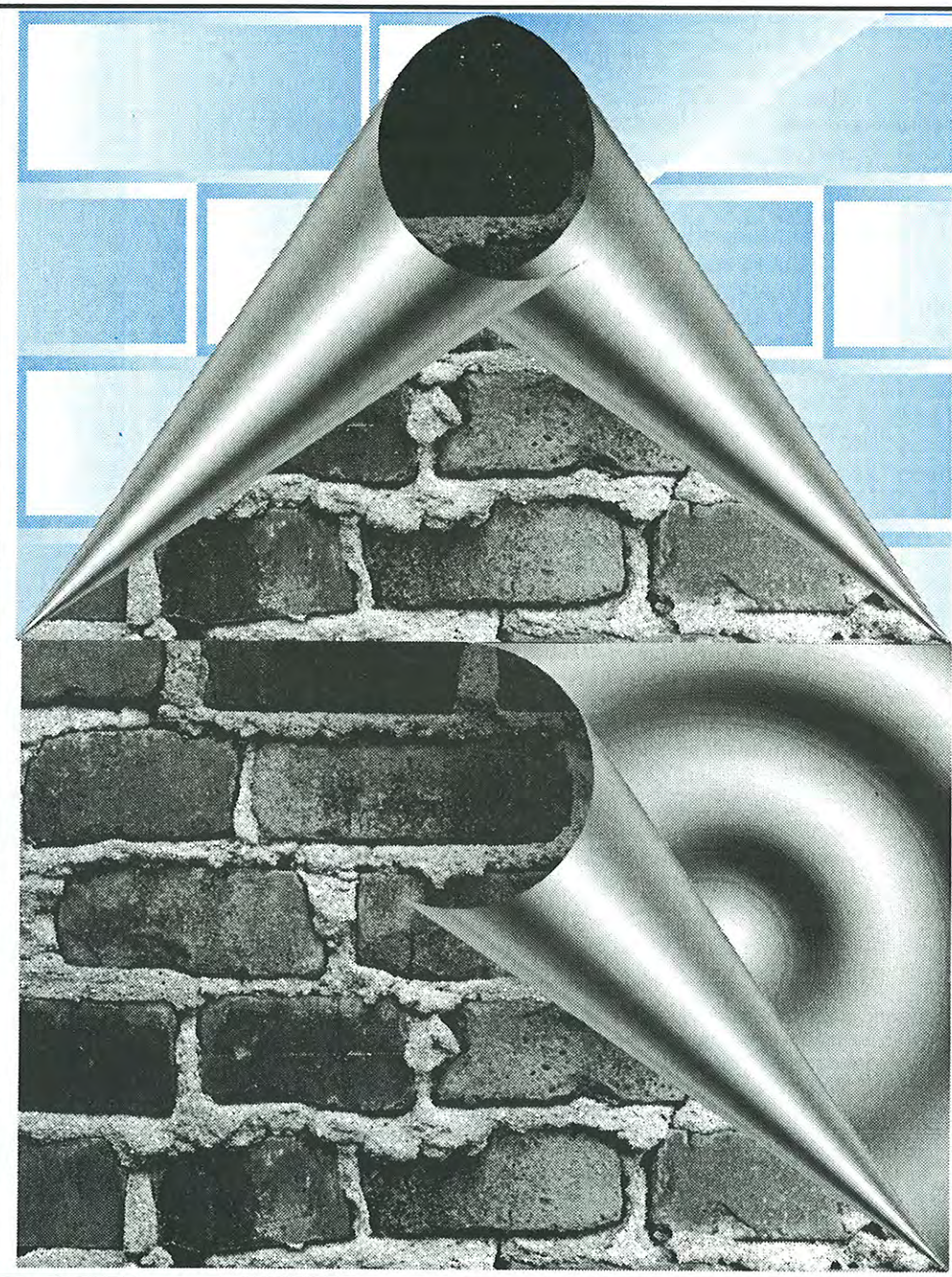


JANUARY 1996

# CONTACT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
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FREE WILL BAPTISTS



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## The 13th Generation

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### Sardis Ministries

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### You Can Be a Lay Counselor

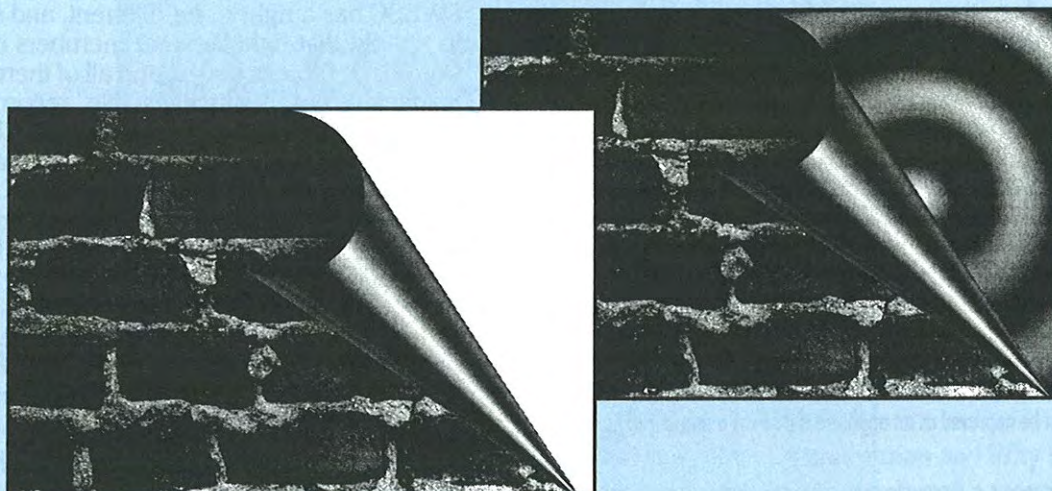
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### Facts Behind Accreditation

When communities change, churches must adapt or die.

# Sardis Ministries

By Greg Hollifield



**T**en years. That's how long it takes for a neighborhood to go through the cycle." The cycle of which my realtor spoke was the cycle of change wherein a neighborhood undergoes drastic changes racially, economically, and/or by age. Once it begins it takes about 10 years to complete.

For me as a new home buyer, that was a scary prospect. Who wants to start on a 30-year mortgage and have the environment change so much in 10 years that you would have to sell for less than you paid?

