapel FWB Church** in 1924. The late Dr. **I. W. Yandell** was pastor. Her husband was an ordained deacon for 50 years. Sister Harrell, age 104, attends **Trinity FWB Church in Oklahoma City, OK**, where her grandson, **Stanley Konopinski**, pastors.

First FWB Church in Willow Springs, MO, organized with 25 charter members in 1977. For the first time since 1978, the church is debt-free, says Pastor **David Carroll**. Members celebrated with day-long services that included reading the church's history and a sermon by one of five former pastors, **Gene Crewse**.

A mortgage-burning ceremony at **New Life FWB Church in Licking, MO**, highlighted a day of thanksgiving and praise as the church became debt-free. Pastor **Mark Williford** welcomed Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** for the morning message. Founded in 1972, the church launched building programs in 1973, 1978, 1987 and 1992.

Members of **First FWB Church in Savannah, GA**, adopted a \$92,000 budget for the year, according to Pastor **Glenn Poston**. The church also installed an irrigation system, purchased a new copier and began publishing *The Reminder Newsletter*.

Pastor **Lucian Baker** reports 30 conversions, six baptisms and eight new members at **Pleasant Hill FWB Church in Delaware, OH**.

The **Missouri State Youth Camp Board** reported 110 salvation decisions at **Camp Niangua** in 1994. They also noted 127 rededications among the 1,234 registrants. The Board expressed special thanks to **Ken and Judy Goff** for their work at the camp.

Pastor **Ronnie Mitchell** reports four new members at **First FWB Church in Mt. Vernon, IL**. The congregation honored Pastor and Mrs. Mitchell with a money tree, a hug from everyone and a book.

Blue Point FWB Church in Cisne, IL, turned 97 years old, according to Pastor **Ernie Lewis**. ■

Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign
October 1994
Update

State	Goal	Gifts	Balance
Alabama	\$ 76,397.63	\$ 4,981.15	\$ 71,416.48
Arizona	1,228.93	2,883.71	(1,654.78)
Arkansas	76,860.94	40,357.13	36,503.81
Atlantic Canada	1,570.51	897.00	673.51
California	17,216.76	1,444.20	15,772.56
Colorado	789.18	1,165.00	(375.82)
Florida	20,703.30	5,781.62	14,921.68
Georgia	38,179.19	27,768.88	10,410.31
Hawaii	184.54	727.26	(542.72)
Idaho	353.37	25.00	328.37
Illinois	16,176.29	4,629.47	11,546.82
Indiana	7,868.27	1,846.75	6,021.52
Iowa	266.99	.00	266.99
Kansas	1,287.82	280.00	1,007.82
Kentucky	35,454.34	4,894.29	30,560.05
Louisiana	94.23	1,925.00	(1,830.77)
Maryland	6,812.10	1,480.81	5,331.29
Michigan	15,116.19	16,004.22	(888.03)
Mississippi	15,559.86	3,798.23	11,761.63
Missouri	60,484.40	33,789.91	26,694.49
Montana	27.48	100.00	(72.52)
Nebraska	102.08	119.00	(16.92)
New Mexico	596.80	630.55	(33.75)
North Carolina	59,118.06	7,131.40	51,986.66
Northeast Assoc.	883.41	270.00	613.41
Northwest Assoc.	1,087.58	135.00	952.58
Ohio	40,923.66	19,398.10	21,525.56
Oklahoma	92,271.60	9,932.15	82,339.45
South Carolina	18,335.75	2,102.00	16,233.75
South Dakota		175.00	(175.00)
Tennessee	78,557.09	51,924.66	26,632.43
Texas	11,547.20	6,648.52	4,898.68
Virginia	24,323.33	2,027.93	22,295.40
Virgin Islands		200.00	(200.00)
West Virginia	46,204.51	973.00	45,231.51
Wisconsin		61.00	(61.00)
Other		2,978.85	(2,978.85)
Totals	\$766,583.39	\$259,486.79	\$507,096.60

