

ONE LORD ONE VOICE ONE VISION

ONE magazine

*Soccer and
the Gospel*

.....

The Art of
Sharing



ONEMAGAZINE.COM | APRIL - MAY 2018



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The Music Commission invites anyone (age 15+) to participate in the convention choir and orchestra in Little Rock, Arkansas, this July. You will enjoy worshipping with Free Will Baptists from all over the nation! If you'd like to be involved, or have questions, email us: music@nafwb.org. You can also connect with us on Facebook to hear previews of this year's music: facebook.com/fwbmusiccommission.

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A Missions Legacy...

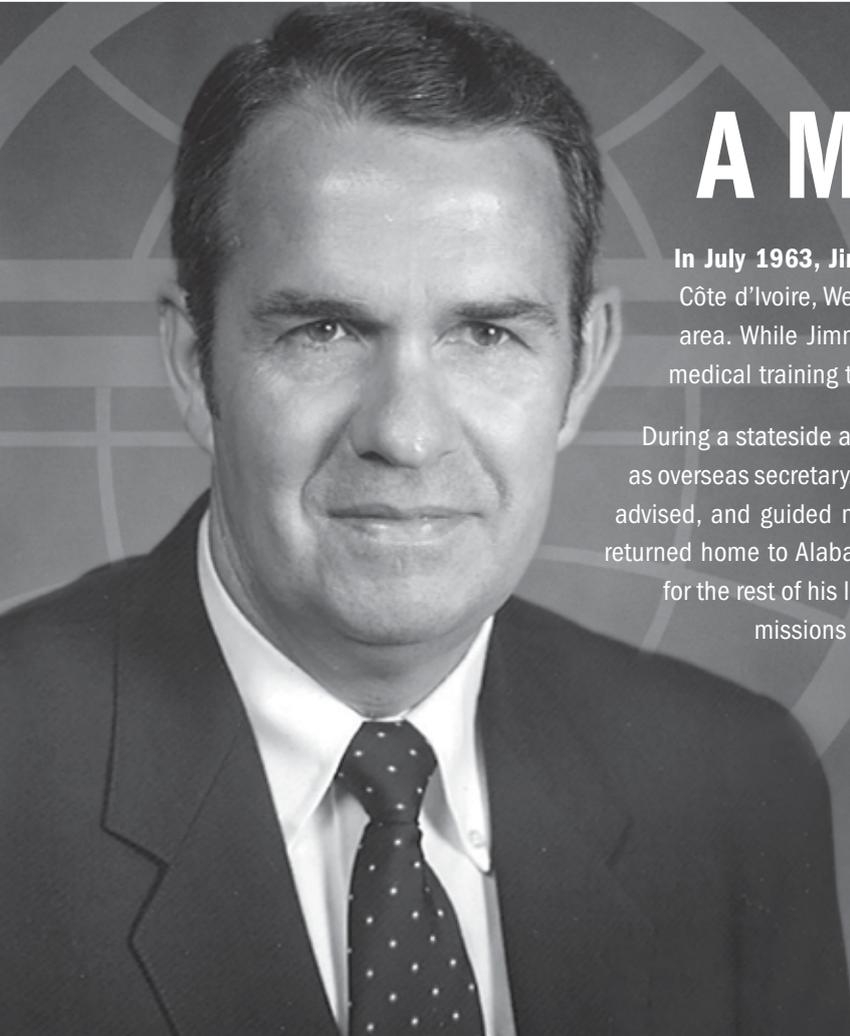
In July 1963, Jimmy Aldridge and his wife Janie, a nurse, began their ministry in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa. For 22 years, the couple served faithfully in the Bondoukou area. While Jimmy established "preaching points" in nearby villages, Janie used her medical training to help hurting people who visited the small medical clinic.

During a stateside assignment in 1984, Jimmy was offered the newly-established position as overseas secretary. For 15 years, the couple made Nashville home while Jimmy counseled, advised, and guided mission strategy for fields around the globe. He retired in 1999 and returned home to Alabama, where he remained an avid supporter and promoter of missions for the rest of his life. When Jimmy stepped into eternity in July 2017, he left an inspiring missions legacy for future generations to follow.

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His Best From My Mess

BY ERIC THOMSEN

“You don’t remember me, do you?”

Trying not to show my dismay, I wracked my brain, trying to match the face before me with a memory...any memory.

“Don’t worry. I was younger then—much younger. I went on a trip with your youth group, the one where you were the only chaperone.”

I groaned. Audibly.

In more than two decades of youth ministry, I only took one overnight trip without multiple chaperones, and it was an unmitigated disaster. When two volunteers called in sick, a parent had to work unexpectedly, and my wife couldn’t make the trip, I found myself alone with 14 mischievous students, a worn out church van, and a short fuse.

That fuse was clipped even shorter as the weekend progressed. With the shortage of chaperones, the teens had no trouble working around my frequent room checks. They sneaked out, tormented other groups, and went sledding in the middle of the night using a brand new hard side suitcase the pastor’s son had borrowed from his mom. They even locked an annoying member of the group

onto the hotel balcony, where he spent a long, snowy night in his pajamas. During services, they whispered, made faces, and laughed at inappropriate times.

Looking back, they were simply being kids, pushing the limits and taking advantage of the situation. At the time, it was infuriating and then humiliating when retreat leaders informed me our group was not welcome back without additional chaperones. I can’t blame them.

Fifty miles into the trip home, the short fuse lit when I looked in the rearview mirror through sleep-deprived eyes to see 14 cherubic, sleeping faces. The explosion that followed wasn’t pretty and left the girls in tears, the guys furious, and all the van windows rolled down so *no one* could sleep. I can’t imagine how our visitor must have felt.

Now, she sat in front of me. An adult. My greatest failure as a youth pastor had come full circle on this routine follow-up visit with guests to our church. No

wonder I didn’t remember her. I had blocked those memories from my mind.

I dropped my head, avoiding her eyes so she wouldn’t see the shame in mine. “I am so sorry,” I murmured, thinking the visit was about to come to an abrupt end. “Why are you sorry?”

Her cheery response was unexpected, to say the least. I raised my eyes to see a broad smile.

“That was the best weekend of my life,” she continued. “That’s the weekend I accepted Jesus as my Savior.”

Once again I saw God’s best from my mess. I am so grateful.

A final note: Kristen and her family not only returned to church, they eventually became faithful members. She coordinates Toddler Time and is an AWANA leader. Every Wednesday night, I enjoy teaching her daughter in my AWANA class, where we have *multiple* chaperones. God is good. **ONE**



About the Columnist: Eric K. Thomsen is managing editor of **ONE Magazine** and president of the Evangelical Press Association. Email: eric@nafwb.org.

First, let me say that *ONE Magazine* is the best way for me to keep up with our association. The news helps me remain current. I am not big into social media, and due to physical limitations, I do not travel to distant meetings. Thanks for the overall view of our works. When going through articles in the last issue, I saw a picture of the FWB Foundation staff. Thinking I recognized some of the people, I began to see if I had overlooked their identities. I found nothing. My wife checked their website and found only two men. So we are still in the dark. Do all of those pictured work exclusively for the Foundation?

—Tony Tilley, Pastor, RN, BSN

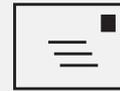
From the editor:

Great catch, Tony. The picture to which you refer can be found on page 16 of the February-March issue, in the article,



“The End Zone.” It features staffers for both Free Will Baptist Foundation (FWBF) and partner ministry organization Cornerstone Estate Planning (CEP). From left to right: Kris Wootton, field representative, FWBF; Doug Little, field manager, FWBF; June McVay, member services representative, FWBF; David Brown, director, FWBF; Nikki Lear, CEP; Troy Sadowski, CEP; Tina Williams, administrative assistant, FWBF; Barry Simpson, field representative, FWBF; Shari Wootton, CEP; Mike Wootton, CEP; Tim York, field representative, FWBF; Todd Smith, field representative, FWBF.

Not pictured were Richard Davis, CFO, FWBF; and Priscilla Hawkins, member services representative, FWBF.



Have something to say? Say it!

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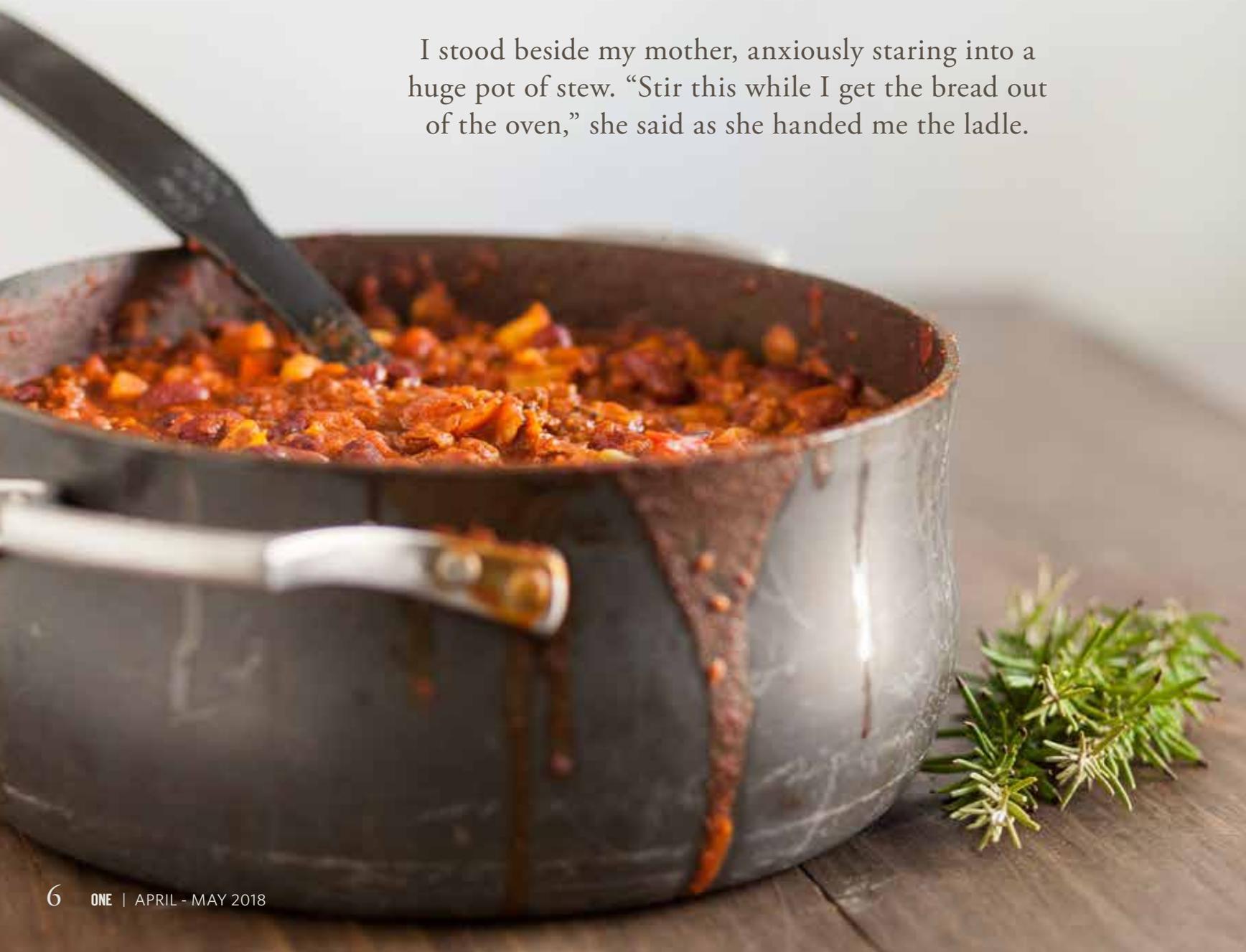
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The Art of Sharing

BY DON MATCHETT

I stood beside my mother, anxiously staring into a huge pot of stew. “Stir this while I get the bread out of the oven,” she said as she handed me the ladle.



A wonderful aroma had overtaken our house and saturated my 14-year-old senses. Stew was a staple in our home. Filling, cheap, and easy to make, any combination of various foods in a pot can be classified as a stew. But this meal was different—we actually had meat.

An air of anticipation filled the house. Usually, we were told, “Save some for your sisters and brothers.” In our house, that wasn’t an exaggeration. We typically had enough, but just enough. Nevertheless, this time we weren’t given a limit. This time, we enjoyed plenty. My mother was very clear, “Eat as much as you want, but don’t waste.”

A generous neighbor had shared fresh meat from their farm “because it was the neighborly thing to do.” This certainly would not be the last time we were the grateful beneficiaries of his generosity. However, this first instance of sharing made such an impact on my memory that, even as I write, I can still picture all the gleeful expressions around that pot. What’s more, I can almost taste that first spoonful!

The act of sharing is a fundamental duty, but it does not come instinctively. Rather, it seems to be passed from one person to another or directly imparted. Anyone who has ever experienced the attitude of a toddler knows this immediately. For youngsters, the notion of sharing appears difficult to comprehend. Young children believe they are the center of the universe. From their point of view, “*Everything* belongs to me!” While we perceive this childish selfishness as being spoiled or self-centered, the truth is, this is who we are as human beings. Sharing is not easy and chafes our iniquitous human nature.

The mystery is this: though sharing does not come naturally, it seems to permeate every culture. Even the harshest barbaric heathen is willing to share with his family and with others in his camp. And, even more mysterious, the less we have the more likely we are to share.

I recently watched a documentary about the Cup’ik Eskimos on Nunivak Island, off the southwest coast of Alaska. The tribe lives in one of the harshest environments on the planet. During the winter months, the island becomes a barren wasteland with high temperatures reaching only -30° for months at a time. To survive, the inhabitants literally eat anything available—

fish, seal, walrus, reindeer, and muskox. Even with such harsh conditions, the first deed after a successful hunt is the act of sharing. An island leader poetically said, “We must be a blessing to others so we will be blessed with meat again. So, the first thing we do is give part of our blessing away.”

The act of sharing belongs to God. As with every good thing, it originated with Him. This theme runs throughout the Bible, from cover to cover. Sharing is at the center of God’s plan. Giving and sharing is one of the most important principles we learn from God’s Word, especially in light of the incomprehensible value of the gift of His Son.

In Genesis, we read one of the most important accounts of why we are obligated to share. The whole Abrahamic Covenant can be summed up in one line: “I will bless you, and you will be a blessing.” Yet, we can learn even more here. The covenant of Abraham displays the blueprint of God’s plan, and it teaches our own responsibility in the Kingdom. We are blessed to be a blessing through resources, finances, and especially the gospel. Shared blessings are the fuel that propels the engine of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

SHARED
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NEWS OF
JESUS CHRIST.

Missionary writer Don Richardson refers to these twin promises as *top-line* (I will bless you) and *bottom-line* (you will be a blessing). Richardson reminds us any top-line blessing equals a bottom-line responsibility to bless others. When God cares for us, we are responsible to care for others.

If this is true, we can’t enter a career or earn money simply to meet our own desires. We must remember God places us in these careers to earn money to provide for our families...and to show love and mercy to others.

Sharing should be the instant reaction to the bewildering love and mercy God has shown us in our own circumstance.

The greatest challenge confronting Christians in the United States is the unhealthy infatuation with top-line blessings without accepting the bottom-line responsibility. The “pursuit of happiness” has produced matchless wealth, power, and ingenuity, but if we fail to love and comfort our neighbor, we miss our role in the Kingdom altogether. Furthermore, we are in danger of creating gods of ourselves, ruling our own meaningless micro-kingdoms.