In my role as pastor, I found that revelation to be equally as troubling. I already knew my community was changing from what it once was. We are poorer now than five years ago. Slowly we have become a community where minorities make up the majority.

"In another five years will we be able to minister to this community at all?" I wondered.

## A Common Problem

The question I've just raised is one with which many of our denomination's pastors and laymen are currently struggling. It's an unpleasant question to ponder.

Even if the community doesn't un-

dergo a radical change, our church's congregation will. We will grow old, and sometimes age causes us to lose touch with our community's needs.

Consider this: In our city we have a realtor who goes by the nickname, "the church man." He has sold more church buildings (70) in the past 12 years than most of our city's other real estate agencies combined.

In an interview with our local business journal, he stated that the average church on the market is 35 years old. According to him, that's how long it takes for a church to go through its "life cycle."

He continues, "It takes about 12 years for a church to grow and reach its peak. Then, church growth levels out and stays on a plateau for about 12 years. After 24-25 years, the church reaches a pivotal point where it either makes some changes or it begins to decline."

I'm currently in my second pastorate and have seen the observations of "the church man" borne out in both ministries. In my pastoral conversations, I've heard evidence that it holds true in churches I've never even seen.

Two recent books, *Turnaround Churches* by George Barna and *Eating the Elephant* by Thom Rainer, intimate that decline brought on by

change is common to churches in all denominations.

## Common Reactions

Some folks reading this article are already reacting in disbelief. Their churches are more than 40 years old and still going strong. Praise the Lord! May they continue! However, the fact that some churches are exceptions to the norm doesn't change the norm.

When pastors see the tidal wave of change coming, they must decide to leave things as they are and hope for the best, or overhaul the ministry or relocate the ministry or to personally change ministries (that is, take another church).

If a pastor has been at the same church for a number of years already, it becomes easier for him to move and leave the decision regarding the church's future to someone else.

The effect upon the congregation is that they will shift their focus from their changing community to their need of a pastor. Once he has been called, the temptation is to expect the new minister to stem the tide and restore the church to its former glory.

After enough pastors have been through, the congregation settles into a depressed attitude toward growth.

Hoping to see souls saved and added to the roll gives way to hoping that no one else leaves. The name of the game is then, "survival." Once a church slips into that mentality, re-vamping or relocating the ministry becomes all but impossible.

### Christ's Word

To the church at Sardis, Jesus said, "I know thy works, that thou has a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God" (Rev. 3:1-2).

From the looks of it, everything was going well enough at Sardis. They had their works. The pastor was still preaching the Word. The people were still visiting on Thursday nights. The doors were always open three times a week as regular as clockwork. Even in their denomination, they still had a great reputation. But the Lord saw beyond all that and called it dead.

How many of our churches are living off the fumes of an empty tank? We still have the machinery in place but there's just no life in the engine. We have our good name but that's about it. What should we do?

### Corrective Measures

"Be watchful," Jesus said. In other words, "take heed." Whenever Christ issues this command, it's usually in connection with His return. True to form, in the next verse, Jesus speaks of being watchful in view of His return.

Given the lateness of the hour, we cannot afford to go through life oblivious to the condition of our community and that of our church. All of us would do well to evaluate our churches' ministries on a regular basis.

We need to make sure that our plant, preaching, programs and procedures are what Christ wants and our community needs. We want to make sure that we're being true to the Word while communicating that Word in a relevant manner.

Taking heed means taking stock. To do this you may need to call in a third party, a consultant. He doesn't have to be nationally known to make helpful suggestions.

Just ask him to walk through your facility, listen to you preach, drive

through your community and talk with your people. You might be surprised at the things he sees that you've overlooked!

If he sees them, you can rest assured that the people visiting your church have seen them as well.

Jesus also said, "Strengthen the things which remain." In other words, "take hold." Reach out, grab the reins and get this thing under control. Go to work on making it better. Take the evaluation and devise a plan for correction. After that, implement it. To borrow a phrase: "just do it."

It isn't enough to see the problem; you need to do something about it. If it needs painting, paint it. If it needs carpeting, carpet it. If your sermons seem flat, listen to someone else and learn from them. Many of our churches' problems might be solved through such careful evaluation and concentrated effort.

Sometimes, though, careful evaluation will reveal a need to relocate the ministry. In that case no amount of restructuring or refurbishing on the current site will help. It would be like rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*.

What happened when the *Titanic* started sinking? Passengers started jumping overboard. What happens when the community around the church starts to change or when the church begins to lose touch with its community? Parishioners jump overboard, looking for another church.

Only a few are then left behind to man the engines and go down with the ship. Those who leave respect them for their heroism, but that does not mean they will return because of their respect. Once they've booked passage on another craft, they're usually gone for good.

Now we turn to perhaps the most divisive question. Should a church which needs to relocate to have a viable ministry go ahead and relocate, or should its membership disband and disperse into other churches? I'm not talking about going into other denominations' churches but into other Free Will Baptist churches.

Your answer will be dictated by what you believe a local church's purpose is. If you think it's there to serve as a denominational presence, then you probably won't relocate at all or you will relocate in another part of the

city to keep up the Free Will Baptist presence. Whether there is opportunity for winning souls will then matter less than keeping the name alive.

If, on the other hand, you believe the local church's purpose is to serve the greater good of God's kingdom, then you may conclude there are enough Bible-preaching churches and (including Free Will Baptist churches) in your area.

Consequently, you might take the proceeds from the sale of the property and invest it in one of our Bible colleges, foreign missions or in the building of a church where gospel-preaching churches aren't as plentiful.

What criteria do you use to determine that a church has outlived its usefulness, if indeed it ever does? At what point does the cost of maintaining the status quo represent poor stewardship of kingdom funds?

How much money might we save and better use as a denomination if we concentrated more of our resources on strengthening what we can to preserve it from death and euthanizing what we can't?

While the decision to trim up, transfer or terminate a ministry is ultimately one that must be made by the local church, shouldn't we have someone on a national level who can help the church understand its situation, options and then provide prayer support?

I don't know all the answers, but I am grappling with the questions. This much I have concluded: "There is a time to be born and a time to die," yet through Jesus Christ, resurrection is always a possibility. What form that resurrected body should take is the teaser. ■



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

# FREE WILL BAPTIST NEWSFRONT

## Free Will Baptist International Fellowship Organizes

JABOTICABAL, BRAZIL—The organizational meeting of the International Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Churches convened October 16-21, 1995, at Evangelandia FWB Camp in Jaboticabal. Melvin Worthington, executive secretary for the National Association of Free Will Baptists, chaired the historic gathering.