THE TOGETHER WAY

October 1994

Receipts

State	Design.	Co-op	Total	Oct. '93	Yr. To Date
Alabama	\$ 10,147.29	\$.00	\$ 10,147.29	\$ 5,512.07	\$ 90,552.21
Arizona	571.00	10.00	581.00	10.00	3,580.77
Arkansas	20,014.83	8,143.75	28,158.58	24,626.99	290,844.43
California	.00	.00	.00	639.49	7,199.68
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	160.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	110.00
Florida	400.00	2,073.38	2,473.38	2,598.04	24,586.97
Georgia	11,044.82	1,552.65	12,597.47	10,354.76	116,885.88
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	227.26
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	125.00
Illinois	7,650.48	2,425.32	10,075.80	7,045.78	108,157.73
Indiana	.00	65.00	65.00	854.82	7,202.67
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	360.00
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	409.93
Kentucky	70.00	308.42	378.42	679.23	7,373.73
Louisiana	79.00	.00	79.00	.00	1,083.00
Maryland	125.81	.00	125.81	300.00	5,644.84
Michigan	16,058.49	4,855.62	20,914.11	5,087.95	148,268.71
Mississippi	20.00	314.78	334.78	698.59	8,331.24
Missouri	9,622.60	.00	9,622.60	8,802.07	119,123.92
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	50.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	119.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	210.60	2,991.59
North Carolina	442.46	363.00	805.46	1,457.15	23,271.85
Ohio	4,152.55	5,467.78	9,620.33	3,103.92	72,747.79
Oklahoma	49,103.08	.00	49,103.08	50,764.37	473,353.90
South Carolina	18,077.14	117.68	18,194.82	17,148.68	192,757.20
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	175.00
Tennessee	14,139.15	2,160.49	16,299.64	1,467.11	111,296.64
Texas	3,222.18	87.62	3,309.80	.00	93,820.45
Virginia	721.43	25.00	746.43	2,423.39	15,051.83
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	200.00
West Virginia	4,033.40	140.03	4,173.43	79.25	44,822.39
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	61.00
Canada	.00	.00	.00	.00	897.00
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	135.00
Northeast Assoc.	5.00	.00	5.00	.00	260.00
Other	.00	.05	.05	(.08)	.43
Totals	\$169,700.71	\$28,110.57	\$197,811.28	\$143,864.18	\$1,972,239.04

Disbursements

Executive Office	\$ 8,162.81	\$19,038.89	\$ 27,201.70	\$ 25,323.10	\$ 272,017.12
Foreign Missions	99,690.47	2,086.47	101,776.94	77,932.11	989,017.54
FWBBC	11,386.98	2,086.47	13,473.45	7,896.58	118,716.49
Home Missions	39,033.79	1,632.89	40,666.68	25,753.74	357,345.58
Retirement & Insurance	950.85	1,270.04	2,220.89	1,408.23	19,485.39
Master's Men	1,396.94	1,270.04	2,666.98	2,160.00	28,798.56
Commission for Theo. Integrity	84.40	45.37	129.77	104.71	1,351.68
FWB Foundation	762.41	544.29	1,306.70	1,306.34	12,942.62
Historical Commission	64.36	45.37	109.73	102.15	1,204.92
Music Commission	64.38	45.37	109.75	81.95	1,143.46
Radio & TV Commission	84.40	45.37	129.77	86.97	1,262.53
Hillsdale FWB College	978.12	.00	978.12	464.80	21,785.53
Other	7,040.80	.00	7,040.80	1,243.50	147,167.62
Totals	\$169,700.71	\$28,110.57	\$197,811.28	\$143,864.18	\$1,972,239.04



The Fruitful Field of Mexico

By Roy Thomas

One of the most exciting things to happen in Mexico each year is the annual convention of the Mexican Association of Free Will Baptists. The 1994 convention met last August at the old Bible institute property in Monterrey. (The Bible Institute was relocated several years ago to its new campus near Tampico.) The convention is a highlight for the Mexican people as they come from various parts of their country to worship together and conduct the Lord's business.

Hundreds of Mexicans make the journey to the convention by riding long tedious miles in buses or trucks. Most of the people stay in the old dormitories or in tents, and eat their meals which are cooked either outside or in the small institute kitchen.

The convention begins on Thursday morning as the general board and various committees conduct business. Lazaro de la Rosa, pastor of the Altamira, Tamps., Mexico Free Will Baptist Church, is the moderator. That night they have a worship service which features singing from many special groups. Every church has a singing group or choir, with many people playing guitars or mandolins.