If I am honest, when I think of all the blessings God has poured out on me personally I am humbled. I spend more for cell phone service per month than the average monthly salary of families in many countries. I certainly am not wealthy by U.S. standards, but compared to the poor in the rest of the world, I am wealthy. So are you. God has richly blessed us, especially those of us in the Western world. The average household (\$50,000 a year)

in the United States earns more than 99% of the world’s population. Even those considered in “poverty” in the United States (\$23,000 a year) fall among the top 19% of the richest people on the planet. I do not believe it a coincidence the United States is still the most “sending” nation in the world. With great blessings comes great responsibility.

Henry Drummond said, “The obvious lesson in Christ’s teaching is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving.” Our blessings were not intended only to give us comfort and security, but to expand the reach of the gospel. We are truly blessed to be a true blessing. 

About the Writer: Don Matchett serves with FWB International Missions as director of church relations and development. A native of Arkansas, Don and his family recently moved to Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.



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What a Friend She Found in Jesus

BY TRIF TRIFONOV

You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends. John 15:14-15

Like many other Macedonians, Melania left Macedonia to study in Varna, Bulgaria, two and half years ago. Feeling lonely and confused in a foreign place, she needed a friend she could trust. She remembered Raditsa, a woman from her hometown who had come to study in Varna a long time ago. Melania knew Raditsa settled in Varna with her husband and family after graduation.

Melania contacted Raditsa. Since Raditsa is a Christian, she invited the young woman to join her at church—New Life Church Varna. Melania believed God existed. Since childhood, she never doubted that since her parents were nominal Eastern Orthodox believers. Later,



Melania (center) with friends

her dad accepted Christ as his Lord and told her and her sister who God was. Already a teenager at this time, Melania thought Christianity was not for her. She needed a friend, not a doctrine, she thought. But when she visited our church for the first time, she was surprised to find a place where people were friendly, the songs and sermon were in a modern language, and sweets were served after the service was over. She continued to attend the church and started reading the Bible on a daily basis. She had many questions. After church, she discussed them with the other believers. She made good friends with other teens in the church.

During the summer, Melania went to a Christian camp in Norway, where her father was working. She was baptized while there. She even sent a video greeting to our church to let us know about her new relationship with Christ. She found a new friend in Jesus.

Last year, Melania started a discipleship course with my wife Vanya. She learned a true follower of Jesus not only attends church, but also serves actively in the body. She began helping with the multimedia and became involved with student outreach. She's already invited a few students to our church services and other events we've put together for students.

Being a Christian isn't always easy for Melania. Recently she asked, "Why is it I don't feel anything like before? Am I really a Christian?" We talked about what makes us Christians—not the way we feel, but what we truly believe and the lives we live. Today, Melania continues to grow in her faith and relationship with her friend, Jesus.

You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends. ONE

About the Writer: Native Bulgarian Trif Trifonov and his family serve with Free Will Baptist International Missions as missionary partners in Varna, Bulgaria. The World Missions Offering helps him plant a church in this university town.



Love Thy Neighbor

BY PASTOR LOGAN WOLF



We have lived in the Cherry Hill neighborhood for nearly four years, and until recently I didn't know *any* of my neighbors. With church activities, community events, and volunteer commitments I was around people all day. When I got home, I wanted to shut out the world. But that changed while studying Jesus' words in Matthew 22:39: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

I always equated the term *neighbor* with everyone. That is, we are to love everyone. Like a vague New Year's resolution abandoned by February, however, it is easy to get overwhelmed by the general nature of this command. Though we *say* we love everyone, we end up not loving anyone very well.

What if we move from general to specific and take this commandment literally? What if we truly determine to love the men and women outside our front door? As I wrestled with the implications of this command on my routine and space, we were in the process of planning a party. We had invited families from church, coworkers, and friends that lived across town, but no one from our street. I knew I needed to invite my neighbors, and I knew that meant meeting them for the first time.

It was humbling to explain I had lived next door for years, and even more humiliating to admit I was a pastor when they asked what I did for a living. But the immediate awkwardness was short lived, and we spent the evening getting to know one another around a fire pit in our backyard.

Since that day, I've been out to eat with our neighbors. We've been in their homes, and they've been in ours. A

few have even visited church unannounced. While it's exciting that those few sat under the preaching of the gospel, it is also exciting to grow in my own faith as I follow the Word of God.

We must be willing to build relationships apart from our own agenda. The command to love our neighbor has no stipulations attached. Jesus didn't say we are to love our neighbors so they might be converted or that we should love them until it's clear they aren't interested in the faith.

No, we are commanded to love them because God is love. It's who He is, and this is who He has created us to be. **ONE**

WE MUST
BE WILLING
TO BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS
APART FROM
OUR OWN
AGENDA.

About the Writer: Logan Wolf is the lead pastor of CrossPoint Church, a multisite ministry with campuses in Taylorsville and Provo, Utah, cities that are 60% and 98% professed Mormon respectively.

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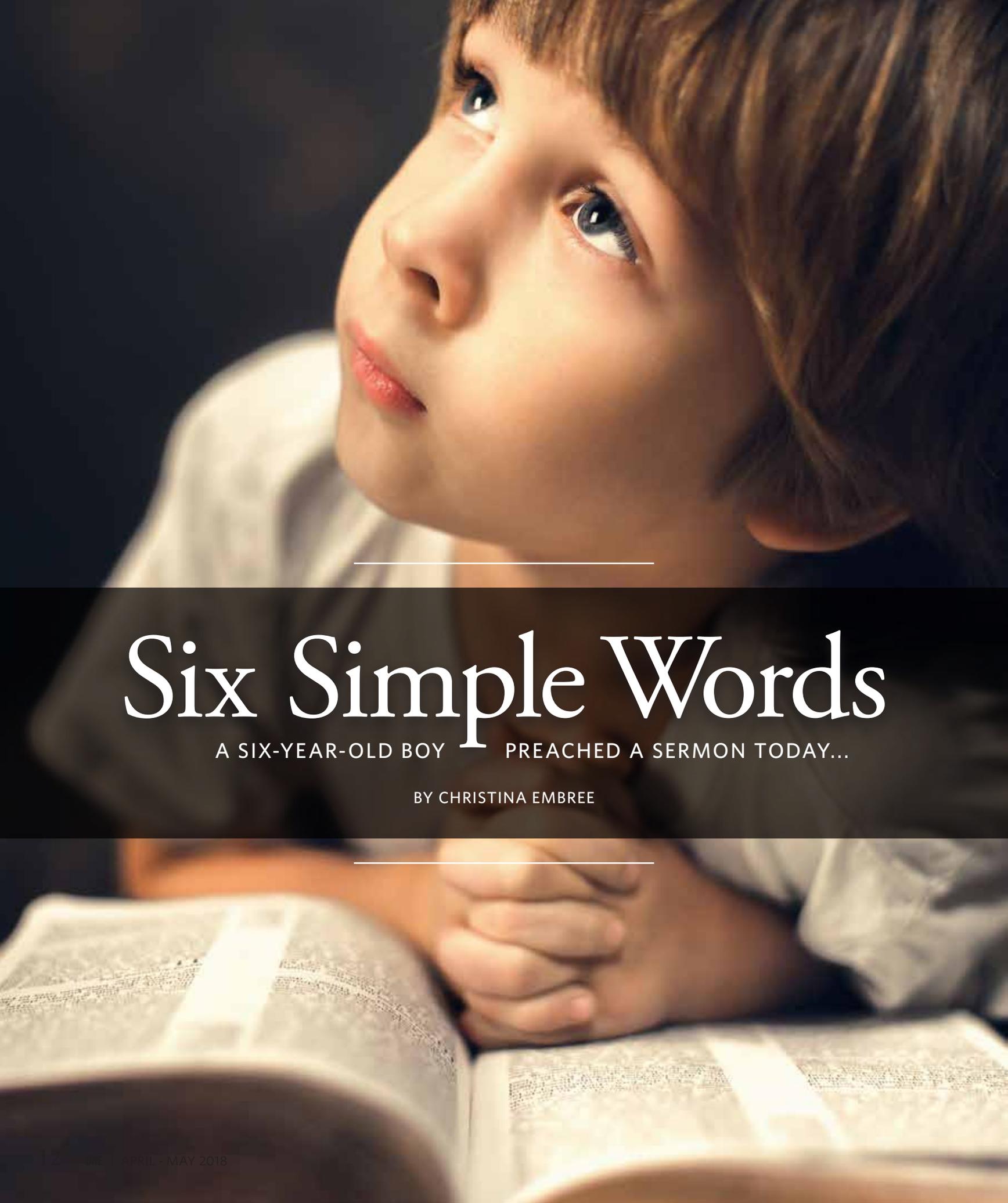
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Six Simple Words

A SIX-YEAR-OLD BOY — PREACHED A SERMON TODAY...

BY CHRISTINA EMBREE

Today, as we were listening to the sermon at church, my six-year-old son heard the speaker say the word *sin*. I whispered and asked him if he knew what sin was. Now, we've had many discussions about the basics of the gospel, including sin, but I wanted to hear his thoughts on the matter. His reply was enlightening.

"Sin breaks us," he replied back, eyes looking up to make sure he got the right answer.

"Hmm," I whispered back, "What does that mean?"

He leaned in close and said, "Sin breaks us, but Jesus changes us. Sin died, but Jesus came back to life."

End. Of. Sermon.

"You got it, kid," I whispered back.

SIN BREAKS US; JESUS CHANGES US. Sin died, but Jesus lives. Six-year-old theology says simply what countless sermons, books, podcasts, blog posts, and seminarians struggle to communicate—all condensed into six words.

I've read many commentaries on what exactly Jesus meant when He said unless we change and become like children, we wouldn't enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:2). The more I work with children—wait, let me rephrase—the more I *listen* to children, the more I think Jesus wanted us to grasp the Kingdom simply, perhaps even "six words" simply.

Sometimes, as adults, we take our roles as parent, protector, mentor, and teacher seriously—so seriously we forget we are also called to listen, change, and become like children.

In their book, *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey*, Catherine Stonehouse and Scottie May share, "If we see children through the eyes of Jesus, we will realize that they are models of faith and sources of revelation... As we live and minister with children, we want to be alert to what God desires to reveal to us through them."

How can we be intentional about doing just that? Here are some ways to hit *pause* on the ministering-parenting part of being adults and tune into that listening-learning part of being Christ followers.

ASK QUESTIONS. That was all it took this morning. I knew he'd heard lots of stories before, so I just asked him about it. The response was how he had heard and understood those stories. And I learned.

LET THEM TELL YOU THE BEDTIME STORY. If you have a book with pictures, often those give enough of a clue for the story to get started. I love hearing the stories told by children. In my experience, they talk a great deal about the love of God and the hope found in the stories.

DON'T ASSUME; ASK. One time, a child walked up to me and handed me a picture with a bunch of random dots on it. I thanked him, but then was prompted to ask, "Can you tell me about this picture?" He went on to explain the green dot in the middle of the paper was God. The red dots were his family. The blue and yellow dots were all the people of the world. God was in the middle, where He could see everyone and take care of all of them. I learned a valuable lesson that day—don't assume; ask.

LISTEN. Lie in the grass, look at the sky, and listen to them talk. Sit beside them on a bench and listen to them dream. Hold their hands as you walk and listen to their stories. Let their awe and wonder over bugs and rocks and clouds and snowflakes draw you back to the awe and wonder of the Creator through the eyes of a child.

Six simple words from a six-year old boy preached a sermon today. I'm grateful I was listening. **ONE**

About the Writer: Christina Embree is the wife of Pastor Luke, mom to three wonderful kids, and works with families at a church in Kentucky. Find more from Christina at www.RandallHouse.com.



Attitude Overboard

BY RUTH MCDONALD

I recently saw a t-shirt that read, “I’m having technical problems with my attitude today. Avoidance suggested.” If the prophet Jonah had worn t-shirts, this one would have fit him perfectly.

Most are familiar with the Sunday School version of Jonah. God told this prophet to go to Nineveh as a missionary. He didn’t want to go, so he boarded a ship headed in the other direction. The moral of the story? If you don’t obey God, you might end up in the belly of a big fish. Thankfully, Jonah said he was sorry, was spit up on dry ground (ewww), and finally obeyed. The people of Nineveh were saved, and they all lived happily ever after. Right?

The real Jonah is much more complex, and the story doesn’t resolve itself quite so satisfactorily. As an adult, it looks to me like Jonah was not only stubborn but also angry, bitter, depressed, terrified, reluctant to obey, whiny, judgmental, and complaining. At the same time, he makes some of the most beautiful and profound statements about God’s nature in the entire Bible. Jonah is not a simple man.

SCENE ONE: SAYING NO TO GOD (JONAH 1:1-3)

The first problem in this adult version of Jonah is why he did not want to obey. Was he uncertain of God’s will? Certainly not! In the second verse of the book we read, “The word of the Lord came to Jonah.” Clear and simple.

Was the prophet too lazy to go? No, again. Nineveh was far, but Tarshish was farther and more expensive. Was Jonah experiencing a crisis of faith? The answer is again negative. In verse 9 of chapter 1, Jonah clearly states, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” Sounds like a pretty clear statement of faith to me.

Fortunately, Jonah himself later tells us why he disobeyed. In Jonah 4:2, we eavesdrop as he tells the Lord, “That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish: for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.”

Say what? Jonah disobeyed because God is gracious? Yes, that is exactly what he said. Jonah was personally

a great fan of God’s mercy, love, and patience. He was happy for God to extend grace to himself, his family, his friends, and his fellow countrymen. However, when God wanted to extend the same compassion and forgiveness to Jonah’s enemies, that’s where the prophet drew the line. The simple truth is Jonah hated Nineveh. He was consumed by anger and a thirst for revenge, to the point he did not want a single Ninevite to escape the well-deserved judgment of God.

The ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh was located in modern Iraq, near the modern city of Mosul. It was part of the Assyrian Empire and feared for acts of terror including beheadings, mutilations, rape, and torture. Sounds familiar, doesn’t it?

Jonah had good reason to hate the Ninevites. They truly did not deserve God’s mercy. Their atrocities warranted God’s judgment. So, Jonah said, “No way! I will not be involved in telling them about God and helping them get off the hook.”

We can certainly understand Jonah’s attitude and perhaps even justify it in our minds. Though Jonah has long been the poster child for rebellion and disobedience, we have to ask ourselves if we would have been any different.

SCENE TWO: RUNNING FROM GOD (JONAH 1:3-16)

It is never easy to forgive those who have caused us pain. As you read this, you may be thinking of someone who hurt you deeply. Perhaps the trauma is so deeply personal you’ve never told anyone. On the other hand, you may catch yourself telling anyone who will listen about just how nasty that person was to you.

Clinging to anger and bitterness causes a huge disconnect in the heart of the believer. Every time we recite the Lord’s Prayer, we plea, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12). Just three verses later, Jesus tells us that if we do not forgive others, the Father will not forgive us. Yikes!

Refusal to forgive causes our spirits to become increasingly toxic. It doesn’t actually hurt the person who

wronged us, but it sure does a number on our own emotional, spiritual, and physical health. Of course, unwillingness to forgive is just one example of sin. Any unconfessed sin or rebellion poisons our spirits if we refuse to repent and allow the Lord to detox our hearts.

Most of us have never physically boarded a ship to Tarshish. These days, we have other ways to run from God’s voice. My personal favorites are neglecting my Bible and turning to television, shopping, overeating, and oversleeping. If I weren’t such a “good Christian,” I might try drugs, alcohol, or partying. Truth is, the root—the “sin behind the sin”—is the same in every case. We want to drown out the convicting voice of God and nestle comfortably in our sinful behavior.