Thirty-five delegates and observers from nine countries with Free Will Baptist associations/churches prayed, sang, worshiped and conducted business through translators until they arrived at consensus. Delegates came from host country Brazil, Uruguay, Japan, Ivory Coast, Panama, Cuba, France, Spain and the United States.

The delegates elected three officers to serve the International Fellowship:

President: John Poole (Brazil)

Vice-President: Ramon Sanchez (Cuba)

Secretary/Treasurer: Melvin Worthington (USA)

The officers, who compose the Executive Committee, will meet annually to plan activities

for the International Fellowship.

Delegates voted that the International Fellowship will meet triennially (every three years) beginning in 1998. Operational funds will come from each country which holds membership. The first budget (\$4,500) will be underwritten at a cost of \$15 monthly from each member country.

Delegates adopted a mission statement for the Fellowship:

“The International Fellowship of Free Will Baptist Churches is a community of Bible-believing churches which seeks

to unite Free Will Baptist

churches around the world for the purpose of identification, communion, mutual edification and encouragement, in order to better fulfill the Great Commission of evangelism and the establishing of churches among all peoples.”

An international consultation of Free Will Baptists had met in Panama in 1992 to work toward organizing the International Fellowship. The “Panama Declaration of 1992” affirming commitment to fundamental beliefs of orthodox Christianity and those distinctive beliefs and practices

which characterize Free Will Baptists was adopted at that time.

The 1995 organizational meeting featured music and preaching as diverse as the cultures represented. The evening sessions attracted about 100 attendees. Speakers for evening worship services came from Brazil, Spain, Cuba, Panama and Ivory Coast. Morning devotion speakers came from Japan, USA, France and Uruguay.

Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington said, “One highlight of the meeting was the observance of the Lord’s Supper and feet washing during the concluding worship service.”

Daily meetings by delegates in



both general assembly and committee format addressed the organizational structure, membership, objectives, outreach, outlook and statement of faith.

The International office will be located in Antioch, Tennessee, and incorporated in order to obtain legal status.

## Pastor Ken Walker Retires



ASHLAND, KY—The Reverend Kenneth M. Walker, 67, retired from the pastorate in December after 43 years in the ministry. Brother Walker, an Ohio native, was converted in 1952 and ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister in 1954. He graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1958.

During his four-decade long ministry, Walker pastored seven churches in six states—Tennessee (4 years), Virginia (6 years), Oklahoma (2 years), Alabama (8 years), Florida (8 years), Kentucky (12 years).

In addition to his numerous pastoral responsibilities, he remained active in state and national outreach. He served on the Home Missions Board (1968-70), The Chaplain's Commission (1964-66) and as a Home Missions Church Extension worker (1966-67, 1970-78).

Brother Walker made one of his most significant contributions to the denomination during his tenure on the Free Will Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees (1983-1994). He chaired the Board and provided leadership on pivotal issues.

He preached at the national convention in 1970 at the Phoenix, Arizona, session.

Ken and Emma Louise Walker moved to Wheelersburg, Ohio, in December where he plans to do supply preaching and revivals.

Dr. James Walker, son of Reverend and Mrs. Walker, is a clinical psychologist in Nashville, Tennessee.

## Rev. William Mishler with the Lord

JOHNSTON CITY, IL—The Reverend William J. Mishler, 79, died October 20, 1995, after 61 years as a Free Will Baptist minister. He was a faithful pastor and a skilled leader on both state and national levels.

During his six-decade ministry, Brother Mishler pastored 11 churches in five states—Missouri, Tennessee, Michigan, Arkansas and Illinois. His final pastorate lasted 13 years at First FWB Church in Johnston City, Illinois, where he was a member at the time of his death.

He moderated the Arkansas State Association three years. He led in organizing Arkansas' Central District Association and served as its moderator.

After moving to Illinois, Mishler moderated that state association three years as well.

Reverend Mishler's service to the denomination on the national level began in 1949 when he was elected to the Sunday School Board which he chaired four years. He served five years as promotional secretary for the Sunday School Board beginning in 1954 and set up the first Sunday School Department in the National Offices.

Mishler is best remembered for his unique leadership on the Board of Trustees at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Elected to the board in 1961, he served 17 years, 14 of those years as chairman.



His national influence also included 18 years as General Board member, and as a member of the Graduate Study Committee.

Born in Colville, Washington, in 1916, Mishler grew up in Missouri during the Depression. He was converted at age 16, called to preach at age 18 and ordained to the Gospel ministry in 1937. He pastored more than 44 years.

After dropping out of high school his sophomore year, he later attended and graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Funeral services were conducted at First FWB Church in Johnston City. Reverend Randy Scott officiated.

Reverend Mishler is survived by his wife of 59 years, Bertie Saladin Mishler; one daughter, Mrs. Bonnie Doggett of Springfield, IL; one son, David Mishler of Johnston City; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

### Free Will Baptist Bible College VIDEOTAPES

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## Oklahoma Adopts \$2.9 Million Budget

NORMAN, OK—Delegates to the 87th annual Oklahoma State Association approved budgets topping \$2.9 million, including a \$380,000 Cooperative budget for state and national outreach. The October 9-12, 1995, gathering was hosted by Calvary FWB Church in Norman.

Budget approvals included: Oklahoma Executive Office—\$133,000; Book Store—\$433,000; State Mission Board—\$432,000; Christian Education Board—\$128,000; Hillsdale FWB College—\$1.8 million.

Moderator David McDougal was elected to a second term. Some 311 registered, including 117 ministers and 50 lay delegates.

Four Oklahoma pastors preached sermons developing the association theme, "Where There is No Vision, the People Perish." Charles Murphy (First FWB Church, Clinton) preached "A Unifying Vision." Leonard Pirtle (Rejoice FWB Church, Owasso) preached "A Unique Vision." Ernest Harrison (First FWB Church, McAlester) preached "An Underwritten Vision." Joe Grizzle

(First FWB Church, Norman) preached "A Universal Vision."

Delegates voted to abolish the standing Public Morals Committee and encourage individual response to issues.

The state Ministers' Conference met Tuesday, October 11, and heard three sermons on "Doctrinal Distinctives"—feet washing, perseverance and tongues.