On Friday the Woman's Auxiliary convention meets, and the regular convention also has preaching services both morning and evening. Saturday is the youth convention, with a host of young people attending from the 33 Free Will Baptist churches of Mexico. Their convention is an exciting and inspiring time as youngsters participate in competitive activities, plays, skits, singing groups and worship services.

Saturday night is a special preaching service accented with special music. The Mexican convention builds to its stirring climax in the final service Sunday morning. Sunday School is taught from our Free Will Baptist Spanish literature. Then the final convention service unfolds with a preaching service and invitation where the altars are flooded with people.

I was honored to speak at the Sunday morning service this year. As I preached in English, our Mexican coordinator, James Munsey, did an excellent job interpreting into Spanish. The service concluded with a large number kneeling at the altar. After lunch, the people reluctantly

said goodbye. They wept, hugged each other and made plans for meeting again next year.

Every time I visit the Mexican convention, I feel as if I have been in a great revival! The unity, love and comradeship one experiences while in fellowship with the Mexican Free Will Baptist brothers and sisters certainly makes the arduous trip worthwhile.

Each of the 33 churches in Mexico was started by a home missionary or a national pastor assisted by the Home Missions Department. Twenty of these churches are self-supporting, and 12 are supported by the department.

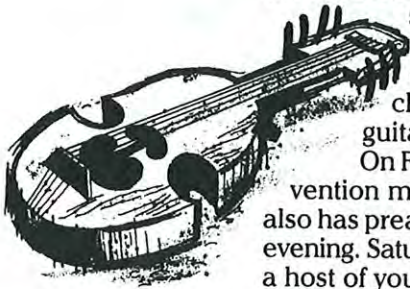
The Free Will Baptist Bible Institute was relocated near Tampico to better train young people to reach their own people for Christ and to start churches in the growing cities of Mexico. Some of the fastest growing churches in Mexico are pastored by graduates of this school.

James Munsey is not only the coordinator for the work in Mexico, but also serves as president of the school. He is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. Lazaro de la Rosa is the administrator of the Bible institute and also teaches part time. Ramon and Ede Zuniga, both graduates of Free Will Baptist Bible College, live on campus and teach at the Bible institute. Felix Escobar, an engineering graduate of a Mexican university, also teaches at the institute.

A new teacher was added this year, Rosie Sanchez, from the Weslaco Free Will Baptist Church in Texas. She graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College with a major in missions and Bible. She will be teaching Bible, geography and missions at the institute.

Associate missionaries Bud and Ruth Bivens plan to move to the Bible institute property as soon as they retire and their house is built. They will work in areas of evangelism and church growth among the Free Will Baptist churches of Mexico.

God is blessing the efforts of Free Will Baptists in Mexico. Souls are being saved, congregations are growing, and new churches are being established. The Bible institute, the youth camp, and the Mexican association are functioning efficiently under the capable leadership of the Mexican people. I believe the future is bright for Free Will Baptists south of the border! ■



Paul Kettelman Remembered

By Larry Hampton, FWBBC Alumnus

One of the best teachers I had at Free Will Baptist Bible College never gave a lecture or made an assignment.

Paul J. Kettelman, FWBBC's first student, was the college's Director of Public Relations for 25 years. Before that, he had been a pastor. (His pastor's heart came through in frequent visits to patients in local hospitals.) His keen mind, quick wit, and infectious smile made him one of the school's best-loved "teachers." I would like to share a few of the lessons I learned from this master teacher.

A Lesson in Humor

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Mr. Kettelman was renowned for his practical jokes. (Some of us still remember his "blowing out the phone lines.") He loved to tell humorous stories and did so from one end of the denomination to the other. He had learned that it is better to laugh than bellyache. Thanks for sharing that lesson with all of your students.

Mr. Kettelman always took his ministry very seriously, but not himself. He knew (and taught us) the value of laughing at our foibles. He convinced us that life is often laughable and a whole lot more livable when sprinkled with laughter.

A Lesson in Individualism

"Cut your own cloth." Mr. Kettelman was aware of the pressure to conform to the "right way" of doing things. But he also knew that God doesn't mass produce His servants. That's why he encouraged each of us to be true to our personalities and our gifts. This was an important lesson indeed in a world beset by a cookie-cutter mentality.