In Jonah 1:5, Jonah’s anger resulted in apparent depression. He exhibits symptoms commonly acknowledged by psychologists of our time: excessive sleep, apathy, and numbness to the crisis around him. When confronted by the other passengers, he seems completely detached when he tells them to hurl him into the sea to resolve the situation.

Remember, Jonah didn’t know the rest of the story. Being thrown into the tempestuous sea during a storm meant certain death. Jonah could have chosen to repent at this point, since he knew the problem. But he preferred to die rather than forgive his enemies and become an instrument of God’s mercy to them.

SCENE THREE: APPOINTMENT WITH GOD (JONAH 1:17—2:10)

I doubt it was written in Jonah’s pocket planner, but God had booked a reservation for a three-day, three-night, all-expense-paid vacation in the belly of the great fish. The experience was anything but pleasant, and Jonah did not come out tanned and relaxed. But he did come out ready to obey. It may have been the most life-changing spiritual retreat in recorded history.

Jonah’s prayer from the belly of the fish is filled with panic, distress, repentance...and a bit of attitude. Even inside the whale, Jonah seems to be blame shifting. In verse 3, he says “For you cast me into the deep, into

the heart of the seas...all your waves and your billows passed over me.” He has forgotten it was his doing rather than God’s that resulted in his predicament.

God did not cast Jonah into the deep. It was the other passengers, and at Jonah’s request. Jonah wouldn’t have been on that ship in the first place if he had simply followed God’s plan. It was Jonah’s rebellion, conniving, and disobedience that took him and his attitude overboard.

God was responsible for two things: He sent the storm, and He prepared the fish. God was too concerned for the lost to allow Jonah smooth sailing. It is never okay to disobey God. We got that part right in the Sunday School stories. We, too, will find living in rebellion is a sure way to incur God’s discipline. He does what is necessary to recapture our attention. But in the midst of His judgment on Jonah, He also prepared a great fish to save the disobedient prophet.

Thankfully, Jonah remembered the Lord. The same God who demonstrated compassion on the undeserving people of Nineveh was patient with his rebellious prophet. Like Jonah, rather than begrudging God’s grace toward others, we should thank Him daily. *We are* the wicked, and yet He gives us grace, patience, forgiveness, and a way of escape.

SCENE FOUR: RELUCTANT OBEDIENCE (JONAH 3:1—4:11)

Every Sunday School kid is happy when Jonah finally obeys, and the people of Nineveh are saved. But Jonah? He wasn’t happy at all. “It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry” (4:1). The prophet delivered the message of judgment from God, then found a comfortable seat a safe distance from the city and waited eagerly to see it destroyed. His heart of hatred toward his enemies remained unchanged.

Obviously, God desires us to follow Him joyfully, eager to do His will. But let’s get real. We all have times when we don’t want to do what’s right, when we’d rather not go to church, be unselfish, or say no to some tempting no-no. When we can’t obey willingly, should we just

give in to our desires? Reluctant obedience won’t please God anyway, right?

Some simple things prove helpful when we don’t want to obey. First, *examine our hearts and ask God to change our desires*. In the very moment of temptation, a quick prayer can change the outcome. If we have more time, it is helpful to refer to the Bible and remind ourselves of the truths that should guide our decisions.

Next, *obey even if we don’t want to*. I’m all about being honest and real, but let’s face it. It’s better to think about sinning than to sin. It’s better to do the right thing than the wrong one. Even with less than ideal motives, the rule of consequences

comes into play, and it is always better to choose the right action. No matter how reluctant, Jonah did the right thing, and because of his decision, an entire city was spared.

The shocking thing about the book of Jonah is that the story ends with the main character retaining his bad attitude. After everything the Lord did to spare him, Jonah still had the nerve to question divine judgment. Can you imagine saying to God, “I know better than you”? It’s a wonder God didn’t strike Jonah where he sat.

But that, my friends, is the happy ending. In Jonah’s own words: “I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.” I am so thankful the Bible is filled with imperfect followers, and God is patient and merciful to me, just as He was to them. **ONE**

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About the Writer: Ruth McDonald and her husband Donnie are career missionaries to Japan. Learn more: www.fwbgo.com.

Now That I'm 90

BY LORENE MILEY

I've just had my 90th birthday. Twelve years and eight months have passed since my husband of 57 years went to Heaven without me. I was so sure I would have joined him by now. But, my times are in His hands, and my reservation is still pending. Any day now. Meanwhile...

Now that I'm 90...

I've entered the last stage of my life on earth. I'm forgetting what lies behind me and moving toward whatever lies ahead, for when one's memories of the past exceed one's dreams for the future, he has ceased to live.

Now that I'm 90...

I'm predicted to contract at least one, and probably two or more chronic or life-threatening illnesses, i.e. heart disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, etc. I'm keeping six "doctors" swamped with appointments, for they are the best you will find anywhere (and no one can deny it): sunshine, water, rest, air, exercise, and diet.



Now that I'm 90...

It's time to review some favorite lessons of a lifetime:

- Fear God and keep His commandments. This is the beginning of wisdom.
- A mark of maturity is to listen to something new without accepting it.
- If you want an excellent caregiver when you're old, birth a daughter when you're young.
- Use it or lose it.

Now that I'm 90...

The physical senses (sight, hearing, smell, feeling, tasting) are fading or gone, but their spiritual counterparts are being renewed every morning. God compensates for old age. When I'm weak, I'm strong. God saves His choicest blessings for those who reach the age of 90.

Blessed be the name of the Lord!

Gratefully, Lorene Miley 

About the Writer: Lorene Miley and her husband LaVerne were pioneer medical missionaries to Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, through Free Will Baptist International Missions. She also served as the editor of *Co-Laborer* magazine, now *Treasure*.



Soccer and the Gospel

BY LINO PASCACIO

Your servant, Pastor Lino Pascacio, greets you from Panama. I would like to tell you about the Jerusalem Free Will Baptist Church located in the eastern part of Panama. In 2017, our church worked on different fronts to rescue souls. Philippians 4:19 reminds us: “My God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Trusting God’s Word, we have worked on numerous projects and emphasized a new program in the community of Cañita—soccer.

The Jerusalem Soccer Club has greatly impacted our community this year. This project has prompted a movement. We have had an influence in homes, schools where they teach secular classes, and government institutions. At the beginning of the soccer project, we were concerned about finances. The club required a financial investment we did not have. We saw the hand of the Lord at work as the young people themselves helped meet the financial costs. During the season, they scheduled sales of rice with milk to raise money for uniforms and sports equipment. They purchased their first uniforms to participate in sporting events in different areas of Cañita. Then, they began traveling to other regions of Panama to represent the church with their sports talent. Many young adults and teenagers in our church have been reached through sports outreach.

God sent young people with needs to this program. Not only health needs but spiritual and material ones.

We serve young people with drug addictions. We serve young people with behavioral problems at school. Through the soccer project, we meet the needs of young people in extreme poverty. We work with young people who have learning problems in school.

Our community has been negatively impacted by the numerous problems of young people in our society. What a great impact our church had! We saw lives changed, and souls were added to the Kingdom and our congregation. They are young, and as young sheep, they have challenging problems that need attention. We cannot solve these problems with our human strength; but by grace, by the favor and wisdom of our Lord, we have been able to minister to the diverse needs of these youth.

Brothers, we have also reached into the public schools in Cañita, since teachers are unable to deal with these kinds of problems. School leaders have taken notice of

our church, and admire the church for this vision to reach young people and adolescents.

The soccer project is based on a fundamental principal—reach lives with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Recently, we

THE SOCCER PROJECT IS BASED ON A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPAL—REACH LIVES WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

inaugurated a second club named Soccer B Club. These events in our town of Cañita, in the region of Chepo, have had a huge impact on us and on our community.

We discovered young people not only have a talent for sports, but also a wide variety of other talents. As we cared for the youth, we came to realize they have talents in

drama, singing, and playing instruments. In just the last few months of 2017, young people started helping the

children's ministry—working with children, Vacation Bible School, and Sunday School.

Because of the musical talent of the young people, we introduced music to our sports team, beginning a Christian music band. The young people use the Christian band to perform at public civic events in our district. Thanks to the Lord, we have reached homes and youth through sports. Thanks to the Lord, today we have many young people serving in our church, and we pray they will produce the fruit of repentance in our community.

From Panama, we send greetings and ask for your prayers. 🙏

About the Writer: Pastor Lino is a graduate of the Chame Bible Institute. Contributions to the World Missions Offering support ministry in Panama.

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If You Build It...

BY JOSHUA HAMPTON



Perhaps you have heard the catchphrase from the 1989 movie *Field of Dreams*. In the film, an Iowa corn farmer hears a voice telling him to build a baseball field in the middle of his corn. “If you build it,” an eerie voice intones, “he will come.” After the farmer completes his task, Shoeless Joe Jackson (long dead) appears and asks to play catch. Later, the ghosts of the 1919 Chicago White Sox team arrive to play a game.

From its origin in this far-fetched script, this catchphrase, “If you build it, he (they) will come” has become a popular declaration for all kinds of things—even the church. But is the statement really true? I don’t think so. Perhaps there was a time in America when one could simply construct a new church building, put up a sign, and the community would just show up. That time, if it ever existed, has passed.

In his book *The Rise of the Nones*, James Emery White states, “This generation is not thinking about religion and rejecting it. Instead, they are simply not thinking about religion at all.” The None Generation hasn’t necessarily rejected church; they simply give it no thought.

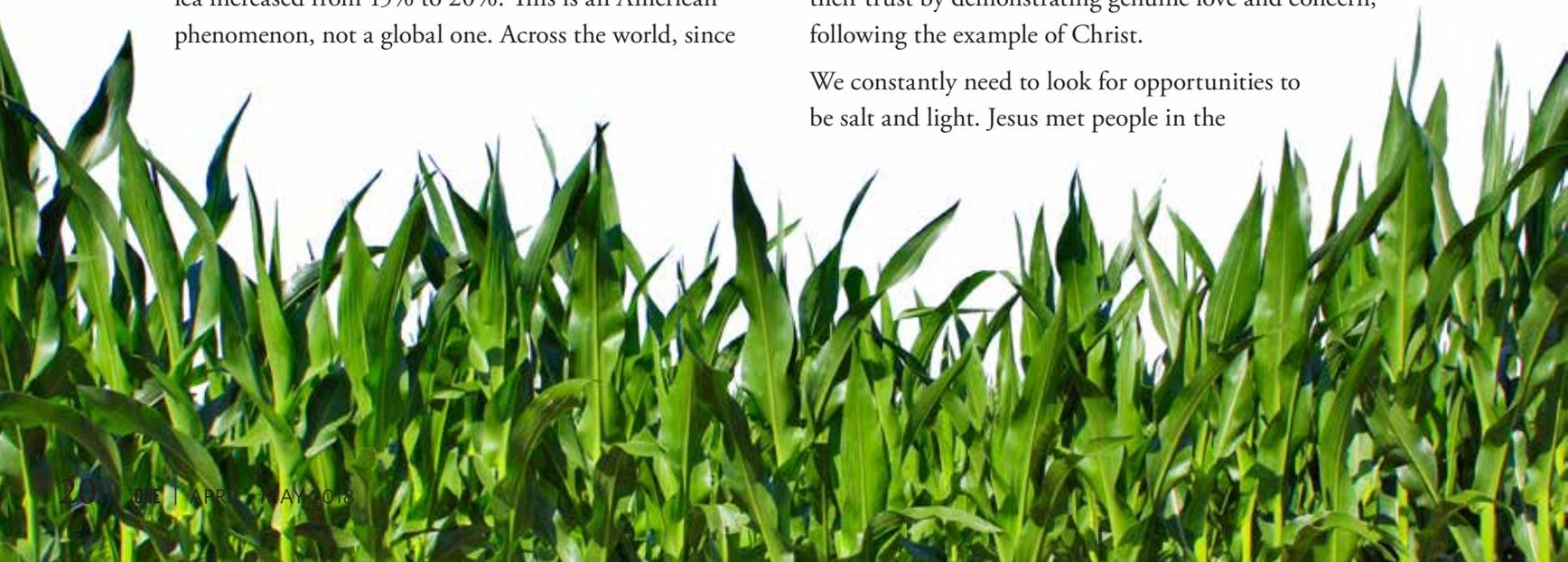
From 2008 to 2012, the percentage of nones in America increased from 15% to 20%. This is an American phenomenon, not a global one. Across the world, since

1970, the 20% who claimed no religious affiliation has dropped to 12%.

What does this mean for the American church? It means we must become more deliberate about reaching out to our neighborhoods and communities. We must consciously seek to be salt and light wherever we are.

It will take a greater effort than a church sign or a simple invitation. We must insert ourselves into the fabric of our local communities. We must make connections with people who may not care one thing about religion or the church. Most nones are not atheists or anti-spiritual, just ambivalent about church. So, we must go to them. We must invest in their lives. And, as we begin to build relationships with our neighbors, we will gain their trust by demonstrating genuine love and concern, following the example of Christ.

We constantly need to look for opportunities to be salt and light. Jesus met people in the



WE CAN PUT UP A SIGN ON OUR PROPERTY, AND THEY WILL KNOW WHERE WE ARE; BUT IF WE INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY THEY WILL KNOW WE CARE AND THAT WE LIVE THE GOSPEL WE PREACH.

fields and by the seashore. He encountered people in the marketplace, by remote water wells, and in the synagogue. The same strategy will work for us as we go out of our way to invest in the lives of others. City events, sports leagues, educational institutions, and more constantly seek volunteers to help. While every venue may not be suitable for a church congregation,

we should become known as the church that is always involved and ready to help.

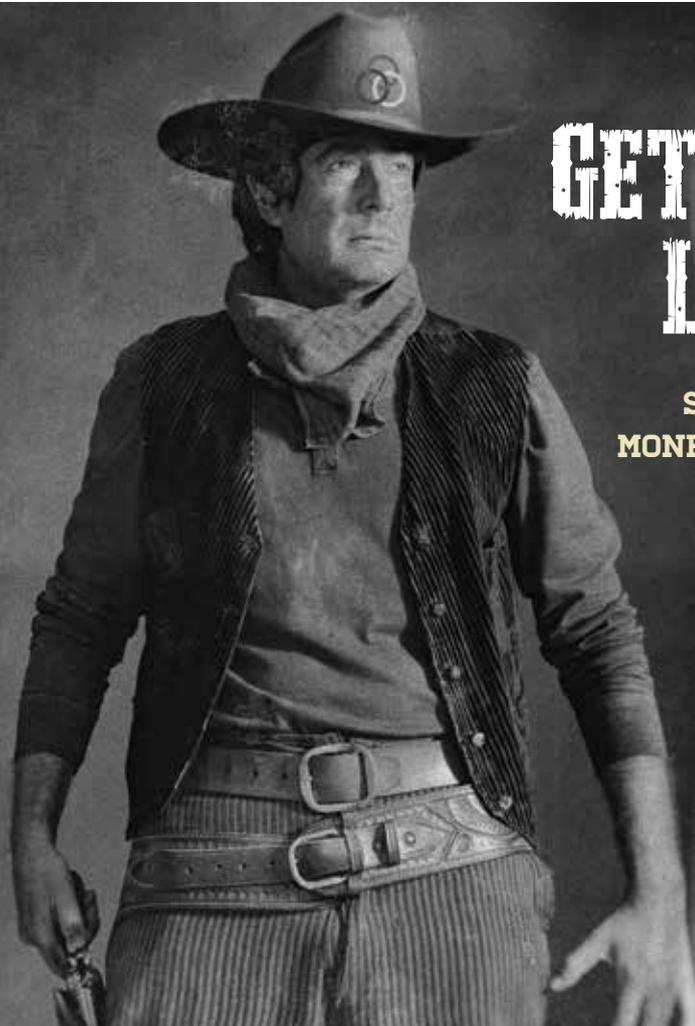
We can put up a sign on our property, and they will know where we are; but if we invest in the community they will know we care and that we live the gospel we

preach. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

Many today do not attend church, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t searching for the truth found in Christ. It is our responsibility to build relationships that allow us to share that truth. Jesus repeatedly said *go*. He never instructed His followers to put up a sign or confine their ministry to a building. Signs and building are wonderful, helpful things, but they are no substitute for going.