The Monday Master's Men Conference included an address by Trymon Messer, general director of the Home Missions Department. President Waymon Ray presented four \$250 scholarships to Hillsdale College students.

The state Auxiliary met Tuesday and voted to change their name to Oklahoma Women Active for Christ. Some 127 registered for the conference. Members awarded this year's scholarship to Jennie Burden and adopted special projects for home and foreign missions and Hillsdale College. Jean Marie Rogers was elected president.

The 1996 Oklahoma State Association will meet October 14-17 at Fountain Head Lodge in Eufaula.

## Georgia Pastor, Gerald Baxley, Dies



SURRENCY, GA—Reverend Gerald Baxley died of a heart attack on October 25, 1995, at Wayne Memorial Hospital in Jesup. The 52-year-old minister had pastored Surrency FWB Church for the past seven years.

A native of Alabama, Reverend Baxley was ordained to preach in February 1968. His first pastorate was his home church, Corinth FWB Church in Midland City.

During his 27-year ministry, Baxley pastored eight churches in three states—Alabama, Kentucky and Georgia. He was within 10 days of relocating to his ninth pastorate (New Lebanon FWB Church in Tishomingo, MS) when he died.

In addition to pastoral work, Baxley was active in local associational outreach. He served as clerk of Alabama's Cahaba River Association and Georgia's South Georgia Association. The Alabama Home Missions Board employed him for a time as interim pastor for the mission work in Enterprise.

Funeral services were conducted October 28 in Baxley, Georgia, with Reverends Rick Brown and Virgil Carter officiating.

Reverend Baxley is survived by his wife, Loneta Baxley; one daughter, Stacie Baxley of Brunswick; three sons, Stephen of Atlanta, Stuart and Stanley, both of Surrency; his mother and one brother.

## FWB Family Ministries Celebrates Homecoming

GREENEVILLE, TN—More than 500 people attended the 56th anniversary celebration at Free Will Baptist Family Ministries (formerly FWB Home for Children) in Greeneville, according to Dawn Sweeney, church relations coordinator. The October 21, 1995, event attracted supporters from several states.

Executive Director Roger Hood explained to visitors the phenomenal growth of the past five years which increased the number of children being cared for from 19 to 66. He also commented on the ministry's four divisions: Trula Cronk Home for Children, P.A.T.H. Shelter, Stanley

Foster-Care Program, Oaks Family Conference Center and Camp.

Debbie Keenman, Mrs. Tennessee 1995, addressed the group about "Parental Responsibility Through the Eyes of a Child."

The mission of ministering to abused, abandoned and/or neglected children who have had little chance of hearing about Jesus Christ was re-emphasized during the program. Many first-time visitors were touched by what they experienced at this special occasion on the FWBFM campus.

Director Roger Hood requested the prayers of the denomination on the future effectiveness of the ministry.

## WNAC Western Retreat Draws 300

GLORIETA, NM—More than 300 Free Will Baptist women registered for the October 20-22 WNAC Retreat, according to *Co-Laborer* editor Suzanne Franks. The western gathering met in the Glorieta Conference Center Chapel in New Mexico.

The conference theme was "On the Trail with Him." Keynote speaker Ruth Bivens addressed conferees twice on walking through the valleys and finding victory in the valleys.

Two Saturday speakers focused on the needs of families under severe duress. California's Janice Rolan Little shared her outreach ministry to wives and children of prisoners. She spoke of how good God is *all the time*.

Joan Ross' message on God's grace in suffering was underscored by her work with the Crisis Pregnancy Center.

Around the campfire, Louise Vandivort warmed hearers with



*Janice Little.*

her presentation, "Deeper With Him in the Desert." She compared Christian qualities with traits be-



*Keynote Speaker Ruth Bivens.*



*Debe Taylor.*

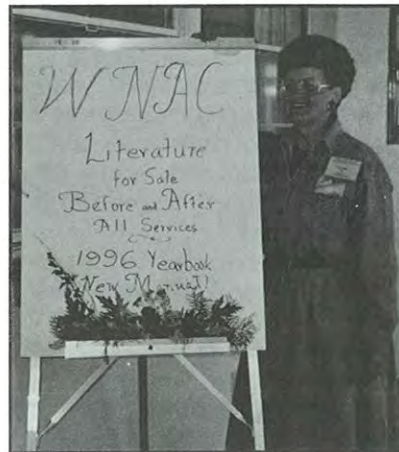
longing to the saguaro cactus. Sunday morning, Fay Forlines (missionary appointee to Russia) challenged the group with an account of God's leadership in her life. The women gave \$2,748 in the missionary offering. The following missionaries attended the retreat and their accounts received \$458 each: Ruth Bivens, Lynda Blanchard, Fay Forlines, Nelda Gwartney, Linda Harvey and Louise Vandivort.

Debe Taylor from Tucson, Arizona, brought a message, "Moments on the Mountain with Him," which

took hearers on a spiritual pilgrimage from Abraham's obedience (Genesis 22) all the way to Mount Zion.

The next WNAC retreat is scheduled September 12-14, 1996, at Ridgecrest Conference Center.

The next WNAC retreat is scheduled September 12-14, 1996, at Ridgecrest Conference Center.



*Missionary-Appointee to Russia, Fay Forlines.*

## Harvest Ministries Purchases Property

DUFFIELD, VA—The board of directors for Harvest FWB Child Care Ministries finalized purchase of a 36-acre site in Lee County on October 17, 1995, according to Newl Dotson, executive director. The property includes a 1½ -story residence which will house eight girls.



*Sticklebyville Girls Cottage—Harvest FWB Ministries*

The new home will be known as the Sticklebyville Girls Cottage. The four-bedroom, three-bath house enables Harvest to care for 20 children.

With the expansion, the chil-

dren's home is seeking mature couples interested in serving as house parents for 8-12 children. A diploma or GED is required. Couples work five days on and five days off with above-average salary as well as insurance and retirement benefits.

The house parent positions need to be filled immediately, according to Executive Director Newl Dotson. Direct inquiries to Mr. Dotson at 540/523-2315.

Dotson said, "Harvest's desire is to provide children a safe, nurturing environment that they can call home."

## Southeastern Sets Spring Conference

WENDELL, NC—Southeastern FWB College's annual Revival and Soul Winning Conference will meet April 22-24 under a big tent on the college campus, according to President Billy Bevan. The three-day conference will feature seven speakers from four states.