A Lesson in Priorities

People came first with Mr. Kettelman—his family, friends, and students. Perhaps that is why he made so many friends for the college. He had learned, and taught us, that ministry must focus on people. Thank you for this valuable, life-changing lesson.



Paul J. Kettelman
1924-1987

A Lesson in Humility

Genesis 11 tells the story of the Tower of Babel. It was the basis of one of Mr. Kettelman's most important lessons. He warned us to beware of the philosophy of the Plain of Shinar. He knew we, too, would be tempted to "make us a name." Thank you for showing us the danger of selfish ambition.

Paul J. Kettelman was one of Free Will Baptist Bible College's most eloquent teachers. Life was his classroom and, most important, he demonstrated the lessons he taught us in his daily walk with God. ■

.....

Larry is a 1969 graduate of the Bible College. He is one of many alumni who treasure their memories of Paul Kettelman, especially at Christmas.

Mr. Kettelman served as FWBBC's Public Relations Director for 25 years, before his death in 1987.

FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Twins? No!

Some people think of the Retirement and Foundation departments as twins. Not so, not even close.

Most of us know a set of twins. Our own Melvin and Milton Worthington for example. They look alike, dress alike and even talk alike, though Dianne and Anne have no problem telling the difference. Close friends can also readily tell them apart.

Retirement and Foundation are not twins. Without getting bogged down in fine details and legal formalities, consider these basic differences in the two agencies.

Whom do they serve?

The Retirement Plan can only serve individuals who are paid employees of a Free Will Baptist agency—a local church, school, district, state or national ministry.

The Foundation is free to serve anyone, even non-Free Will Baptists, who are interested in supporting one or more of our ministries. Again, this may be a local, district, state, national or international agency. The key word here is "supporting." There must always be some underlying benefit for a Free Will Baptist ministry.

How does each department serve?

The Retirement Plan provides a disciplined method of accumulating contributions from either the Christian worker, the agency employing him/her or both. These accumulations are deposited as either tax paid or tax deferred within the limits established by the IRS. This allows for deposits and earnings to accrue without being diminished by taxes.

All accumulations in a participant's retirement account will go to him/her, the beneficiary or his/her estate. The exact time and method of transfer will be determined by choice of the recipient. No ministry or agency of the denomination, including the Retirement Board, will receive any proceeds of this account.

The Foundation provides a present service to donors in order, at some point in the future, to provide for one or more denominational

ministries. These provisions are possible through various trust agreements or gift annuities. Each type agreement has its own rules and guidelines, but frequently provides lifetime income to the donor and immediate charitable tax deductions.

How are these programs regulated?

The Internal Revenue Service controls each of these programs under very strict legal guidelines. However, here again they are different since each operation falls under separate sections of the Code.

The Retirement Plan serves individuals who minister in some capacity within our denomination. The Foundation works with individuals in order to provide for the ministries of Free Will Baptists.

Different? Certainly so, but each fills a very real need. Twins? Certainly not, but in and for the same family.

If you have a question about either department or how one of them can be of service to you, please contact either office. They have the same address and are served by the same staff. ■

The following friends have contributed to the Evelyn Hersey Memorial Endowment:

Bihoro Fujinkai
Bihoro, Japan

Fred Hersey
Antioch, TN

If you would like to add to this memorial endowment, please send your gift to the Free Will Baptist Foundation.

The Nobleman's Son

John 4:44-54

This is what John calls "the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee" (v. 54). Not that Jesus had performed only one miracle before (see 2:23), but this is the second of the seven John selected as special signs that the Savior was Messiah and Son of God.

The water was turned to wine in Cana; this nobleman (Greek *basilikos*, literally "royal one") lived in Capernaum, fifteen miles or so away. Perhaps he was a member of the royal family of Herod; more likely, he was a "royal official," connected in some way with King Herod's court.

At any rate his son was seriously ill, "about to die" (v. 47). Upon hearing that Jesus had returned to Cana, he made the trip from Capernaum and proceeded to request that Jesus come down (Cana was in the hills, Capernaum on the shore of Galilee) and heal the son.