Perhaps its time to change the catchphrase from “If you build it, they will come” to “If you *go*, they will listen.” **ONE**

About the Writer: Joshua Hampton and his family are planting a church in Missoula, Montana, along with Josh’s parents, Clayton and Tammy. Learn more: www.fwbnam.com.



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20 BY 2020

AN UPDATE ON THE STRATEGIC GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

BY CLINT MORGAN

The mission statement of Free Will Baptist International Missions (IM) declares: “We exist to labor with the Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission.” From 1935, when we sent our first missionary Laura Belle Barnard to India, to the present, the desire to do our part in fulfilling the Great Commission has been the major impetus for our programs, strategies, activities, and ministries. The biblical foundation of this task, and its focus on all nations, make it relevant to all believers of every era.

If, as a Mission, we come to a point we are no longer driven by Christ’s passion for the nations we become little more than pious programs of little, if any, eternal value. We must be steered by the perpetual presence of God’s Spirit to accomplish His desires. Our strategies must be founded on His desires, directed by the eternal light of His presence, and executed in humble obedience.

During one of the darkest times in IM history, the leadership team (IMLT) focused on the light we could see and determined a path of renewal. We committed to reestablishing IM as the denominational agency tasked with leading Free Will Baptists to follow the Great Commission.

One might say it was one of the most unlikely moments for us to set five-year goals. Our financial picture was bleak, momentum had stalled, and denominational confidence wavered. However, the IMLT sincerely believed the worst was behind us. Our responsibility was to set a new tone. Above all, it was imperative not to lose hope.

In October 2015, the IMLT spent three days in prayer, discussions, and analysis. We then set five major goals we believed were realistic, forward-thinking, and faith-

based. Those goals, known as the *20 by 2020 goals*, established specific areas to increase by at least 20% by the end of the year 2020.

Let’s consider two aspects of this strategic plan. First, we will review the benchmarks in the five areas when we launched this plan on January 1, 2016. Then, we can look at the latest statistics to analyze our progress toward reaching the goals. Based on our 2015 statistical reports, we laid out the following projections reflecting a 20% increase by the end of 2020.

1. Grow the number of churches giving monthly to IM from 1,104 to 1,324.
2. Establish and sustain cash reserves at a minimum of 20% of our annual budget. Between 2008 and 2015 we hovered around 5% in cash reserves.
3. Boost the number of missionaries sent by IM and its national church partners from 79 to 95.
4. Raise the number of Free Will Baptist believers outside of North America from 25,524 to 30,628.

5. Expand the number of Free Will Baptist churches outside of North America from 314 to 377.

NOTE: On some of our present fields, legal implications do not permit the organization of mission outreach points into churches. This leads to a somewhat skewed number when speaking of churches overseas. The *total* number of organized churches and not-legally-recognized churches is well over 550.

Throughout my time with IM, strategic discussions have always stirred my creative juices. However, the best-developed strategies aren't worth the paper they are written on unless those needed to execute them are in agreement. In the case of our *20 by 2020 goals*, both the IM home and field teams are aware of these goals and the work it will take to see them realized. Together, we are working diligently to see them properly communicated and the plans and incumbent ministries executed with excellence.

The clock started ticking on these goals January 1, 2016, and the alarm will sound on December 31, 2020. Today, we are just over two years into the process, a good time to pause and see how we are doing.

According to 2016 statistical reports, we enthusiastically present the following progress report toward our 20 by 2020 goals. (Field reports from 2017 are not available at this time and will be presented at the National Association in Little Rock, Arkansas, in July 2018.)

- **131 new churches** gave to IM = 8.4% increase
- Throughout 2017, our cash reserves remained **over 20%! Goal met.**
- Five missionaries left IM in 2016, but we saw an increase of **eight partner missionaries** for a 2016 total of 82 = 2.6% growth in this area
- Statistical reports show **27,612 attending services** each Sunday in Free Will Baptist churches outside of North America = 7.5% upswing
- Field reports indicate **346 churches** on our fields = 10.4% buildup

NOTE: We do our very best to provide a clear and concise statistical report. In some cases,

the reports are either late or not presented. We do not take the liberty to make assumptions about statistics. You may see numbers go up and down in seemingly strange ways. Be assured, we desire to give you the most accurate picture possible of what God is doing around the world through Free Will Baptists.

Hopefully, you are inspired that we are seeing positive movement in each goal. The numbers have increased across the board, and we rejoice in what God is doing around the world.

Success in ministry cannot, and should not, always be measured in numbers. The element of faithfulness cannot be measured. However, the facts allow us to conclude the faithfulness of our missionaries and national brothers and sisters is producing eternal fruit.

The progress made toward our 20 by 2020 goals is due to three major factors: God's work in the hearts of believers; their obedience to His directives; and in the last two goals, unbelievers submitting to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Developing strategies is great. I am all for laying out strategic plans. But, let us not forget the clear biblical exhortation given in 1 Corinthians 3:6-8, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."

As our mission statement constantly reminds us, we exist to labor with the Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission. We must follow through. This calls for ongoing strategic planning and constant laboring together until He returns. **ONE**

About the Writer: Clint Morgan has been general director of International Missions since 2011. Learn more: www.fwbgo.com.

IM Ends 2017 in Black, Erases Missionary Deficits

Antioch, Tennessee—For the fourth year in a row, International Missions ended the year in the black. General Director Clint Morgan enthusiastically stated, “We rejoice in God’s provision through His people!”

At year-end, **undesignated donations to the World Missions Offering (WMO) totaled \$552,768.04.** The 2017 WMO was designated to support partnership commitments (\$275,795.91) with the balance split between missionaries in need (60%) and the general fund (40%).

As of December 31, 2017, all missionary deficits were erased. The WMO contributed \$166,183.28 to the erasure. The balance of \$53,495.02 from the general fund completed the effort to leave no missionary with a deficit.

“No words describe the joy of having adequate income to erase the 2017 deficits of all missionary accounts. Each missionary staring at red ink embarks into 2018 with a blank slate and the hope of securing adequate resources to fully fund their accounts,” said Director Morgan. “We used undesignated gifts to

the WMO and the general fund,” CFO Rob Conley explained, “to erase all \$219,678.30 of deficit missionary accounts. While extremely thankful we could do this, it means all **10 accounts are underfunded.** Giving missionaries a clean slate on December 31 does not mean they will not have a deficit again. That is, unless people support these struggling accounts on a monthly basis. Please, look at the list of those who are underfunded and choose at least one account to support monthly.”

Missionaries who began 2018 with \$1.00 or less in their accounts are: *Rusty and Brenda Carney, Jerry and Barbara Gibbs, Carlisle Hanna and India Ministries, Don and Ruth McDonald, Neil and Mandi Morgan, Matt and Cristina Price, Lázaro and Ariadna Riesgo, Nathan and Linda Snow, Dennis and Carol Teague, and Steve and Lori Torrison.* Those listed in italics are currently on stateside assignment.

Morgan reminded, “Lack of monthly support moved missionary accounts into the red. Faithful monthly giving will put our missionaries on the field and keep them there.” **ONE**

Deficit and low accounts at the end of January:

Steve and Lori Torrison	-\$10,151.06
Dennis and Carol Teague	-\$1,718.15
Neil and Mandi Morgan	\$552.55
Lázaro and Ariadna Riesgo	\$853.15
Daniel and Shelby Culwell	\$2,008.74
Allison Caudill	\$3,866.06
Rusty and Brenda Carney	\$3,969.18
Matt and Cristina Price	\$4,260.57
David and Angie Outlaw	\$5,787.86
Tyler and Kellie Penn	\$5,937.01
Nathan and Linda Snow	\$6,917.75
Steve and Becky Riggs	\$8,343.62
Jack and Ashley Ketteman	\$9,259.75
Don and Ruth McDonald	\$10,447.42
Jerry and Barbara Gibbs	\$10,755.15

Snapshots Around the World



Brazil: Pastor Israel Paranhos at the Second FWB Church in Araras, Brazil, baptized two young men on New Year's Eve.

Panama: The Panama Association of FWB Churches held their annual convention January 6-7. Dr. Kenneth Eagleton, director of field partnerships, attended the services, met with the executive committee, and visited churches throughout the country.

Japan: Mrs. C. and her two sons began attending Kamifukuoka Christ FWB Church after joining in the church's family Christmas program in December. She accepted Christ as Savior in January.

Cuba: Cuban pastors and leaders participated in a five-day retreat on the campus of the Cedars of Lebanon Seminary in Pinar del Rio, Cuba, January 22-27. The retreat featured speakers from the States. Dr. Robert Picirilli led two sessions each day, one on Calvinism versus Arminianism and the other on the pastor and his ministry. Dr. Neil Gilliland spoke daily on pastoral counseling. Dr. Danny Baer taught daily sessions on

evangelism. Additionally, the men gathered each evening for worship services. Dr. Picirilli addressed the men twice during the week and Dr. Baer preached once. Sam McVay traveled with the team and served as translator. Sam, Neil, and Dr. Picirilli spent the weekend following the retreat in Havana and spoke in the La Lisa FWB Church on Sunday.

France: The Free Will Baptist church in Nantes elected their first French pastor, Patrice Alcindor, on February 11. The Alcindor family will move to Nantes in July to begin their ministry. Over the last four decades, missionaries have pastored this church.

Nicaragua: A Panamanian couple (members of the Bethania FWB Church in Panama City, Panama), Emiliano and Carolaine, enrolled in a master's of business administration course at a prestigious Nicaraguan university several years ago. Emiliano completed the two-year course at the top of his class. The university invited him to stay on as a researcher. From the beginning, the couple held Bible studies at the university. Intellectuals at all levels of faith—agnostic to Catholic, curious to nominal believers—have attended throughout the time. An average of nine people participate in each study. Kenneth Eagleton heard their testimony at the annual Panamanian national convention

and encouraged, "Pray the Lord would give Emiliano wisdom as he responds to deep questions. Ask God to change lives as people come into contact with His Word."

France: The first *JPense* event of 2018 was held January 27. More than 150 people attended, with non-believers bringing other non-believers. Approximately 10% of attendees signed up to participate in discussion groups. Joel Teague addressed the theme, "Where is God? Why is there so much suffering in the world?"

Panama: Panamanian women held their annual retreat February 2-3 on the campus of the Chame seminary. Typically, the time is reserved for encouragement, fellowship, and the spiritual growth of women who gather from churches around the country. This year, women decided to focus on evangelism and invited unsaved friends to attend with them, free-of-charge. Several women made professions of faith. Keila Delgado, formerly of Panama and Cuba and currently living in Arkansas, spoke during plenary sessions.



Building the Kingdom



BY CHRIS COMPTON



Most Christians agree outreach and missions are a good thing. The idea of sending a missionary to the field, putting a new roof on someone's home, purchasing backpacks for kids, or funding the church's outreach account gives us all the "warm fuzzies." But, for some, this feeling never becomes reality. Why? Some say they can't afford to. Their daily expenses and debt have become too much of a burden. One of the greatest tools to keep people out of debt and constant financial crisis—and able to give freely as God leads—is an emergency fund.

It doesn't matter how well you plan things in life, or how much money you make. No one knows what is going to happen. A transmission goes out. The refrigerator stops cooling. A child takes an unexpected trip to the ER. Unexpected things happen from time to time, and it pays to be prepared.

According to a survey by Bankrate.com, 63% of American households do not have enough money saved to cover a \$500 to \$1,000 emergency expense. When one doesn't have money set aside, it is easy to resort to a credit card to cover the expense. With the average credit card rate at 14.97%, that emergency just became more stressful and the expense more expensive.

The solution? Establish an emergency fund. Your parents or grandparents likely encouraged you to have a "rainy day" fund. They knew what they were talking about. An emergency fund puts a buffer between you and those rainy days. It turns a crisis into an inconvenience. Your emergency fund is a reserve to cover truly unexpected expenses and should only be used for true emergencies. Not only is an emergency fund wise, it is biblical. Proverbs 21:20 says, "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up."

While having an emergency fund is smart for anyone, how much to put back depends on each family's financial situation. The more stable your income, the less you

need in an emergency fund. Most experts recommend setting aside three to six months of living expenses.

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For those just starting an emergency fund, that goal may seem unattainable. Start small with a goal of \$1,000. This amount will cover many of your unexpected expenses or an insurance deductible. It will also allow you to sleep better at night. After you reach that goal, set another attainable savings goal and

just keep saving. No matter how much you save, just having an emergency fund makes all the difference to your peace of mind.

Keep your emergency fund in a place where you can access it easily (preferably not in a jar buried in the backyard). A good place to store these funds is in a tradition-

al savings account or a money market account. Both are interest bearing and easily accessible. No matter where you choose to put your emergency fund, the idea is to keep it safe and separate from the rest of your resources.

Feeling secure in your finances and knowing you are prepared if an unexpected crisis arises will give you peace of mind and allow you to sleep better at night. Less stress and better sleep will give you the freedom to focus on other efforts like building the Kingdom! **ONE**

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

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The Outsiders

BY BARRY RAPER



*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.
Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know
how ye ought to answer every man. —Colossians 4:5-6*

Do you know someone who is not a Christian? Perhaps it is a family member, friend, co-worker, or classmate. While only God knows the heart perfectly, as closely as you can tell (and perhaps by his or her own admission) this individual does not believe in Christ. Do you have a face in mind? Now, let me take it a step further: how do you plan on sharing your faith with him or her this year?

Paul describes those who have not put their trust in Christ as “them that are without,” more literally, those who are “outside.” We might be tempted to think of those “outside” the church building or “outside” of our local congregation. However, the real issue is whether a person is a believer in the saving work of Christ. Those trusting Christ are inside. Those who do not believe are outsiders. It is as simple as that. When it comes to the spiritual condition of those outside of Christ, the Bible is clear—all are in a desperate condition, and Christians must respond to the urgent need.

This challenge from the Apostle Paul calls us to consider the responsibility and privilege of sharing our faith. After asking the Colossian believers to pray for an open door for him to share the gospel, Paul immediately challenged the Colossians in their own witnessing efforts. He focused on two indispensable and inseparable parts of sharing our faith—actions and speech.

Actions: Watch Your Walk

What did Paul mean when he instructed the Colossians to “walk in wisdom toward them that are without”? He was urging his readers to be wise in their lifestyle before and interaction with unbelievers. Wisdom comes from knowing God, knowing the Word of God, and knowing how to apply the principles of the Word of God to everyday life. Anyone who has done much witnessing at all understands that sharing your faith requires wisdom. No situation or person is quite the same. Paul also urged the Colossians to

redeem or make the most of their time. The word *redeem* carries a financial connotation. We must understand that time is the most valuable commodity available to us and “buy it up.” None of us know how much time we have. In the United States, life expectancy hovers around 80 years of age, but expectancy is no guarantee. When you watch sports, you see teams trying to manage the clock. In football, a quarterback spikes the ball to stop the clock. A basketball team fouls the opposing team to stop the clock. Timeouts still the clock for a few moments, but eventually the clock runs out, and the game is over. In real life, we have no such measures to stop time. And, more importantly, this is no game. This is life, death, and eternity.