California pastor Claudie Hames will be a newcomer to the program. He pastors First FWB Church in Bakersfield where he has led the church for 31 years. The church outreach includes a bus ministry of eight buses and a Christian school with grades K5-12. The church averages 600 in Sunday School.

Another newcomer to the program is Tim Hall, pastor of First FWB Church in Owensboro, KY, and moderator of the Kentucky State Association.

Returning to the program is Florida pastor Roger Duncan who leads First FWB Church in Seffner. Duncan spoke last year and has been invited back for a repeat performance. His is a multi-ministry church with a Christian school, grades K5-12 with over 530 students. Duncan conducts a week-long Camp Meeting each January at First FWB Church with attendance topping 1,000.

The following four ministers will complete the program and preach once each during the conference: Pastor Nate Ange (Landmark FWB Church, Cary, NC, and part-time homiletics professor at Southeastern), Pastor Dann Patrick (Faith FWB Church, Goldsboro, NC, and vice-chairman of Southeastern's Board of Directors), Reverend Karl Sexton (a Southeastern graduate who pastors Gateway FWB Church, Virginia Beach, VA), and college president Billy Bevan who pastors Hilltop FWB Church in Fuquay-Varina, NC.

Tuesday evening during the conference, the college choir, *Sounds of Victory*, will present a concert.



Hames



Hall



Duncan



Ange



Sexton



Bevan

# Coming Next Month...

◆ Leadership Conference Report

—News and Pictures

◆ State Association Meetings List for 1996

◆ God's Mandate for Worship

◆ At His Feet



Members of **Bethel FWB Church** in **Richton, MS**, completed a new fellowship hall. The group also hosted the South Mississippi Association in September and the Association Youth Rally in October, according to church reporter, **Peggy Hinton**. **Gary Kelly** pastors.

The Auxiliary at **Bethlehem FWB Church** in **Pontotoc, MS**, sponsored a pastor-pounding to show appreciation for Pastor and Mrs. **Benny McKinney**.

The goal for the October missionary conference at **Fulton FWB Church** in **Fulton, MS**, was to raise \$3,000 in cash and secure \$915 in monthly pledges. Pastor **Bill Van Winkle** said the church exceeded both goals. They raised more than \$4,600 in cash and ended with \$930 in monthly pledges.

Pastor **Jerry Norris** reports four new members at **Calvary Fellowship FWB Church** in **Fenton, MO**.

**Bethany FWB Church** in **Timmonsville, SC**, celebrated their 178th anniversary in October. After a fellowship meal for friends and members, the group launched a week-long revival with Georgia pastor **Glenn Poston**. **Galen Dunbar** pastors.

Missouri minister **Max Courtney** retired from the full-time pastorate after 45 years of service. Members of **First FWB Church** in **Springfield**, where Reverend Courtney pastored the last six years, honored the Courtneys with a special dinner, gifts from the church and a love offering. In addition to his pastoral duties, Brother Courtney also served in district and state association roles. He presently serves on the Missouri Youth Camp Board.

The release of 55 balloons containing tracts explaining the Roman's Road of salvation marked the 17th anniversary celebration of the Children's Churches at **First FWB Church** in **Desoto, MO**. Eight children have been saved recently through the Junior and Beginners Church efforts. **Bob Thebeau** pastors.

Twenty people stepped forward to become charter members when **Republic FWB Church** in **Republic, MO**, organized

on September 7. Pastor **Don Anderson** moderated the organizational meeting.

Pastor **Dean Dobbs** got appreciated in a big way when members of **Pleasant Acres FWB Church** in **New Bern, NC**, gave him a gift of more than \$1,100 and then instructed him to take a trip to the mountains to relax.

By February, members of **Union Chapel FWB Church** in **Chocowinity, NC**, expect to move into their new \$300,000 family life center. The congregation broke ground for the 6,000-square-foot structure last July. The center will provide space for cradle role, nursery, two classrooms, children's church, a kitchen and a fellowship hall. **Henry Horne** pastors.

Members of **Gospelway FWB Church** in **Gastonia, NC**, expect to relocate on a five-acre site near Bessemer City, according to Pastor **Ronnie Bolin**. The new brick and metal building planned will include some 7,000 square feet in a phase I development. Cost estimates of \$300,000 will provide a worship center, two offices, classrooms and nurseries.

Four **North Carolina** ministers died in recent months after giving their lives and energy to the cause of Christ among Free Will Baptists. **Homer Arwood** (Western Piedmont)—pastor and soul winner. **Johnny Floyd** (Western Piedmont)—church planter, pastor, evangelist. **Tommy Morgan** (Piedmont)—pastor, association clerk and treasurer. **Richard Swarm** (Blue Ridge)—pastor and soul winner.

Fifteen teens and six adult sponsors from **Red Bay FWB Church** in **Red Bay, AL**, spent all day in activities with youth at the FWB Children's Home in Eldridge on September 30. In addition to a picnic and games, the Red Bay group hauled dry wall materials into the new dormitory under construction. **Tom Scott** pastors. **Brad Williams**, minister of youth and music, led the youth invasion.

Members of **Immanuel FWB Church** in **Joliet, IL**, showered the **David Potete** family with gifts to encourage them. The Potetes are home missionaries in Chica-

go. The Immanuel group gave Brother Potete a personal computer. The congregation also helped themselves when the Master's Men chapter raised \$1,200 for the national work. **Sam Williams** pastors.

The youth of **Illinois** raised almost \$8,000 for the Master's Men department under the leadership of **Kelly Douglas** who spearheaded the project. Ten local churches as well as the Illinois Camp Board participated.

Pastor **Cliff Donoho** reports 27 conversions at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Davenport, IA**. The church, not yet three years old, averages 67 in morning worship. It sits on an 8.5-acre site in a new building.

VBS activities at **Pittsburg FWB Church** in **Pittsburg, IL**, resulted in 14 conversions and two rededications. **Danny Gray** pastors.

Pastor **Larry Cook** baptized eight at **Bear Point FWB Church** in **Sesser, IL**.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Mt. Vernon, IL**, began a nursing home ministry under the leadership of **Mary Ann Levitt**. The church also gave a grocery shower and cash gifts to Pastor **Ronnie Mitchell**.

**West Wayne FWB Church** in **Wayne, MI**, celebrated 50 years of service to the community, according to Pastor **Joe Jones**. The church began in 1945 with 14 charter members.