It's possible that the verb tense (Greek imperfect) of "besought" (KJV) or "implored" (NKJV) indicates a repeated plea, but that isn't certain. Regardless, the request is very straightforward.

Jesus' first response, as often the case, was apparently calculated to serve as something of a test: "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." The "you" is plural and the negative is emphatic. Jesus is indirectly addressing his whole audience, probably the generally unbelieving generation that we meet throughout the gospel account.

Regardless, the courtier is not deterred. He presses his request with simple directness and urgency: "Sir (Greek *kurios*, often "Lord"), come down before my child dies!" Note the change from "son" to "child," a word more expressive of endearment in these circumstances.

Now Jesus responds just as directly: "Go," He said, "your son is alive."

And the nobleman believed—put his confidence (a Greek ingressive aorist, apparently)—in what Jesus said and proceeded toward home in that confidence, even though it was apparently late in the day and he would have to stop over somewhere.

Nor was his confidence misplaced; while yet on the way down to Capernaum, his servants (Greek *douloi*, slaves) met him with the good news that the child (it is the tenderer word in v. 51 again) was alive and (by implication) well!

In his wonder, no doubt, the nobleman inquired (the word suggests a strong interest in learning the answer) of his servants the time when the son began to improve—"took a turn for the better," we might say. "The fever broke yesterday at 1:00," they said.

And the father recognized that this was the very time when Jesus had told him that his son would live. (It seems clear that John is using the Jewish way of counting the hours of a day beginning about daylight or 6:00 a.m.)

The result was twofold. First, was a confirmation of the nobleman's faith. What v. 50 already said, v. 53 says again: he believed. We remember that John doesn't always use "believe" in its fullest sense. Sometimes it is merely a tendency to faith that doesn't develop further.

Surely the repetition in v. 53 implies that this man came to the fullness of saving faith in Jesus. Furthermore, so did all his "house"—the word (Greek *oikia*) means household or family, broad enough to include a man's bondservants. The man's whole family put faith in Jesus, just as John intends we should do when we read of these miracle-signs.

What else did John want us to see

in this? Surely there is a deliberate irony in what Jesus said in v. 48; compare 20:29. Yes the miracles should engender faith, but blessed are those who do not need them and can rest their confidence in Jesus based on His word. Jesus does not have to be present to heal or to save. Better yet, He is always present where people call on Him, and His word is enough. ■



Robert E. Picirilli



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Thomas Marberry

Pastors At Risk

H. B. London, Jr., and Neil B. Wiseman

(Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993, hardback, 240 pp., \$17.99)

The subtitle of this book is "Help for Pastors, Hope for the Church." It is designed to help pastors and their congregations confront some of the most important problems and difficulties which ministers face. The ministry is in trouble in America today. Many pastors are overworked, stressed-out, underpaid and frustrated.

A recent survey of 5,000 pastors done by Focus on the Family presented some startling results. Of the pastors surveyed, 80% believed that pastoral ministry had affected their families negatively; 90% felt that they were inadequately trained to cope with the demands of the ministry; 70% said they had lower self-esteem than when they started in the ministry; 40% reported serious conflict with a parishioner once a month and 70% said that they did not have someone they considered a close friend.

Chapter two of the book analyzes 15 hazards which make the ministry so difficult. These include loneliness, money problems, personal problems, unreasonable expectations of

church members and a variety of other pressures.

According to the authors, these hazards are formidable, but they do not have to be fatal. They can be controlled or at least managed to such an extent that they do not destroy the pastor and his ministry. They can be confronted with "God-enabled courage, creativity, imagination and faith."

The first thing a pastor must learn is to control his own life. He cannot allow expectations of others to set his agenda. Under the leadership of God, he must set it himself. He must move from a philosophy of ministry based on works to one based on grace. He must present his vision of the ministry clearly to the governing board and congregation of his church.

London and Wiseman offer this important advice, "Try not to confuse the whole with the part. One grouching member is not a reason to preach a fiery sermon or a cause to resign. The majority are usually fair-minded in their expectations. Trust the evaluation of the many over the judgment of the few."

The final part of the book offers practical advice on how to manage finances, how to involve members more effectively in the management of the church, how to deal with stress and burnout and how to keep one's own relationship with God where it needs to be. An effective pastor must develop the ability to be content with what he has and, at the same time, lead his congregation into appropriate and meaningful change, growth and development.