Be Salty

While our actions are important in communicating the faith, ultimately “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). With this in

mind, Paul urged the Colossians to have grace-filled speech, “seasoned with salt.” To be “salty” in popular slang means to be disrespectful or agitated. That is not what Jesus had in mind when He told believers, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men” (Matthew 5:13).

Salt has a preservative quality to it. This was especially important in biblical times, when it was used to cure and keep foods.

Of course, salt also adds flavor to food. The metaphor is clear: in a world of death, decay, and dullness, the followers of Jesus bring a preservative quality to the world. Second Corinthians 2:14-17 builds on this thought when it challenges us to spread the fragrance—the knowledge of Jesus—everywhere we go.

Yet, the only way our speech can be gracious and salty (in the proper sense) is if we become

conduits of grace. In other words, grace must be at work in our own lives before we can season the lives of others. God’s loving and gracious activity and power must permeate our lives. We cannot simply turn it on when witnessing opportunities arise. We must live every day in grace. Our efforts to share the gospel will then overflow from our hearts. It is out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). Gracious, salty speech starts in the heart.

Make It Personal

In 2012, LifeWay Research conducted a survey of churchgoers and discovered 80% of faithful churchgoers believe they have a personal responsibility to share their faith. Only 61% of those surveyed, however, had told another person how to become a Christian in the previous six months.”¹

If you are a Christian, you have a responsibility to share the gift you

¹ <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/research-survey-sharing-christ-2012>

have received. You don’t have to present it exactly the same way I would. Conversations with people about spiritual matters seldom happen in neat little packages. While it doesn’t matter *how* you share your faith, it is crucial that you do.

Sharing your faith takes consistency in your walk, your lifestyle. It takes wisdom. It takes gracious speech, seasoned with salt. How serious is this responsibility? Just look at Paul. A man in chains for spreading the gospel asks believers to pray he will have more opportunities to share the gospel. Then, he urges them—and us—to answer God’s call to share the gospel with the outsiders before it is eternally too late. Sounds serious to me! **ONE**

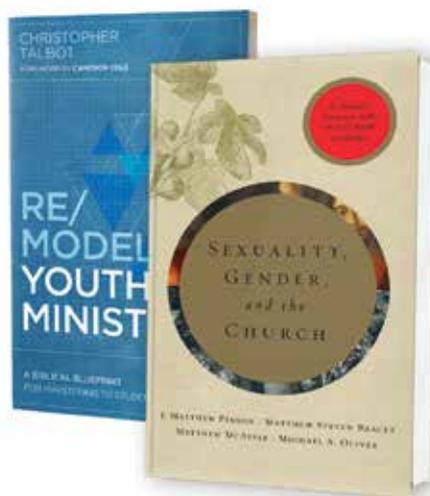
About the Columnist: Dr. Barry Raper is program coordinator for ministry studies at Welch College and pastor of Bethel FWB Church near Ashland City, Tennessee.

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GOOD NEWS, GOOD JOBS, *and* GOOD WORKS

BY KEVIN L. HESTER

Good News

Welch College takes its mission to educate leaders to serve Christ, His Church, and His world very seriously. Everything we do at Welch College is geared toward preparing our students for a life of the mind, a life of service, and a life of fruitful Kingdom work in vocational fields from ministry to education and from healthcare to banking.

Apparently, our students have made this mission of service their own. In May 2017, Welch College surveyed its graduates from the last five years on employment, ministry, and service. A robust 12% response rate allows the College to feel very confident in generalizing the data from this survey. It also demonstrates several myths about a Bible college education.

GOOD JOBS

One myth quickly dispelled by the survey was that Bible college graduates have a hard time finding a job. In actuality, 100% of respondents indicated they were employed, and 88% percent reported they were employed full time and working in the area of their undergraduate major. One hundred percent of respondents also reported their undergraduate major mostly or directly relates to their area of employment. These numbers are exceptionally strong considering the slow recovery of the job market in recent years.

Another myth is you can't get a job outside of the church with a degree from a Bible college, or you at least won't find a well-paying job. Again, the numbers tell a different story. While Welch College had numerous church vocations reported (pastoral ministry, youth and family ministry, and missions), other representative oc-

cupations included healthcare jobs like counseling and nursing, teaching occupations from elementary school to college, and jobs in recreation. Eighty-eight percent of the graduates (all the full-time employees) indicated starting salaries of at least \$25,000 with 63% reporting salaries of greater than \$35,000.

Not only are employers recognizing the quality of accredited Welch College degrees, so are our graduates. Whether they work in churches, for non-profits, or in the broader business world they all agreed that their education had prepared them well for their vocation. One hundred percent of those surveyed indicated their degree at Welch College prepared them well for ministry. Respondents also said their major had prepared them well for their vocation.

GOOD WORKS

Another myth crushed by these numbers is that a Bible college degree will not allow you to get into a graduate program. Our graduates are prepared well and enabled by their accredited degrees to enter a number of quality graduate programs in different disciplines. In fact, 63% of those who responded to the survey indicated they had completed or were presently engaged in graduate studies.

As might be expected, Welch College graduates have learned the importance of the local church. One hundred percent of respondents indicated attendance at a local congregation. Seventy-five percent of respondents noted they were members or regular attenders. This compares to 27% of all millennials who regularly attend a place of worship.¹

Not only are our graduates attending churches, but they are also contributing members of their congregations.

As part of a free-response question, our graduates listed the following church activities: preaching, teaching, children's ministry, music, evangelism/outreach, and

discipleship/mentoring. But graduates aren't confining their service to the church. In addition, 63% of our graduates said they were actively engaged in community service with 25% reporting at least 3 hours a week and another 25% reporting an average of more than 8 hours of community service weekly.

It turns out a Welch College education not only prepares a student for ministry but for high quality employment in various vocational fields. Our graduates are working and serving in churches globally. Our graduates have learned the mission of the gospel reaches beyond the boundaries of a map or the walls of a church or business. The Kingdom of God is being built in our communities and around the world, and Welch College graduates are helping fulfill this task. **ONE**

About the Writer : Dr. Kevin Hester is vice president for institutional effectiveness and dean of the School of Theology at Welch College. To learn more about Welch College, visit www.welch.edu.

1 <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/23/millennials-are-less-religious-than-older-americans-but-just-as-spiritual/>



Students Make President and Provost's Honor Roll

The fall 2017 semester at Welch College ended with 93 students receiving academic recognition, according to Provost Matthew McAfee. This honor roll includes both online and Enriched Adult Studies students whose fall courses ended in December.

Thirty-seven students made all A's and were placed on the President's List—9 seniors, 6 juniors, 9 sophomores, and 13 freshmen. Fifty-six earned a 3.25 GPA and all A's and B's and were placed on the Provost's list—15 seniors, 8 juniors, 11 sophomores, and 22 freshmen.

PRESIDENT'S LIST:

"A" HONOR ROLL

Kandace Ailworth (Fr.) TN
Michelle Alexander (Fr.) TN
Samuel Benninghoff (Sr.) TN
Catherine Blades (Fr.) TN
Laura Boivin (Fr.) TN
Sarah Brown (So.) TN
Joshua Burgus (Sr.) TN
Jimmy Daniels (Sr.) AR
Summer Elliott (So.) QC
Micah Feltner (Fr.) TN
Jakob Gates (Fr.) TN
Jalynn Hood (So.) TN
Joshua Hunter (Jr.) AR
Cheyenne Johnson (Fr.) TN
Kinsley Kivette (So.) TN
Dakota Kron (Jr.) TN
Jonathan Lewis (Sr.) IL

Taylor Marsh (Sr.) TN
Hailee Morgan (Fr.) GA
Hannah Morgan (Jr.) TN
Jonathan Payne (Fr.) IL
Kasey Perry (Sr.) NC
Daniel Rojas (Jr.) TN
Kendal Ryan (Fr.) IL
Steven Simpkins (Jr.) TN
Kori Slemph (Sr.) VA
Halen Stidham (So.) AL
Sonny Thomas (So.) NC
Deborah Trifonova (So.) BG
Abby Walker (Jr.) NC
Abigail Warren (So.) TN
Ryan Whiticker (Sr.) TN
Kullen Williams (Fr.) TN
Brittany Wilson (So.) NC
Destinee Woolett (Fr.) SD
Whitney Wright (Sr.) OH
Zealtiel Zuniga Anaya (Fr.) AR

PROVOST'S LIST:

"B" HONOR ROLL

Seniors

Stacy Allison, TN
Rachel Anderson, TN
Gabriel Cameron, GA
Benjamin Campbell, AR
Alyssa Hill, VA
Russell Houske, TN
Anna Kear, TN
Jacob Lute, OH
Rae Mahaney, OH
Hailee Mann, TN
Thomas Moody, TN

Kayla Newland, TN
Brandon Presley, TN
Meredith Ryan, IL
Stephen Seeley, NC

Juniors

Dalton Alvis, PA
Erica Brown, GA
Keren Delgado, AR
Thomas Cummings, TN
Daniel Hubin, TN
David Robinson, NC
Elizabeth Stevanus, TN
Rachel White, VA

Sophomores

Michelle Bigelow, CA
Mary Brown, AR
Elisha Cameron, GA
Baylea Freeman, VA
Kaliesha Garrison, MO
Andrew Glass, OH
Jacklyn Grizzle, TN
Jacqueline Hunter, AR
Avery Jones, OK
Mariah Moore, KS
Sarah Pierce, IL

Freshmen

Riley Bell, TN
Brice Carter, GA
Alegna Cochran, TN
Victoria Crook, TN
Michaela Easley, TN
Jessalyn Eubanks, IL
Garrett Galbreath, TN

Nursing Degree Formalized With Union University

On Thursday, December 7, Welch College President Dr. Matt Pinson and Union University President Dr. Dub Oliver signed an agreement creating a new Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) degree, according to Dr. Greg Ketteman, vice president for strategic initiatives.

“In August, President Pinson announced a collaborative relationship with three universities to address the increasing demand for nurses,” Ketteman said. “Belmont University, Cumberland University, and Union University have each agreed to create a seamless path for Welch College students to be admitted to

(continued from page 32)

Christy Harris, NC
 Mark Henry, MO
 Jerry Hopper, AR
 Kelsey Horton, TN
 Jenna Hurt, NC
 Kylie Johnson, MI
 Kayla Jowers, VA
 Jolee McClure, TN
 Jacob Nettles, MO
 Seth Oliver, TN
 Taylor Pate, FL
 Ashlee Presley, TN
 Mallie Sharenberger, TN
 Gabriella Smith, CO
 Victoria Thomsen, TN

their Schools of Nursing.”

According to Ketteman, in this new arrangement with Union, Welch freshmen will pursue an associate’s (A.S.) degree with a Pre-Nursing/Biology major at Welch. Students will be able to take advantage of Tennessee Promise, as well as other federal and Welch-based financial aid. These students will begin volunteering in a healthcare setting, primarily within the High-Point Health System.

Upon completing the Welch A.S. degree, graduates will transfer into the B.S.N. program at Union, living on the Welch campus while taking nursing courses at Union’s nearby Hendersonville campus. When appropriate, nursing students will participate in clinical education settings in Gallatin and Sumner County. Welch students will be mentored and advised throughout the four-year academic process.

Ketteman said, “One of the great things about this program is that it allows students entrance into a well-known B.S.N. program at a time when admission to such programs is very competitive. It also enables students to complete their B.S.N. at a significantly lower price than at most institutions, since the first two years will be at Welch, which has a significantly lower tui-



tion rate than most private colleges. The last two years will be at Union, which also has competitively priced tuition.”

He continued, “Welch is making a considerable investment in faculty, equipment, and instructional materials to make sure participants in the new program are well prepared and qualified for the rigors of nursing majors. Corporate sponsors and grant applications have been made to offset the start-up cost of this new educational initiative.”

HighPoint Health System has already contributed \$25,000 toward the initiative. Susan Peach, CEO of Sumner Regional Hospital, recently presented a gift to Welch for its new nursing collaborative. “My hope is that this partnership between these schools will fill the need for more nurses in the Mid-state,” Peach noted.

Contact Dr. Ian Hawkins (ihawkins@welch.edu) for more information about the program.

Changing Our Geography

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS



Last year, 38.7 million Americans packed up and moved. That's 12% of us to different neighborhoods or counties, other states or countries. Why do so many change their geography? Many move for Christian ministry, job opportunities, to be nearer to (or farther from) family, for better health care, or to warm frozen toes in the South. Members of the military move because Uncle Sam tells them to. And a few of us simply yield to wanderlust and haul off to a new location just for the pleasure of it.

Whatever the reasons, a mobile lifestyle has its ups and downs. We sat down with two seasoned movers for some insights on the subject. Retired army chaplain Colonel Kerry Steedley has moved 26 times and his wife Brenda, 20 times.

EVANS: If there is a “moving quota,” you two have met it. What are your first thoughts on this mobile lifestyle you chose all those years ago?

KERRY: I see the sovereignty of God through all of it. Though we moved a great deal in chaplaincy, it was the best life for me. My life verse is 2 Timothy 2:4, which talks about pleasing your commanding officer, in my case, the Lord who called me, not a general or colonel. That needs to be the case for all of us.

EVANS: Paul's soldier metaphor works for civilians, too, doesn't it? Whatever our reason for packing up, we need to be sure the Lord is directing and presiding over it.

KERRY: It's always about people first, then place. Because I was a chaplain, I had the privilege of wearing the cross on my uniform, but I never knew what the next job would entail. I just knew those people and that place were *His* assignment for me, even when it was hard.

EVANS: What were some of those hard places?

BRENDA: For Kerry, the hardest was Washington, D.C., because of the exposure and visibility of his position.

KERRY: I'm an introvert. We both are. I go into this big room with all these people, knowing I need to start a conversation. It's not always easy, but you do what you're called to do.

BRENDA: For me, Hawaii was hard.

KERRY: Sometimes they don't tell you about paradise until you get there [laughter].

BRENDA: Our first tour there, the house was a cinder-block bunker with bright yellow walls and six colors of tiles. We had a dehumidifier but no heat, no A/C. I quickly learned to live with geckos because they ate roaches. But the worst was that we were empty nesters. Our son and daughter were gone, so I was lonely, and I complained. Eventually, I had to apologize to the Lord. After three years, I came to love that house, even without our children. If I wrote a book about lessons I've learned from my homes, that one would be in it. It's not the house but who you are with that makes the difference.

KERRY: Moving can be hard, and some wives just won't do it. I'm blessed to have Brenda as my wife. We are partners. I would have been a dropout if it hadn't been for her.

BRENDA: I took it seriously that God called me to be Kerry's wife. Wherever he was sent, I was sent, and had a role as chaplain's wife to be responsible for spouses. As Kerry moved up, my role moved up, too.

KERRY: I'm sure I was sometimes evaluated well because of Brenda. They thought I must have good judgment to have a wife like her [laughter]. Back to Hawaii, the second time there, our house was a doublewide on stilts on a hillside. At night, wild pigs came to root under our porch. You know...paradise!

BRENDA: At least we had a screened-in lanai.

EVANS: Wild pigs, geckos running across your feet, cockroaches—what kind of person do you need to be to survive a mobile lifestyle?

KERRY: Everywhere we've ever lived, I've worked with people who are unhappy and complain all the time because of where

they are. I've told them to get out and go home, because if God calls you to a work and a place, He is going to direct, and it'll be your best life. I didn't say *easiest*, I said *best*. I firmly believe the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, so you look forward, not back. In the military, we had a preference sheet. We called it a "dream sheet," and it was mostly dream because when orders came, you went or you got out. No negotiation. Whatever the calling, you have to look at it that way and not worry about the unknown.