The **Michigan Youth Board** reported 30 salvation decisions during youth camp. Workers from 16 churches participated in camp activities.

What's your interest level in Free Will Baptist history? Reverend **George Lee** owns a large historical collection that's for sale. It includes more than 3,600 individual pieces. Asking price: \$20,000. Serious potential buyers can secure a list of the holdings by writing Reverend Lee at 303 Veronica Lane, Goldsboro, NC 27534-9656. ■

## FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

*The Broader Scope of Education*

By Tim Campbell, Alumni Affairs Director

Most educational institutions have noble goals. They seek to prepare their students, from an academic and practical standpoint, to go out and function effectively in the world in which they live. While this may call for broad instruction, the level of spiritual exchange is limited. However, the purpose and instructional goals of Free Will Baptist Bible College are much broader and more holistic. As our statement of purpose declares: *We are to equip men and women, through Bible-based education, to serve Christ and His Church.* This purpose makes us more than just another educational institution; it reminds us of who we are and what our mission is. We are here, in reality, as an arm of the church. We seek to please God in how we educate the people He allows us to have. Our instruction seeks to be more than just formal education, and that is sometimes a difficult responsibility. How does that translate in a practical sense? Well, let me cite just a few particulars.

It means that our faculty is not just to take a textbook and teach the material inside, but that the professors are to instruct, challenge and inspire the students academically and spiritually. In effect, they are to mold them so that when they leave their class and the College not only will they be effective in their individual vocations, but—to use biblical terms—they will be salt and light in a dark, decaying world. Professors have the enormous responsibility of making their imprint upon the students.

This also means that the support staff and administration are not just the oil for an educational machine, but are the foundation of a God-ordained institution of a particular denomination.

The College also has the immense responsibility of being the concluding complement to a godly upbringing. Sometimes the College may be the only spiritual training that some young people may receive. It has the task of instilling high convictions and biblical standards into students—values which may not have been present before and which run counter to the popular culture.

In short, the College has the job of instructing academically, teaching the Bible ef-

fectively, instilling a love for God, equipping young people to be witnesses, challenging people to adopt the highest convictions and standards, fostering loyalty to the denomination, urging faithfulness to God's call and Church, and imparting a zeal and compassion for God's work, fellow Christians, and a lost and dying world. (I am sure I left a few things out.) Of course, remember, this must be done in a few classroom hours within eight to 10 semesters.

That is why when I came back to work for the Bible College, I felt as never before the burden and responsibility that every Free Will Baptist should feel for the ministry of the college.

Our school is much more than just another college. In some respects, it is more than just another Bible college. It is an institution that God called into being more than 50 years ago to perform a unique and vital function, not just for a denomination, but for the Kingdom of God. Yes, we have a broader scope of education. Again, *we are to equip men and women, through Bible-based education, to serve Christ and His Church.*

To do this, we must have support. Money, time, encouragement, and prayers are just a few of the ways that you uphold the College. But we also need people who are partners in our mission, who will criticize constructively and then work jointly and zealously with the College. People who will not just send their children to the College, but will prepare them to come to school equipped with a knowledge of who they are, who we are, and what a privilege the denomination and God are providing for them.

No, the purpose of Free Will Baptist Bible College is much broader than that of other colleges. It has much more to impart than many other institutions. And, if Jesus Christ carries and society continues to slide, the job will become more difficult. But it can be accomplished with God's help and the support of people who realize that this is not just another educational institution. No, we are much more than that. We are a college on a mission from and for God. ■



## FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION

### *Frank Giunta Joins Foundation Staff*

**By William Evans**

Reverend Frank Giunta will join the Free Will Baptist Foundation as field representative for planned giving on January 1. Brother Giunta is well qualified for this role through previous training and experience. As a field representative, Giunta will be available to visit individual families, small groups and churches to explain the opportunities for, the mechanics of, planned gifts.

The purpose in employing Rev. Giunta is to help all ministries of the denomination. Frank will offer his services without pressure or obligations to our members. The Foundation presently manages planned gifts benefiting most of our national agencies, several district associations, local churches and ministries.

Frank has 11 years experience as a field representative for Every Home for Christ, formerly known as World Literature Crusade. During that time, he arranged gifts in excess of 25 million dollars. This total included cash and deferred gifts such as gift annuities, unitrusts, annuity trusts and revocable trust agreements. Some were immediate and others were through the estate, but all were designed to achieve the goals of individual donors.

Rev. Giunta is excited about the potential of the Foundation. He said, "When you consider what can be accomplished by Free Will Baptists linking arms together, it is easy to be optimistic about the future of this program for individuals and our churches."

He is looking forward to working through the Foundation to assist Free Will Baptists in attaining their donative goals. "Our people want to see these ministries grow because they win souls," he said. "Yet they often need the earnings of their finances and are unable to give major gifts during their life. The Foundation can help them achieve both goals through appropriate planned gift agreements."

Frank also emphasized that good planning considers the income consequences, timing of transfers, family and estate complications as well as actual choice of the ministry benefited.

Good planning enables gifts to achieve more for both the giver and recipient.

Frank is looking forward to helping Free Will Baptists across the denomination. If you have questions concerning planned gifts, call or write him in care of the Foundation. He will be working from his Missouri office for the present.

Rev. Giunta's past ministry includes beginning two mission churches and pastoring es-



tablished Free Will Baptist churches in four states. He has also served as principal of a Christian grade school and high school, clerk of the Missouri Free Will Baptist Youth Camp and various district and associational offices. He now serves as General Board member for the Missouri State Association and moderator of the Bootheel District Association.

Frank is married to the former Peggy Swan of Pocahontas, Arkansas. He and Peggy have two children, a son, Steven who is married to the former Diana Kreutzer of Farmersville, Ohio,

and a daughter Karen who is married to Tim Polston. Frank and Peggy are the proud grandparents of seven grandchildren.

If you would like information on either immediate or deferred gifts of cash, real property or other assets, please write or call Rev. Giunta at the Free Will Baptist Foundation. All contacts and information provided to him will be held in strict confidence. ■



## HOME MISSIONS

# *The Other Side of Church Planting*

By Ida Lewis

Planting new churches and training missionaries are top priorities for the Home Missions Department. There are other outlets available through Home Missions for serving the Lord. Let's take a brief look at these avenues of service available.