There is no doubt that ministry today is more difficult than it was years ago. The methods and strategies that worked well in the past may not work today. Many pastors need a restoration of hope, joy, meaning and purpose in their ministries.

No book (including this one) can offer quick and easy solutions to the complex problems which modern pastors face. This work does, however, make a significant contribution to the field. It deserves to be read both by pastors and by lay leaders in local churches. ■

BEYOND BELIEF



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RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY NEWS

Christian Association of PrimeTimers Responds to Senior Boom

ST. CHARLES, IL (EP)—The U.S. is experiencing a shift from a youth-oriented society to a mature-oriented society. Presently, more than 63 million people in the USA are 50 years of age or older, with 31 million of them 65 and older (more than the entire population of Canada). By 2015, when baby boomers join the age 50 and above group, there will be more than 136 million seniors in the U.S.

A new organization, the Christian Association of PrimeTimers (CAP), has been formed to serve the needs of this growing segment of the U.S. population. CAP is similar to the American Association of Retired People (AARP), but has a Christian emphasis. CAP seeks to provide its members inspiration and encouragement, life-enriching opportunities for service, and significant savings on products and services which PrimeTimers would typically need.

Dr. Billy A. Melvin, chairman of the board, explains, "We differ from other associations such as AARP because we seek to challenge PrimeTimers to make their lives count for Christ and to provide them with avenues for Christian service."

All members qualify for discounts on individual and group travel. A no-annual fee bank credit card is available, along with special pricing on Bibles, Christian books and recordings. There are also special CAP-negotiated rates on insurance coverages, including Medicare Supplement, and low-cost prescription drugs are available to members by mail.

For more information about CAP, call (800) 443-0227.

Studies Link Abortion to Suicide, Breast Cancer

SPRINGFIELD, IL (EP)—Abortion has been linked to suicide and breast cancer in two new studies.

Some 28 percent of women who regret their abortions attempt suicide, and over half of these women attempt suicide more than once, according to a new study published in the fall 1994 edition of *The Post Abortion Review*.

The study found that 36 percent of the women surveyed described themselves as having become self-destructive after the abortion, and 20 percent reported having a subsequent nervous breakdown, with 10 percent reporting subsequent hospitalization for psychiatric care. Only six percent said the abortion improved their lives; 61 percent said it made their lives worse. Only 31 percent report that they feel reconciled with their abortion experience.

According to project director David Reardon of the Elliot Institute for Social Sciences Research, this study is more reliable than pro-choice studies which are typically limited to follow-up interviews three to six months after the abortion.

"The 260 women in our sample had their abortions an average of 10.6 years ago. Furthermore, over 60 percent say that there was a period of time, five years on average, in which they would have denied the existence of any negative feelings. It is only by studying women well beyond the five-year mark that we can really begin to see the cycle of disintegration which abortion causes in women's lives."

Another study, published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, found that women aged 45 or younger who have had an abortion are at least 60 percent more likely to develop breast cancer than other women their age.

The study, led by Janet R. Daling of the Seattle-based Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, was developed by interviewing 846 women with breast cancer and 961 healthy women of the same age group. It found that the greatest risk appeared to be among young women under the age of 18.

"Women should be made aware of the possibility of an abortion-breast cancer link as one of the many risk factors associated with the procedure," stated Wanda Franz, head of the National Right to Life Committee. "Every woman deserves to know all of the facts before she agrees to undergo any medical procedure, including abortion."

Since 1957, 24 other studies have been published suggesting a possible link between abortion and breast cancer, but most of these studies have received little media attention.

"Abortion providers and pro-abortion groups claim to have the best interest of women at heart," concluded Franz. "However, hiding the facts about a potentially deadly risk shows that politics and money are often higher priorities than protecting the health of women."

Poll Finds Americans Ignorant of Basic Bible Teachings

GLENDALE, CA (EP)—A new study on religious beliefs shows increasing evidence that millions of Americans—even many who might be classified as born-again Christians—do not reflect beliefs that are consistent with an orthodox understanding of the Bible.