BRENDA: Another thing about moving a lot—you need to be organized. Kerry makes lists and checks things off, but as a former teacher I make a whole lesson plan. I want to know the end, how it's going to turn out. But still be flexible because you will have to adjust. I've been on my knees many times because of those adjustments: "Lord, do something." It may be about the children's school, a house, or job—whatever. "Lord, help us. Do something." Adjusting is part of it.

KERRY: Another thing, wherever God moved us, He always had people waiting to help us grow in faith. You have to be the kind of person who looks for that.

BRENDA: When my parents died, I knew God had sent us to Fort Benning because of the way the people nurtured me and loved me. The Lord put us there at that time.

KERRY: A negative side of moving—I like my stuff. I'm a packrat. If I had it to do over again, I think I'd live with less and do without some of my stuff. But the hardest thing for me to let go of is people, and I've done a lot of that.

BRENDA: But positives come out of negatives. It grew us. Moving brought us closer. We learned to cling to one another. I think of Germany.

KERRY: Tracy and Kevin were in third and sixth grade. It was winter and cold when we came in at the airport and moved into a little apartment on an upper floor of what had once been German barracks. We all cried that first night. I told them, "We'll try to stick it out until summer then I'll resign." Then came steam heat and



frozen pipes and lots of stuff, but by summer, we all loved it. Kevin had gotten into baseball, and we traveled throughout Europe, even into East Germany. Kevin cried when we left. I think we all did.

EVANS: What about the moving process itself and finding a place to live? How have you juggled that?

BRENDA: I always worked myself to death, organizing, sorting, labeling, but you have to do it. I hated to see strangers come in to move us. Over the years we lost two pianos, and a young mover stole a ring Kerry had given me. But overall, the moving experience itself was good, and I got my ring back four months later along with a lesson in faith.

KERRY: My warning is to be smart and don't expect people to be honest.

BRENDA: Finding a home is harder. With children, you think about a good school and good neighborhood. Home is your haven and place to be alone. I need that.

KERRY: I would look for motivated sellers and pick five

houses for Brenda to look at. We'd ask ourselves: could this be home, not just a house? If not, we kept looking. We typically had ten to 30 days, so we always felt pressure.

BRENDA: From Germany, where we'd been so happy, we moved to Ozark, Alabama. Nice brick house, children had their own rooms, but some things were hard. Kevin had played baseball all over Germany. In Ozark, he had to prove himself again and again. Hometown boys played together. When it's hard for your children, it's hard for you. Finally, a new coach was hired who recognized Kevin's talent. Eventually, Ozark was wonderful. It was home. And that's what you want, wherever you are, a place you call home. **ONE**

About the Writers: Over 55 years of marriage and ministry, Bill and Brenda Evans have had 13 "moving adventures" in six states from New Hampshire to California. They now live in Ashland, Kentucky.

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Week 4 - God is Unchanging

June 2018 - New Testament

(2 Corinthians) The Believer's Role as a Steward of the Gospel

Week 1 - The Believer's Quest

Week 2 - The Believer's Identity

Week 3 - The Believer's Testimony

Week 4 - The Believer's Strength



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Meeting Unmet Needs

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

The Samburu people of remote north-central Kenya have a desperate need for clean water. The area in which they live is called Barsalinga and receives only three to eight inches of rain a year. To put that in perspective, Nashville, Tennessee, receives 48 inches of rain per year.

The Samburu are a primitive, nomadic people who live much like Abraham of the Old Testament. The nearest major source of water is a 3.5-hour walk to the Ewaso Nyiro (Black River), but even this source is unreliable. The responsibility to get water often falls on the women, who frequently dig in the dry riverbed to find it. Even when they obtain water from the river, it is unclean and disease-ridden.

The Samburu cannot live closer to the river due to the threat of larger animals and malaria. In recent years, over 600 of the Samburu people have received the living water of Jesus Christ, but they need a reliable water source to sustain them physically. In 2017, Free Will Baptist International Missions applied for and received a grant of \$30,000 from Free Will Baptist Foundation to dig two wells in this region. The wells are



expensive to dig. The logistics of getting the equipment necessary to dig a well to this remote part of Africa is costly. This region also requires a deep well. In Tennessee, a well rarely has to be dug beyond 75 feet to find a reliable source of water. In the Barsalinga region, the depth to sustainable water is generally 150 to 225 feet. The cost of pipe alone contributes to the expense of digging wells.

International Missions, through the work of Eddy and Amanda Simmons, has already been reaching these people and giving them the Living Water. However, the Gospels of both Matthew and Mark refer to giving a cup of cold water in Jesus' name as something we all should do. Meeting physi-

cal needs is often the doorway to meeting spiritual needs.

The Foundation has been blessed over the last four decades. Total assets have gone from zero to nearly \$80 million. Due to this growth, a grant program has been established to help Free Will Baptist ministries fund projects like the Living Waters Project to help the Samburu people. This year \$500,000 will be awarded to several ministries as grants to meet unmet needs. **ONE**

About the Columnist: David Brown is director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. To learn more about the grants program, call 877-336-7575 or email foundation@nafwb.org.



Understanding What You Control

BY JOHN BRUMMITT



“Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). And all of God’s people said *amen!* But then they left church, and worry and anxiety climbed into the car with them and rode home.

Many people are prone to worry. Anxiety is often the result of worrying about the future. Stepping into the unknown is unnerving. The way most of us deal with our worry is through a sense of control, or rather, through our locus of control. *Locus of control* is a basic concept Julian Rotter proposed in the 1950s. Do you control your life, or does something else? This concept can be either internal or external.

Internal locus is the belief that personal decisions and efforts directly affect the thoughts and behaviors of a person—that is, you control your reactions to situations and your environment. *External locus* is the belief that behaviors and thoughts are determined by outside influences or environments. Embracing an external locus of control tends to make you more anxious, since most things we face every day are beyond our control: people we encounter, the weather, car accidents, traffic, news, or the latest market report. For example, if you get stuck

in traffic, drenched in a rainstorm, and then fussed at by your spouse, many people would say you are having a bad day. Your environment and things outside of your control cause you to have a bad day.

Allowing things beyond our control to affect our thoughts and behaviors becomes a problem because we tend to focus and worry about things over which we have no control. When we try to deal with our anxiety by clinging to our own sense of control, we remain in constant fear.

Focus for a moment on just the retirement side of things: you know the future. Instead of using internal locus of control, the market dictates

BY WORKING
HAND-IN-
HAND WITH
HIS PLAN FOR
US, WE LIVE
SUCCESSFUL
LIVES.

our investment saving strategies. Reacting to situations outside our control, bull and bear cycles of the market end up costing us double, because we sell after markets have fallen and buy after markets experience gains. No one person controls the market's ups and downs, and even when the government steps in to try to help, things often don't go as planned. But letting anxiousness about what *might* happen keep you from setting aside money you need for retirement will only lead to greater problems later.

Whether the markets are in a bull or bear cycle, you need to keep your saving strategy on course. If you always let outside factors control your feelings about retirement or investments, you will either panic, selling when the markets are down (the wrong move), or you will buy when the markets are up (again, wrong move).

We know from years of study and research, that fear of loss often causes us to miss out on the greatest rewards. Which brings us back to our question. Do you control

your life, or does something else? The truth is, our lives are in God's hands. We shouldn't try to take back things we can't control anyway.

Sure, we all have to prepare for the future. We don't know if we will die tomorrow or live to be 102, but we need to do our best to prepare for anything God allows. By working hand-in-hand with His plan for us, we live successful lives. While this doesn't mean our lives will be free from downturns and setbacks, we can rest in the knowledge He is in control, and we are not. **ONE**

About the Writer: John Brummitt became director of the Board of Retirement in January 2016. He graduated in 2011 with an MBA from Tennessee Tech University. A 2004 graduate of Welch College, he has been with the Board of Retirement since the spring of 2006. Learn more about retirement options: www.BoardofRetirement.com.

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Helping After Harvey

BY HEATH FERGUSON

Last August, Hurricane Harvey devastated southeast Texas, specifically the Houston area. A record 60 inches of rainfall fell in a four-day span. The resulting floods forced dams to release water at record amounts. Conroe Dam, two miles east of our church facility began releasing water at 73,000 gallons per second. Areas downstream flooded, and thousands of homes were destroyed and families displaced. Five months later, recovery efforts continue thanks to nearly \$96,000 in relief funds that has flowed through our church, allowing us to assist those in need. While life has returned to somewhat of a routine, victims of the flood are still displaced from their homes, with the exception of one family.

Relief efforts began almost immediately after the storm passed. Through mutual friends, John Phillips and his crew from Phoenix, Arizona, delivered 16,000 pounds of supplies. Within minutes after their arrival (after three long days and four blown tires) the trailers had been emptied and supplies distributed to local shelters housing displaced families.

Eastside Free Will Baptist Church sustained serious storm damage. The church replaced damaged carpet throughout the building with ceramic tile due to financial restrictions. However, your financial gifts made it possible for Eastside to carpet their classrooms. We are thankful for Buffalo Floor Covering, owned by a high school friend, for giving us honest prices (rather than doubling or tripling the amount like so many dishonest service providers did in the wake of the storm). We are also grateful they finished their work in a timely manner.

Four days after the storm, we caught a ride across nearby Spring Creek on a large truck to check on a church member's home. The ride was necessary because streets were still impassable for regular vehicles. Also riding in the truck were Steve and Cibeles, headed to their home for the first time following the storm. The couple has

no family in the United States and no one to help them with recovery. Their family (including two junior age girls) had been living in a hotel, and they were anxious to assess their home and move back in—water and all.

The couple discovered water had risen four feet into their home, and they lost everything. Their couch was resting across the kitchen counter. Mud covered their new floors just installed after years of savings. Our church put the family up in a hotel, provided hot meals, helped them clean and remove sheetrock, and gave them gift cards to help them rebuild. Today, they are the only family we know back in their home. Before they ever knew the location of Woodforest Church, they began calling it “their church.” Today, they attend on a regular basis as they continue to rebuild their home and lives.

Joey and Christy live across the street from church members Jonathan and Ashley McNeese. After the storm, our church sent a work crew into their hard-hit neighborhood. The crew went door-to-door to offer help. Jonathan and our crew found Christy standing alone in her house with no idea where to start. They began removing the items from the home and started a relationship with this dear family. Because Joey works two jobs to make ends meet, he was unable to be at the house



much of the time. If it were not for the assistance of the church, this family would not be as close to returning to their home. We've helped them with gift cards and food, and they should be back in their home by February.

Space does not allow for a detailed look at every story that came out of Harvey, but there were many. God opened many doors for our church to minister thanks to the financial gifts from around the country. Multiple families benefited from clothing, necessities, cleaning supplies, gift cards to Home Depot and Lowe's—any other items to help them get back on their feet. Danny and Heather lost everything in their home after it was submerged in eight feet of water. After helping them with furniture, they will return home in the next two weeks. The Carl family also had more than eight feet of water in their home. They recently sold that house and will move into another home. We have helped them with gift cards for groceries and essentials during the transition. The Gillmans lost everything in their rental home, including the family car. They were about to be kicked out of the hotel where they had stayed for weeks. We were able to extend their stay at the hotel until they secured new housing. A schoolteacher who lost everything needed clothing and necessities, and Woodforest Church provided them.

Just before Christmas, Tiffany contacted me. Though she had just found a place to live for her three children and her sister and her four children, they lacked basic necessities. The family had beds but no bedding, and her young daughter asked Tiffany if "Santa would bring her a pillow and blanket." It wasn't Santa but God working through you and Woodforest Church who provided for this family.

Thank you! None of these stories would have been possible without the generosity of Free Will Baptists across the country. God used your gifts to impact this community and has given our church an opportunity to show the love of Christ and share the gospel. **ONE**

About the Writer: Heath Ferguson and his family are planting Woodforest FWB Church in Magnolia, Texas. To contribute to ongoing recovery efforts, visit www.fwbmastersmen.org.

North American Ministries Hosts First Pastors' "Boot Camp"

Antioch, TN—North American Ministries (NAM) hosted the first Pastors' Boot Camp training event January 23-24, at the National office building in Antioch, Tennessee. Twenty pastors from seven states attended the two-day event, which featured 12 sessions of training on information ranging from security to social media, leadership, and church health issues.

Speakers included NAM directors David Crowe, Jim McComas, Brad Ransom, and Kenneth Akers.



NAM Director David Crowe

Guest speakers included NAM Board Chairman Jeff Jones and Robert J. Morgan, teaching pastor of the Donelson Fellowship.

Response to the free event was extremely positive as participants enjoyed great teaching, fellowship, and food provided by NAM. Sessions were additionally offered on Facebook Live on the NAM page. Hundreds of viewers joined the sessions via the Internet.

Brian Cameron, pastor of White Oaks FWB Church in Macon,

Georgia, commented, "I attended the Pastors' Boot Camp not really knowing what I would get out of it. What I received was practical help for my ministry, insights from men with decades of experience, wonderful fellowship, and tools that will aid me well into the future. The entire staff of NAM was extremely helpful and took the time to invest in me as a pastor. I am extremely grateful. The next time they have a Boot Camp, sign up as soon as you can. I promise you will not regret it." **ONE**

New Church Planters Approved

Antioch, TN—The North American Ministries (NAM) Board of Directors met in Nashville Wednesday, December 6, 2017. During the meeting, three new church planting teams were approved for service.



Maitland & Jessica Bailey

The West Virginia State Mission Board and NAM partnered to send **Maitland and Jessica Bailey** to plant a church in Morgantown, West Virginia. In the northern part of the state, Morgantown boasts a population of over 30,000 people. In addition, the city is home to West Virginia University, which has an enrollment of over 27,000 students.

Zach and Alishia Parent grew up in Wellington, Kansas. After attending college at Randall Uni-



Zach & Alishia Parent

versity they are following God's call to return to their home state and plant a church in McPherson, Kansas. Zach comes to NAM from Eastside FWB Church in Muldrow, Oklahoma, where he served as youth pastor.

Steve and Amanda Schmidt will start a church in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the largest city in the state. Steve and Amanda were both born in Missouri, but Steve was raised in Wyoming. Steve comes to NAM after serving churches in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Shane and Jamie Suggs are associate church planters with Josh and Ashley Bennett in Tifton, Georgia, and joint project workers with the State of Georgia. Shane's responsibilities at Awaken FWB Church include lead-



Steve & Amanda Schmidt



Shane & Jamie Suggs

ership development, business operations, children's ministry, and more. Shane and his family come to NAM from Alabama. He has been a pastor, church planter, and youth pastor in various churches. Shane and Jamie have two daughters, Grace and Eden.

Brad Ransom, director of church planting said, "We are excited about the future for these newly commissioned church planters. Please pray for these families as they venture into new fields of service." **ONE**



“Wow! What a Ride.”

BY TERRY AUSTIN

I imagine most of us have experienced a lengthy meeting we were happy to leave and forget most of the content presented. Briefings and meetings are like sermons—the introduction and conclusion are critically important to ensure the audience remembers the message you wanted them to hear.

Recently, during a briefing, the presenter ended with this quote: “My final wish for you is that you do not view life as a journey to the grave, with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather that you skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming: ‘Wow! What a ride.’”

For many years, the National Association of Free Will Baptists has endorsed ministers to serve as chaplains to the military, law enforcement, and first responders. The first Free Will Baptist military chaplain was army chaplain Gerald Mangham. He was a pioneer, going beyond what was required of him in education and ministry. Each phase of his service as a chaplain gave him unique and unprecedented opportunities to minister to his “parishioners” and fellow soldiers. For Chaplain Mangham, this ministry took him to Vietnam, both to minister to American soldiers and to defend the country. This is true of other types of chaplains who both minister to and participate in the same training and responsibilities as their “parishioners.”