### *The National Missionary*

The missionary is one who goes to a city that is strange to him, where Free Will Baptists are unknown. He works to gather his own prospects, finds a place to live and locates facilities where his church will gather. After board approval, he goes out on itinerate for services to raise support. This provides the opportunity to share his burden with those in churches throughout the United States.

### *Joint Project Missionary*

In the Joint Project, state and national mission boards work jointly to establish a new church within that state. The missionary is approved by both state and district missions boards and ratified by the national Home Missions Board. The state works with the national home missions department to raise the required support for the missionary.

### *Associate Missionary*

The Associate Missionary Program is designed to enable men who do not choose to go as regular missionaries to receive help in starting Free Will Baptist churches. The missionary is approved by the national Home Missions Board and by state or district mission boards where applicable. After approval, this missionary receives the same program of orientation by the Home Missions staff as the regular home missionaries.

### *Aquila and Priscilla Workers*

Taking inspiration from the biblical lay couple, Aquila and Priscilla, the Home Missions Board sponsors this program to aid in planting Free Will Baptist churches. This program gives recognition and assistance to those dedicated lay couples who leave their homes and relo-

cate to help home missionaries establish Free Will Baptist churches in needy cities.

Even though these couples work at secular jobs for their living, under this program, they may raise their moving expenses to the field.

### *Tentmakers*

Tentmakers are men who start Free Will Baptist churches on their own without the sponsorship of state or national home missions boards. The Tentmaker Program was created to express gratitude to these dedicated men of God who work at secular jobs in order to plant churches in their cities.

### *National Workers*

The Home Missions Department employs national workers such as pastors, teachers and lay workers in the fields of Mexico, Canada, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands as the need arises. All national workers must meet the same basic requirements and standards as the home missionary.

### *Summer Workers*

Summer workers and short-term missionaries are used as the need warrants. These workers are assigned to assist missionaries already working on the field in mission churches.

### *Chaplaincy Program*

The Home Missions Department is the endorsing agency for placing chaplains in the armed forces. The general director works directly with the Joint Chief of Staff of the Chaplaincy of the United States Armed Forces in Washington, D.C., to place chaplains in the armed forces.

There is much more information regarding each of these home missions workers. The work is challenging, exciting and rewarding as we work to win souls for the kingdom as well as plant and grow Free Will Baptist churches for the glory of God. ■



Robert E. Picirilli

## The Third Commandment

**T**hou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. (Ex. 20:7; cf. Deut. 5:11)

Why should this third commandment matter? We don't expect such restrictions about the way we use one another's names. (I know that well: with a name like Picirilli, in the south, I can't afford to care what I'm called.) Is God thus more vain or sensitive?

Start answering this by realizing that in the culture of Bible people, one's name was much more important than it is to us. Consider how often the Bible attaches special significance to a name or change of name.

A person's name tells something basic about his character. This is the thinking behind words like "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. 18:10). The person's name stands for the person.

Then recall how Israel came to know the name of God, and all that was attached to it. When God summoned Abram to a strange land and promised him a great nation of descendants and through him to bless all nations, He revealed His personal name, Jehovah—perhaps more accurately Yahweh (Gen. 15:7).

Thus when Moses asked who he should say sent him to the enslaved Israelites in Egypt, the answer was, Tell them that "I am" has sent you. "Yahweh" and "I am" share the same Hebrew root (Ex. 3:13-14; cf. v. 15).

So the Israelites treasured this as God's personal revelation of Himself to them, and they so revered that name that they didn't even pronounce it—with the result that the ancient pronunciation was ultimately forgotten!

What does it mean to "take the name of the Lord in vain"? Probably the first thing this prohibited was to swear by the Lord a false oath. If so,

Leviticus 19:12 puts this precisely: "Ye shall not swear by my name falsely."

But surely the commandment was not intended to be so narrowly restricted. After all, "in vain" means things like for nothing, emptily, without meaning. Consequently, *any* use of God's name which falls short of the seriousness with which God Himself is to be regarded is "taking" it or employing it in vain.

No doubt this includes the all too common cursing or profanity that links any name for Deity with it.

But just as surely it includes what we call "light" swearing like "By God" or even "By heaven" (which simply substitutes the place of God's abode for God Himself). Indeed, even the careless use of expressions like "Lordy, lordy" should be avoided. And "Gee" is a shortened form of "Jesus."

Matthew 5:33-37 certainly comes into play here. God's name is too holy to be used seriously for the wrong reasons or lightly for any reason.

Something else we ought to ponder is using God's name "religiously" without meaning. I fear that God will hold us accountable for using his name easily, glibly, ritually, without meaning. And how often do we pray, or sing hymns, without even thinking about what we're saying?

Indeed, reverence for God and for the things of God (sacred things) is what's at the bottom of this commandment. We ought not to joke about spiritual matters, and we ought not to put God's name on anything unworthy of Him. Among other things, this means we ought to be careful what we blame Him for!

How then shall we keep this commandment? Positively, by a regular and serious use of God's name in the right way. By thinking and speaking often and seriously and biblically about Him. By refusing to take sacred things

lightly and guarding our conversation. By engaging often and meaningfully in prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

And we must not forget that He will not hold us guiltless for vain use of His name. In other words, He will find us guilty for such use and administer the appropriate punishment. Apart from that, surely we know that if we use His name carelessly, it may not be available to us as a refuge and strong tower when we need it. ■

### Capital Stewardship/Victory Campaign October 1995 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	42,697.13	34,163.81
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	6,347.42	14,355.88
Georgia	38,179.19	28,573.88	9,605.31
Hawaii	184.54	727.26	(542.72)
Idaho	353.37	25.00	328.37
Illinois	16,176.29	4,949.47	11,226.82
Indiana	7,868.27	1,846.75	6,021.52
Iowa	266.99	0.00	266.99
Kansas	1,287.82	280.00	1,007.82
Kentucky	35,454.34	5,409.29	30,045.05
Louisiana	94.23	1,925.00	(1,830.77)
Maryland	6,812.10	1,539.38	5,272.72
Michigan	15,116.19	16,004.22	(888.03)
Mississippi	15,559.86	3,843.23	11,716.63
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	201.00	886.58
Ohio	40,923.66	19,588.10	21,335.56
Oklahoma	92,271.60	10,259.08	82,012.52
South Carolina	18,335.75	2,102.00	16,233.75
South Dakota		175.00	(175.00)
Tennessee	78,557.09	56,884.57	21,672.52
Texas	11,547.20	7,041.52	4,505.68
Virginia	24,323.33	2,027.93	22,295.40
Virgin Islands		200.00	(200.00)
West Virginia	46,204.51	998.00	45,206.51
Wisconsin		61.00	(61.00)
Other		2,978.85	(2,978.85)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$766,583.39</b>	<b>\$270,097.00</b>	<b>\$496,486.39</b>

## How Shall We Reach Them?

Michael Green and Alister McGrath

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995, 241 pp., paperback, \$9.99).