A nationwide survey by the Barna Research Group indicates that although most people own a Bible, relatively few have a consistently accurate understanding of the content of the Bible. Still, a majority of the American people gave correct answers to many Bible questions.

Among the survey findings were:

- Almost two out of every five adults (38 percent) believe that "the entire Bible was written several decades after Jesus' death." (The entire Old Testament, of course, was written hundreds of years before His birth.)
- Nearly three-quarters of adults (72 percent) agreed that "all of the miracles described in the Bible actually took place."

- Most people accept the Bible's claim to the virgin birth. In total, 85 percent agree that "Jesus Christ was born to a virgin."
- Amazingly, 10 percent believe that the name of Noah's wife was "Joan of Arc."
- One-quarter of adults (22 percent) assert that "Jesus Christ never married because He was a priest, and priests did not marry." The rabbis and religious leaders of His day did, of course, marry.
- One out of every six adults (16 percent) believe that the Apostle Thomas wrote a book which is included in the New Testament, known as the Book of Thomas. (No such book exists in the New Testament.)
- Half of all adults (49 percent) agreed that "the Bible teaches that money is the root of all evil." (The Bible actually teaches that it is the love of money which is the root of all evil.)
- Only one-third of adults (36 percent) believe that "Jesus Christ was related to King David."

Reacting to these results, George Barna, president of the firm which conducted the study, said "Clearly, most people don't know what to make of the Bible. Adults constantly gave us answers which contradicted or conflicted with previous replies. Answers were inconsistent regarding the inerrancy of scripture. There is virtual total ignorance of the history of the Bible. The content of the Old Testament is a mystery to most adults. The continuity between the Old and New Testaments would surprise most Americans."

Other recent surveys by Barna's company have learned that people do not know even half of the 10 Commandments, do not know who preached the Sermon on the Mount, do not know that the story of Jonah and the fish is from the Bible, and believe that the expression "God helps those who help themselves" is a direct quote from the Bible. (It was actually penned by Benjamin Franklin in the late 1700s.)

His research also shows that millions of people own Bible versions which contain language which is simply too difficult for them to read and comprehend, due to functional illiteracy.

Barna proposed some reasons for the high levels of scriptural misunderstanding and Bible ignorance. "This survey also showed that less than half of all adults had read from the Bible in the past week. Naturally, if you spend little time reading the Bible, the chances of knowing what's in it are slim," he said.

"Much of the Bible reading that takes place is a quick reading of a few verses, hardly enough to enable a person to grasp the key themes and messages of the Bible," Barna continued. "This survey even showed that when we asked people if they were currently studying any topics or subjects of personal interest, only about one-quarter of the public mentioned study of the Bible or Christian teachings as part of their current focus. It seems that understanding what's in the Bible is not a high priority for most Americans—not even among those who are most committed to participation in their church or to personal spiritual growth." ■



Jack Williams

The Time Thieves

They infiltrate through unguarded moments in the day, and once inside our outer defenses they set fire to the most carefully planned schedule. They ignore deadlines and push aside urgent projects with the trivial. Whenever they appear, the time thieves rearrange priorities with no thought for the consequences to others.

Two hundred years ago, Benjamin Franklin turned his pen to the problem when he wrote, "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." Old Ben would not be surprised to learn how little has changed since 1790.

Are you a time thief? Do you mishandle minutes and hours that belong to others? Do you squander energy and creativity with nothing to show for your efforts? Do you put off doing important projects until they explode into emergencies?

To some extent we're all time thieves. What begins as a casual hello becomes a sit-down conversation which lengthens into a 30-minute gab session that clogs the work flow and stops productivity. If it happens daily or several times a day, friction and frustration inevitably result.

The person who would *never* steal your wallet may think nothing of stealing something far more important—your time. When we ignore another person's boundaries and obligations, we become thieves . . . of time and creativity.

The biblical injunction to redeem the time has a ring of urgency about it. That's because we only have so much time and no more. Time once gone is gone forever.

Some time thieves are things.

The copier breaks at work. The phone system shuts down. The car blows a tire. A city water main bursts. Things can be repaired or replaced. Preven-

tive maintenance can forestall mechanical breakdowns and shorten the down time.

Unfortunately, not all time wasters are things.

Most time thieves are people.