I had the privilege of serving as an airborne chaplain in the 82nd Airborne Division stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I had no idea what those brave men and women did until I joined them. The easy answer is they jump out of airplanes. The more detailed version of that answer is they jump out of airplanes at 1,200

feet above ground level, going 140 knots with at least 65 extra pounds of gear. Each jump is an act of faith. You hope your parachute deploys and lowers you to the ground at a speed that allows you to react and land safely. Many times, these jumps are conducted at night without (or with very little) light. Wow! What a ride. I became a paratrooper because my parishioners were paratroopers. I believe they heard my message because I was one of them going through the same hardships and joys they experienced.

Today, I find myself in Washington, D.C., as the military district of Washington command chaplain, a position once held by Free Will Baptist Chaplain (Colonel-Retired) Kerry Steedley. I have the privilege to serve with some of America’s finest sons and daughters who routinely honor our nation’s military dead by performing funerals at Arlington National Cemetery and conducting military ceremonies to honor our nation. I have been privileged to pray publicly, and at times, to lead the nation in prayer. I constantly remind myself (and those with whom I serve) I am simply a Free Will Baptist minister in uniform. I am amazed at how the Lord has blessed me because I answered the call to minister in the military.

Any ministry has its unique challenges. As ministers, we have been called to serve in a particular church,

leadership role, or organization...even as a chaplain. The challenges are unique, but the end of the story is always the same. We are seeking to reconcile our parishioners with God through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Though we have been given a noble mission, we are not exempt from the bumps and bruises of life's journey, the hurts from painful encounters, the sadness from disappointments, or the suffering of those we love and to whom we minister. However, there is a great sense of pride and accomplishment when your congregation thanks God for you and your ministry.

I hope you view your life and ministry as a journey through God's will. Serve faithfully and honorably, and in the end, I hope you "slide in broadside, thoroughly

used-up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming: Wow! What a ride." **ONE**

About the Writer: Chaplain (COL) Terry Austin grew up in Delaware and joined the Marine Corps in 1975. While in the Corp, he accepted Christ and answered the call to preach. After attending Welch College and Mid-America Theological Seminary, Austin returned to active duty as a chaplain in December 1989. He has represented Free Will Baptists through Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He and his wife Mona have two adult children, Adam and Tabitha. Learn more about the ministry of FWB chaplains at www.fwbna.com.

Billy Melvin With the Lord

Englewood, Florida—Dr. Billy A. Melvin, former executive secretary of the National Association, died February 1, 2018, at age 88. Melvin served as executive secretary from 1959 to 1966 before accepting a position as executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals, where he remained until retirement in 1995.

Born in Macon, Georgia, in 1929, Billy spent his formative years in Durham, North Carolina. He studied theology at Welch College from 1947-1949 before completing an undergraduate degree at Taylor University in 1951. He later attended Asbury Theological Seminary and completed a M.Div. at Union Theological Seminary. He received honorary doctorate degrees from Azusa Pacific University (1968), Taylor University (1984), and Huntington College (1995), and was awarded the Legion of Honor from Taylor University in 1993. Before starting his work in denominational leadership, Melvin pastored churches in Kentucky and Virginia.

During Dr. Melvin's tenure as executive secretary, the National Association incorporated and received federal tax identification. National departments constructed and moved into a new building. The Sunday School



Department (now Randall House Publications) was established and produced its first curriculum. The denomination added the Historical Commission and the Commission on Theological Liberalism and began endorsing chaplains for the

military. The Master's Men department was officially recognized, and the Executive Office published the *Free Will Baptist Hymn Book*.

In addition to his role as executive secretary, Melvin served as editor of *Contact* magazine (now *ONE Magazine*). Under his leadership, the publication expanded from 16 to 28 pages, and readership rose above 7,000. Melvin additionally authored the *Randall House Minister's Manual* and numerous articles and resources for pastors.

Memorial services were held in Englewood, Florida, and Nashville, Tennessee. Memorial donations may be made to FWB International Missions (fwbgo.com/give), World Relief (worldrelief.org), or the donor's choice of charity.

Preserving Free Will Baptist History

BY PHILLIP T. MORGAN

Since 1963, the Historical Commission of the National Association has been charged with preserving and promoting the history of the denomination. One key aspect of this task is the Historical Collection housed at Welch College. This collection contains a wide variety of records well-organized for researchers to access with ease. However, this process also relies on the faithful help of people throughout the denomination. When everyone takes part, the commission is best able to fulfill its task.

RECORDS FREE WILL BAPTISTS CREATE

Free Will Baptists have created many formal records since migrating to America in 1684. Records preserve the ideas and actions of people beyond the moment. Every culture creates records, even non-literate oral cultures. However, oral cultures can only preserve information through memory, which relies on interpersonal communication and is prone to deterioration. Written records are much more reliable.

Though we live in a literate society, Free Will Baptists in the southern Palmer Movement did not create many written records before the 20th century. In addition, many southern records were lost or destroyed during the Civil War and its aftermath. During the 20th century, however, Free Will Baptists have produced many more written records, especially after forming the National Association in 1935.

Some of the gaps in our records could be filled by oral histories. Older Free Will Baptists hold memories of many events and may be able to recount stories heard as young people from their elders. In fact, an octogenarian today still could hold second-hand oral knowledge from the 19th century. While this information is prone to mistakes and memory loss, few other sources remain. Interviewing these

aged saints and committing their responses to video or audio recording or written transcription is an invaluable resource for historians.

Beyond memory and oral traditions, Free Will Baptists also have many written and social records. Social records are especially important for Free Will Baptist historians. Social records contain information about the actions and events of social bodies, such as religious organizations, political organizations, or social groups. Primarily, these include minutes and periodicals for churches, associations, and ministries. Pamphlets and books detail the actions and events of various people and organizations. Even bulletins, flyers, photographs, posters, promotional materials, and other printed every-day materials (broadly known as *realia*) from special events contain valuable information.

Social records are one of the primary forms preserved at the Historical Collection. It is our ongoing goal to collect all Free Will Baptist periodicals and associational minutes. The collection is on the mailing lists of most Free Will Baptist periodicals, and some associational clerks regularly send old and new minutes. However, many gaps still exist in these records, and both clergy and laypeople provide an invaluable service in helping us gather these materials. We also require their help collecting books, pamphlets, photographs, and all other *realia*.

Instrumental and legal records are also a primary concern for the collection. *Instrumental records* hold information designed for a specific task, such as defining the beliefs and practices of a Free Will Baptist organization (treatises, statements of faith, and church covenants), analytically addressing some aspect of Free Will Baptist theology or doctrine, instructing in spiritual growth (by a Free Will Baptist author), and research data on Free Will Baptists.

The vast majority of legal records created by churches and associations are charters filed with the government. At times, however, Free Will Baptists have become embroiled in more complex legal matters that produced reams of records. The collection preserves these types of documents (depending on the importance of the legal proceeding to the denomination as a whole).

Individuals also preserve personal information that can be incidental (birth, marriage, and death records), extemporaneous (diaries and journals), or reflective (memoirs and autobiographies). These personal documents also take the form of interpersonal communications—letters, emails, and audio or visual recordings. The Historical Collection preserves these personal records from people who have had significant influence on the denomination.

HOW THE HISTORICAL COLLECTION PRESERVES RECORDS

Preserving documents is an intentional and surprisingly complex endeavor. Determining what to keep is difficult. Records must be catalogued so researchers can locate them easily. Finally, archivists take special care to preserve records from deterioration.

Generally, the collection's purpose is to preserve "anything published or preserved by, for, or about Free Will Baptists."¹ However, the limits of space, time, money, and manpower make it impossible to preserve everything. Instead, we limit the number of copies of any record, and preserve only items important for research in the future.

When the collection acquires new records, they're entered into Welch Library's online catalog. From anywhere in the world, researchers can search the catalog by author, publisher, subject, title, or other, more technical filters. Ideally, this means they can find specific records they know exist and discover new records relating to their work. Researchers can even request scans of specific records be emailed to them when necessary, although our resources are limited, and these requests take time to fulfill.

After cataloging, records are carefully preserved in the collection. Too often, people store records in musty stacks, spare rooms, storage closets, and display cases where they are exposed to climate fluctuations, harmful sunlight, insects, and rodents. While this destruction is unintentional,

1 Robert E. Picirilli, "Free Will Baptist Historical Collection: Collection Development Policy and Manual" (Unpublished, 2017), 1.

it still erases the recorded memories of our denomination. Records of all types need to be stored in an accessible, climate-controlled space reasonably secure from theft. At the collection, records are stored in archival-quality envelopes and boxes or shelved in the main room of the collection. These materials cannot be checked out of the library, and some records can only be accessed with the assistance of the archivist or a librarian. Moldy books are treated to stop their deterioration. Documents are unfolded, bent corners straightened, and rusty staples and paperclips removed so they won't stain the paper.

Another important aspect of preservation is to provide universal access. With the help of North American Ministries and Free Will Baptist Foundation, the Historical Commission is currently scanning all minutes in the collection and uploading text-searchable PDF files to www.fwbhistory.com. This is a massive undertaking, requiring many hours of labor. We began with the minutes of the National Association and are proceeding alphabetically through the states. Currently, we're scanning minutes from the state of Mississippi. The results are already benefiting researchers and opening new vistas of historical study.

YOU CAN HELP!

Although we occasionally seek additions to our holdings, we primarily rely on faithful donors to supply the collection with historical records. Hopefully, this brief overview will encourage others to take part in preserving our denominational memory. If you would like to help Free Will Baptists preserve our history, please consider donating materials to the Historical Collection. Donations can be mailed to the address below. For help determining which records are important for preservation or what the collection needs, contact Phillip Morgan at pmorgan@welch.edu or at Welch Library, NAFWB Historical Collection, 1045 Bison Trail, Gallatin, TN 37066. 

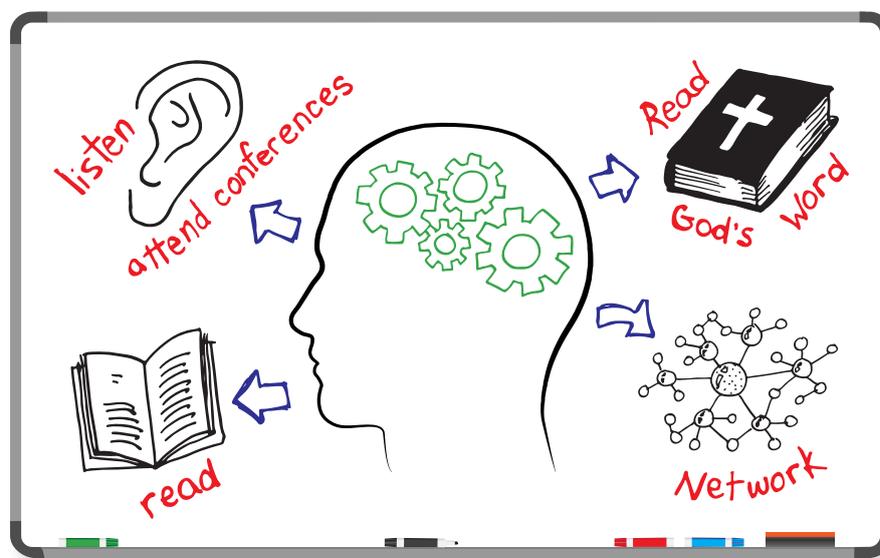
About the Writer: Phillip T. Morgan is curator of the Free Will Baptist Historical Collection housed at Welch College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he additionally serves as History Program coordinator and professor. Phillip, His wife Megan, and their two children Isaiah and Julia live on a small farm in Robertson County, Tennessee.

Leader as a Learner

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

Leaders distinguish themselves by inspiring people to be more than followers thought possible and by changing the culture together. Inspiring or influencing a group of people is no easy task. Leaders who decide their call is greater than managing status quo must see beyond the status quo. Complacency and leadership cannot coexist for healthy, organized groups. Vision, by definition, suggests an attainable goal not yet achieved. Paul modeled “pressing toward the mark.” Goals, marks, achievements—all require moving forward to new ground. Habits may be the mark of discipline, but the lack of honest reflection is a sign of stagnation.

How can you break out of stagnation? Network with other leaders, attend conferences, and read books. Begin by seeing yourself as a leader-learner. Find other leaders who solved the problems you



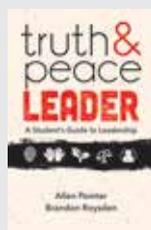
face and learn from them. Network with stronger leaders in an iron-sharpening manner. College is about a third lecture and two thirds reading. The problem comes when people stop reading after completing their last level of education. Is education ever really complete? Absolutely not! If you are not learning, you cannot cast vision for what is next.

Even while imprisoned and near death, Paul asked Timothy to bring his scrolls (books). Paul never stopped learning, and thankfully, his epistles reveal how God stretched him. Read Scripture for principles to live by and read books to contextualize how you practice those principles. John Maxwell called this the law of the lid—the people you lead can only rise to the lid *you* set over them and collectively they will only grow as you grow. **ONE**

Leadership Quote

“The man who does not read has little advantage over the man who cannot read.”

- Mark Twain



Recommended Book

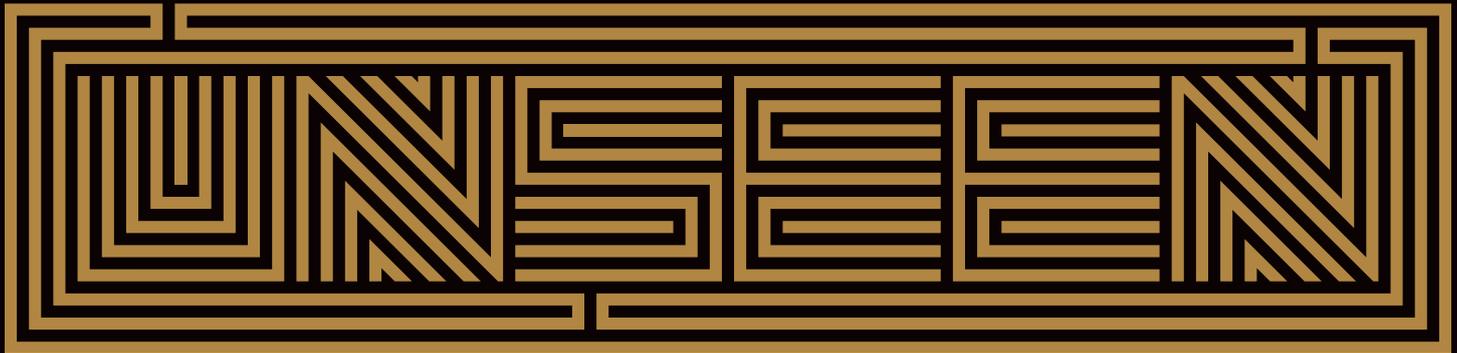
Truth & Peace Leader: A Student's Guide to Leadership

By Allen Pointer and Brandon Roysden

About the Columnist: Ron Hunter Jr., Ph.D., is CEO of Randall House Publications.



JULY 22-25, 2018
LITTLE ROCK, AR



HEBREWS 11:1



TRAINING

ALL INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES AND STATE COMPETITION RESULTS must be sent to Randall House by **JUNE 1**. The CTS event schedule will be posted online by June 15.

SERVICE

STC ORGANIZERS WORK WITH LOCAL CHURCHES AND NON-PROFITS to find areas of need so students help make a **real impact** in the city. Sign up in advance online or visit our on-site booth.



LEARNING

DON'T MISS THE DOZENS OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES provided by the **ENGAGE Leadership Network**. Topics covered include leadership, student ministry, apologetics, and more. There's something for everyone!