**M**ichael Green served for a number of years as professor of evangelism at Regent College in Vancouver. Alister McGrath is research lecturer in theology at Oxford University and research professor of theology at Regent. Green is well known for his research and writing in missions. McGrath is a leading authority in theology and apologetics.

This volume also contains essays on specific subjects by other well-qualified individuals such as Linda Christensen, John Feldsend, Michael Griffiths and Patrick Sookdheo.

This book confronts the realities of evangelism in the modern world. The authors recognize that Christianity is by definition a missionary faith; it must reach out to the lost or eventually it loses its vitality and dies.

They also recognize that evangelism is more difficult to do today than in earlier years. We live in a complex world where people are influenced by a wide variety of ideas both religious and secular. The authors and contributors, in a series of well-written and thoughtful essays, analyze how different groups of people in today's world can be reached with the gospel.

In chapter one, McGrath emphasizes that the evangelist must understand both the gospel and how to present it effectively. He must be willing to listen to people, understand where they are and start from there.

Chapter two examines reasons why people are not Christians. Green recognizes that the climate of opinion today is often hostile to Christianity. In order to witness effectively, the Christian must understand the reasons that cause people to reject the Christian faith and be able to deal with them in an understanding and compassionate way.

In my opinion, chapters three through five constitute the most valuable part of the book. These chapters remind us that sharing the Christian faith involves building bridges of understanding and respect.

Christians must develop meaningful relationships with unbelievers and the ability to present the gospel to them in an understandable and acceptable fashion. The authors discuss how one may build bridges to apathetic materialists, university and high school students, and people who have had negative experiences in Christian

churches or with individual Christians.

One insightful chapter focuses on sharing the faith with those involved in other religions such as Judaism, Islam, various eastern religions or the New Age Movement.

In the closing chapters, the authors remind us of the relationship between apologetics and evangelism. Apologetics is that branch of theology which concentrates on defending the Christian faith against the attacks of unbelievers.

In the modern world it is imperative that Christians know what they believe and why they believe it. If they are to be effective in evangelism, they must be prepared to defend the faith in an effective way.

This is one of the most helpful books on evangelism that I have read in several years. In particular, it gives to the Christian witness a basic understanding of modern Judaism, Islam, eastern religions and the New Age Movement. It presents a number of suggestions for presenting the gospel to members of these religious groups. Such an understanding is essential if members of these groups are to be won to Christ. ■



Thomas Marberry

## BEYOND BELIEF



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## Sail On the Tide

**W**hen David Ben-Gurion came out of retirement for the ninth time, he was asked by an American why he bothered to retire. "It's like those 'going out of business' signs you see along Seventh Avenue—a chance to unload stock he doesn't want, hire a new staff and make a different contract with the union."

If the best you can say about last year is that life resembled a "going out of business" sale, don't despair. Restock your shelves. Negotiate a better contract with yourself. Take a different route to February. Unload ideas that clog creativity and collect dust bunnies.

**Before one of our staffers** left for a long-delayed vacation, she carried the weight of the world on her shoulders and a year's clutter on her desk. I warned her that she probably wouldn't survive the avalanche if her paper mountain shifted. She dared me to touch anything that didn't have my name on it.

However, she spent the last three hours Friday afternoon shoveling "crucial" documents into a cardboard box destined for the dumpster. We saw her desk top for the first time since the Persian Gulf War. She even flashed a seldom-used smile when she emerged from beneath Mt. Trashmore.

What's interesting is that during her three-week absence, we never needed that mountain of paper she guarded. She returns to work Monday. I'll bet she never misses the stuff she tossed.

January is a good place to stack unfinished yesterdays. Lighten your load. Give yourself an edge on tomorrow. Get lean and mean about the clutter in your life.

**New perspectives.** Some years

ago, I watched a farmer trying to plow his garden with a mule. Nothing worked. Every time the farmer yelled, the confused animal jerked the plow and uprooted more black-eyed peas.

Then another man, also a farmer, stepped up and whispered to his frustrated neighbor. The second man took the plow lines and walked slowly toward the mule, speaking softly to the nervous animal. He calmed the mule and plowed the garden without raising his voice.

What a difference! Same mule. Same plow. Same garden. But another hand on the reins, another voice, another attitude. The first farmer just didn't get it. He shook his head and muttered unkind words about the mule's ancestry.

All some unruly problems need to stay in the harness and pull the load is a different perspective from the man behind the mule. I'm told that this principle works on people as well as mules.

**Bigger stakes.** The stakes will be higher this year. In spite of our newer technology, we still contend with the same old flaw in human nature—the sin question. That's ugly. That's final. That's also life.

The wages of sin remain unchanged—death. Those who postponed coming to terms with God until a more convenient season will discover that no season is ever convenient enough when a man's on the run from the Hound of Heaven.

**Today is the day of salvation.** For some, it will be this day or no day. Because cancer will still the laughter. A heart attack will stop the busy executive. A house fire will rush a family to judgement. An expressway collision will slam into the eternity.



Jack Williams

The good news is that God has never been closer to troubled humanity than today. If life gets bad enough . . . if the night gets dark enough . . . perhaps we will look up high enough to see the Light of the world. God has His own way of bringing order out of disorder and hope out of despair.

**I don't know about you,** but next December 31, I want to log out with some old debts paid, some new friends made and some promises kept. I want to build a bridge here and there over troubled water. I want to look back at the end of the day and see the rows laid out straight, the seed in the field.

I intend to keep a short account with the Judge of the universe. I want my tithing record current and my prayer life fresh.

**William Shakespeare** said it: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries . . ."

Here comes the January tide sweeping in with deep water and great opportunity. If I drown by June, let it be in the deep with my face to the wind, and not in a pond of mediocrity smothered by those who hesitated in January.

You do what you must. As for me, God willing, I sail on the tide. ■

## CONTACT

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by

*Keith Fletcher, Editor-in-Chief*

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