That's us. How embarrassing to admit that we have identified the problem and it wears my shoes. People who waste time are difficult to repair and nearly impossible to replace.

Tell one person that he's wasting time and he gets the point. Another may retreat in a wounded huff.

What's the solution? First, let's make sure we want a solution. The reason some people have so many time thieves around is because they seem to want them. They're just too available to any interruption that walks in the door.

When he was supreme commander of the allied forces in Europe during World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower developed a formula for dealing with crises while still concentrating on his prime objectives. He insisted that nothing be brought to him unless his aides had decided that it was both urgent *and* important. If it was not urgent, it could wait; if it was not important, it could be delegated to someone else.

If I'm the time thief, I need to take a hard look at myself. On the other hand, what if I'm not the problem, but *he* is? The typical time waster may consider his interruptions or long chit-chats therapy to defuse his frustration or to unwind from a tough weekend.

We can help each other. Make an appointment rather than drop by unannounced. An appointment allows the other person to give quality time instead of a few distracted minutes.

Tame the telephone. Good telephone manners mean that we're careful how frequently we call and how long we talk when we do. No-

body wants his pastor or his teacher or a friend to sigh in resignation when they hear his voice on the phone.

Plan ahead for phone calls. Know what you want to say, say it and then say goodbye. A well-planned one-minute phone call is far more productive than a 20-minute marathon punctuated with *What's new? How are things going? What do you know good? So what's happening?* and other open-ended clichés that say nothing.

One of my favorite time-saving people occasionally calls and her opening line is usually, "Hi, Friend, I'll only keep you a minute." Then she does exactly that! I wish she'd call more often. You probably know someone like that. I'd like to *become* someone like that.

The Psalmist wanted God to remember how short his time was (Ps. 89:47). Job asked God for a set time to plead his case (Job 9:19).

While Ecclesiastes 3:1 promises that "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose. . .," Jeremiah warns those who waste time that for them "The harvest is past, the summer is ended . . ." (Jer. 8:20).

Of course, emergencies override schedules and leap-frog to the top of the priority list. We all understand that. Friends don't need appointments, if they can accept being told *no* when their visits are not convenient. A certain amount of social interaction in the form of necessary interruptions will always be part of the workplace.

Busy people make the best phone calls and visits—short ones. They respect deadlines, make appointments and keep them. They call, speak up and then hang up. They plan ahead. They don't lose sight of how precious time is, theirs or yours.

Are you a time saver or a time thief? If you don't know the answer to this question, ask someone. ■

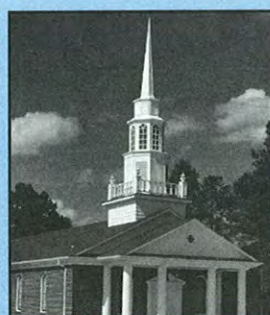
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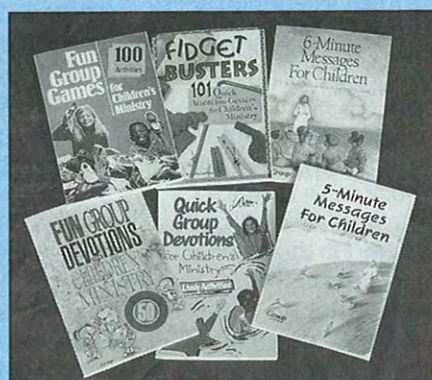
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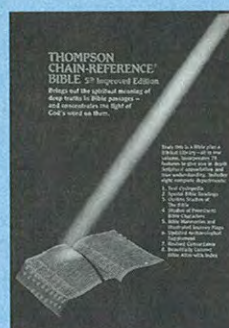
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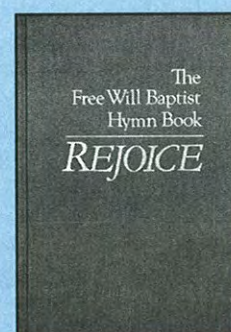
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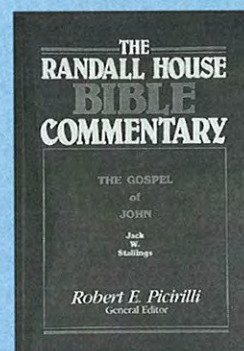
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