WORSHIP

Come together to worship!
PRESCHOOL, CHILDREN, 456, TEENS



SUNDAY AM



JACOB RIGGS

SUNDAY PM



KENDALL ROSS

MONDAY PM



JAKE MANNING

TUESDAY PM



FRANK TUREK

TUESDAY PM



DREW WORSHAM

WWW.VERTICALTHREE.COM

a ministry of  randall house

Introducing 2018 Nominees for Standing Boards and Commissions

Antioch, TN—The 2018 Nominating Committee has presented the following nominees to be considered for the 2018 Convention election, according to Cory Thompson (OK), committee chairman. Please note: the following boards do not elect members in 2018: Home Missions (North American Ministries), Board of Retirement, and Free Will Baptist Foundation.

WELCH COLLEGE

To Be Elected in 2018:

2024 Will Beauchamp (FL);
replacing himself
Theron Scott (SC)
Tim Campbell (AR)

Theron Scott has pastored Horse Branch FWB Church in Turbeville, South Carolina, since 2011, after pastoring in the state for more than 30 years. He earned a B.A. in Pastoral Training from Welch College in 1977 and is currently completing the M.A. in Theology and Ministry from Welch College. In addition to moderating several district associations, Scott served as a member of the South Carolina Home Missions Board for 10 years. He is both board member and director of the South Carolina State Camp and a member of

the South Carolina Conference Presbytery Board.

Tim Campbell pastors First FWB Church in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. Previously, he served as executive director of the Arkansas State Association (2002-2015) and director of stewardship development at Welch College (1995-2002). A Welch College alumnus with a B.A. in Pastoral Training from Welch College (1990), Campbell has been a member of the Executive Board of the National Association and has been active in leadership at national, state, and district levels.

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

To Be Elected in 2018:

2024 Danny Gasperson (NC)
Mark Price (OH);
replacing himself
Robert Posner (TX);
replacing himself

Danny Gasperson has pastored Zephyr Hills FWB Church in Asheville, North Carolina, for 18 years. A 1984 graduate of Welch College, he earned an M.A. from Bob Jones University in 1985. Gasperson is a board member-at-large for the Executive Board of the North Carolina State Associa-

tion, a member of the Blue Ridge Association Mission Board, a regular team leader for The Hanna Project, and an instructor for Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. He is a member of the Go Global team, which seeks to increase awareness and involvement in missions. Danny and his wife Jackie have two children, Rebecca and Joshua, and two grandsons, Nathan and Hudson.

RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

To Be Elected in 2018:

2024 Kendall Ross (AR)
Mike Mounts (OH);
replacing himself
Mike Trimble (MI);
replacing himself

Kendall Ross has pastored Ozark FWB Church in Ozark, Arkansas, since 2009. Previously, he served more than ten years as minister of music and church development at Cavanaugh FWB Church in Forth Smith, Arkansas. Ross is an adjunct professor at Arkansas Tech University and University of Arkansas, Fort Smith. He earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from University of Oklahoma in

(continued on page 53)

Pre-Registration

2018 National Association of Free Will Baptists

NAFWB | V3 | LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS | JULY 22-25

One Form Per Person | Register Online: www.nafwb.org | Name Badges Required for All Convention Events

First Name _____ Last Name _____
Home Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Country (if outside USA) _____ Email _____
Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____
Church You Attend _____ Church City _____ State _____

National Association (All voting delegates must be members in good standing of a FWB church.)

Voting Delegates

- National Board/Commission Member
- Ordained Minister
- Ordained Deacon
- State Delegate (Authorization Required)
- Local Church Delegate (Delegate Card Required)

Non-Voting

- Attendee (All Ages, Including Infants and Toddlers)

Tickets

WNAC Laughter and LattéQty_____ x \$20 = _____
Monday, July 23, 8:30 p.m. (\$25 onsite; limited quantity available)

Welch Alumni & Friends LuncheonQty_____ x \$40 = _____
Wednesday, July 25, noon (\$50 onsite; no tickets will be sold between
the close of pre-registration and the convention)

National Association Info: 877-767-7659 | www.nafwb.org

Vertical Three Conference

Preschool

- Ages 3-5, Attending Preschool Worship - \$25 (\$35 on-site)
- Ages 0-5, Not Attending Preschool Worship - NO FEE

Students: \$25

Any student or competitor* attending any CTS competition or event
MUST pay \$25 V3 conference fee (\$35 onsite).

- Grades 1-3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-12

*Competitors must pay this V3 conference fee **in addition to**
CTS competition fees already paid.

College Age | Adults: \$20

Adults attending any competition or event MUST pay \$20.

- Adult Attendee

Tickets:

ENGAGE Student Ministry LuncheonQty_____ x \$30 = _____
Monday, July 23, noon

V3 Special Event - Drew Worsham.....Qty_____ x \$12 = _____
Tuesday, July 24, 9:00 pm (\$14 onsite/at the door)

V3 Information: 800-877-7030 | www.verticalthree.com

Register April 2 – June 22, 2018 (postmarked) No Refunds After June 22

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- + Check (Payable to FWB Convention)
- + Visa, Discover, or MasterCard only (both debit and credit cards accepted)

Card # _____

Card Holder _____ Exp ____/____

Signature _____

RETURN TO:

Convention Registration

PO Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011 / FAX: 615-731-0771

Convention Questions: 877-767-7659 | convention@nafwb.org

Office Use Only: Date _____ CK# _____ Amt \$ _____ From _____

Convention Housing

2018 National Association of Free Will Baptists

1. Prepare Personal Information.

You will need the following:

- + Name(s), address, city, state, zip
- + Phone/email
- + Credit card information
- + Special requests: wheelchair accessibility, rollaway bed, or crib

2. Contact the Hotel.

- + **Online reservations** open on **Monday, May 14**, 9:00 a.m. CT (10:00 a.m. ET). Links to online reservations will be available at www.nafwb.org. No phone reservations will be accepted on this day.
- + **Phone reservations** will open **Tuesday, May 15**, 9:00 a.m. CT (10:00 a.m. ET). **Online reservations are encouraged to avoid long wait times.**

3. Things to Remember:

- + Hotels have been instructed **NOT TO ACCEPT** reservations before opening day.
- + Hotel rates do not include 15% tax.

The first night's room and tax will be charged for any canceled reservations.

The charge is non-refundable, but reservations are transferable. Available rooms may be posted at www.nafwb.org for transfer.

**Reservation Cut-off Date:
Friday, June 22, 2018**

Little Rock Marriott (HQ)

3 Statehouse Plaza
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 877-759-6290

Rate: \$149

Valet Parking: \$25/day (No Self Parking Available)

Comfort Inn & Suites Presidential

707 Interstate 30 Frontage Road
Little Rock, AR 72202
Phone: 501-712-4230

Rate: \$99

Suite Rate: \$115

Complimentary Breakfast and Parking

Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Little Rock

521 President Clinton Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-975-9800

Rate: \$139

Parking: \$10/day

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel

424 West Markham
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-372-4371

Rate: \$139

Self Parking: \$9/day

Hampton Inn & Suites Downtown Little Rock

320 River Market Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-244-0600

Rate: \$139

Parking: \$9/day

Complimentary Hot Breakfast Buffet

Holiday Inn Presidential

600 Interstate 30
Little Rock, AR 72202
Phone: 501-375-2100

Rate: \$119

Complimentary Breakfast and Parking

Homewood Suites by Hilton Downtown Little Rock

400 River Market Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-375-4663

Rate: \$155

Parking: \$9/day

Complimentary Hot Breakfast Buffet

Complimentary Evening Reception M-Th

LaQuinta Little Rock Downtown

617 S Broadway
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-374-9000 (Option 5)

Rate: \$84

Complimentary Breakfast and Parking

Residence Inn by Marriott Downtown Little Rock

219 River Market Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-376-7200

Rate: \$155

Parking \$10/day

Complimentary Hot Breakfast Buffet

Complimentary Evening Reception M-W

Wyndham Riverfront Little Rock

#2 Riverfront Place
N Little Rock, AR 72114
Phone: 866-647-4458

Rate: \$109

Complimentary Breakfast and Parking

(continued from page 50)

1986, a B.A. in Leadership and Ministry from Randall University in 2001, and the M.A. in Leadership and Ministry from Randall University in 2012. He is a member of the Executive Board of the Arkansas State Association, a member of the Board of Trustees for Randall University, a member of the Grantham Theological Committee, and the clerk of the Unity Association. Kendall and his wife Denise have four children and three granddaughters.

WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST

To Be Elected in 2018:

- 2024** Amy Johnson (IL); replacing herself
- Khristi Shores (NM)
- Sarah Sargent (OH); replacing herself

Khristi Shores and her husband Mark have spent the last 16 years at Mountain View FWB Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico—first as church planters then in pastoral ministry. An alumnus of Welch College, Khristi is president of New Mexico Women Active for Christ after serving 14 years as vice president. Khristi and her husband Mark are regular team leaders for the E-TEAM student missions program. The couple has two sons, John and Joshua.

COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

- 2019** Thomas Marberry (OK); replacing Randy Corn, resigned
- 2023** Matt Pinson (TN); replacing himself

Thomas Marberry is pastor of First FWB Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and distinguished professor of New Testament at Randall University. Previously, he served as vice president for academic affairs at Randall University. Marberry earned a B.A. from Baylor University, a M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Baylor University. He has taught Greek, theology, and church history for almost four decades, along with writing extensively. He published two *Randall House Bible Commentaries*—Galatians and 1,2,3 John, and is currently completing a commentary on the book of Luke. Dr. Marberry regularly contributes to *Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought*, and is a frequent presenter at the annual theological symposium.

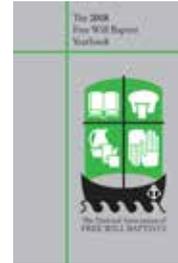
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Baggin' for Support

BY KEITH BURDEN

Prior to what is now known as E-TEAM, Free Will Baptist International Missions sponsored a program for college students who were also prospective missionary candidates. The students went through rigorous application and screening before being selected. Once approved, they were assigned to a foreign field to work with a veteran missionary family for several weeks during a summer. They were required to raise funds to cover the cost of travel and related expenses.

My sister-in-law Kay was selected to serve in Ivory Coast, West Africa. She prepared her fundraising presentation, which included a brief overview of her itinerary and financial need. Not surprisingly, the first service she scheduled was in her home church.

On the appointed Sunday morning she sat nervously on the front pew as the congregation anxiously waited to hear her appeal. Before she was introduced however, and unbeknownst to the pastor, an emotionally-disturbed, troubled young man sitting near the back of the church suddenly decided he wanted to minister in music. He sprinted down the center aisle, jumped over the altar, grabbed the microphone, and shouted, "Right on!" He then took his place on the stage and proceeded to sing every verse and the chorus of a song popularized by

the group The Moody Blues.

Despite the pastor's best efforts to regain control of the service, the young man insisted on completing his solo. When it finally and mercifully ended, the summer missionary was introduced. As she began to speak, the awkwardness of the occasion became even more acute. The young soloist lay on the front pew and made contorted facial expressions at Kay the entire time she spoke. Somehow, she managed to keep her composure and finish her presentation. Needless to say, she breathed a huge sigh of relief when she returned to her seat.

If things were not bizarre enough already, the story took another unexpected twist. Totally unannounced, an elderly gentleman adorned in overalls stood to his feet and asked the pastor for permission to speak. The old saint proceeded to make a passionate appeal for the summer missionary. He argued "this young woman should not have to go around baggin' [begging] for money to go to the mission field."

Drawing on his years of experience as an auctioneer, he commenced calling on various members of the congregation to make pledges of financial assistance. Within a matter of minutes he succeeded in raising the full amount needed.

Please don't miss the point of this

story. The intent is not to amuse the reader, nor speak disparagingly of the young man with emotional problems. Rather, it should serve as a powerful illustration of how God can, and sometimes does, use unusual circumstances and unconventional means to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

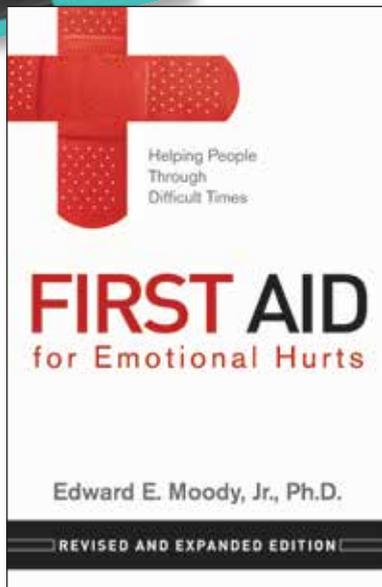
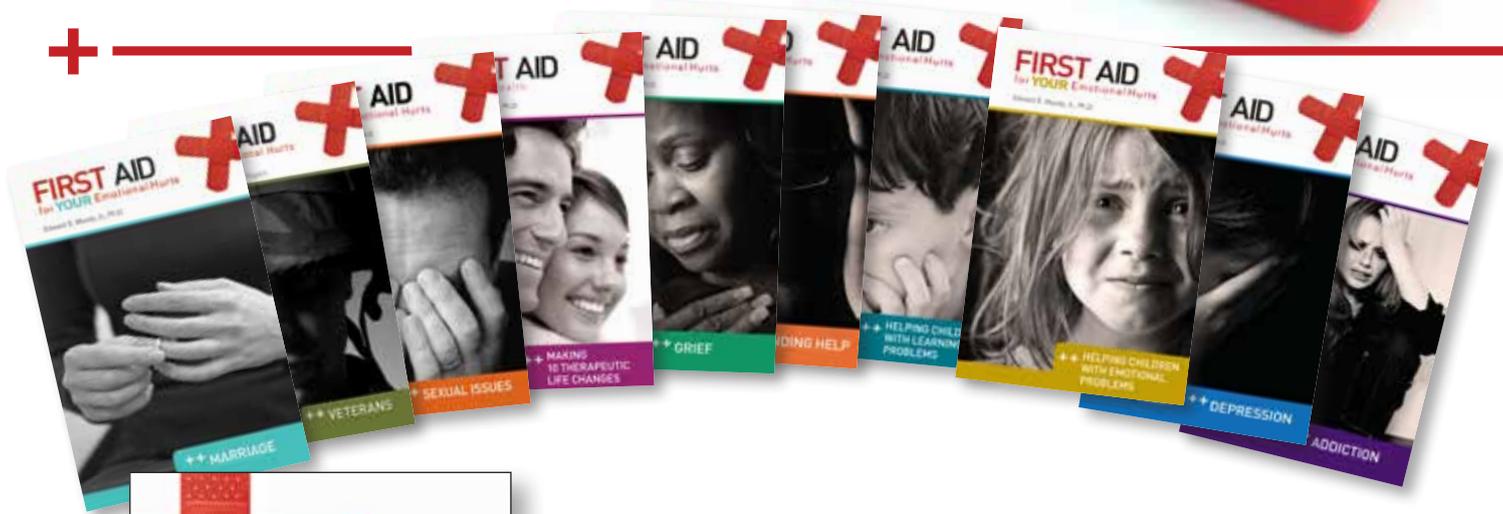
This experience also reminds us that as followers of Christ we have a biblical mandate (and a wonderful opportunity) to participate in fulfilling the Great Commission. Thank God for those willing to "go into all the world and preach the gospel." The overalls-clad saint was right. Missionaries should not have to go around "baggin'" for support. May we be as willing to send them as they are willing to go. **ONE**



Keith Burden, CMP
Executive Secretary
National Association of
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— W. Jackson Watts
Pastor, Grace Free Will Baptist Church, Arnold, Missouri

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