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MAGAZINE

The Magazine for Free Will Baptists

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2013

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First Glimpse >>>

Jack's Joyride

A four-decade joyride began in 1970, on the streets of Fresno, California, when Jack Williams attended his first national convention. “I was the assistant shuttle car driver,” he recalls with a smile, “and even that was unofficial.”

It was the first of many convention hats Jack would wear. From 1972-1976, he was convention staff writer, a job he set aside when he became convention coordinator in 1977. He picked up the pen again in 2001 after coordinating 24 consecutive conventions, and spent the next 12 years detailing the historical moments of each new meeting. When asked about his many responsibilities, Jack simply chuckles: “I may have worn a lot of hats at the convention, but one thing is for sure...they were all cowboy hats!”

Jack's joyride took a dangerous detour in November 2012 when he suffered a massive stroke from which he continues to recover. In July, he missed his first convention in 43 years after a remarkable run . . . from any perspective.

It has been an eventful journey. When asked about memorable meeting moments, Jack offers two—the first was a collision with a cowboy on the streets of downtown Tulsa during the 1986 convention. It wouldn't have been a big deal except the cowboy was towing a full-grown buffalo with only a rope!


Jack paints another vivid picture of the day the convention nearly came to a screeching halt. “I will never forget the 1995 Wednesday afternoon business session in Charlotte, North Carolina. We were in the middle of some serious business when a lady rushed in shouting, ‘You gotta get these people out of here. There's a gas leak, and the place is gonna blow!’ Turns out it wasn't gas at all, but water from a broken main. I'm glad we didn't stop the business for that!”

His statement is no surprise, because when it comes to the convention, Jack is all business. “I always thought business was the most important part of the convention—God's people doing God's business for God's glory.”

His passion for God's business carried over to his professionalism, and he remains a legend in the convention planning community. He was the first Free Will Baptist to earn the CMP (Certified Meeting Professional) designation, was named Meeting Planner of the Year in 1996 by the Professional Convention Management Association, and won the President's Award from the Religious Conference Management Association in 2004.

Jack shakes off the accolades. “One person can't plan a convention, especially a convention like ours. It takes a team, and over the years, we put together a good team.” He tips his hat to former Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. “It was a joy to work with Melvin for 23 years. He trusted me, turned me loose, and I made it happen. We never disagreed...at least not about conventions.”

As Jack's convention streak comes to an end, he shares a final secret with the next generation—the most important ingredient for every successful convention. “Coffee! Gallons of good, strong, black coffee!”

Amen to that. 

ERIC THOMSEN, MANAGING EDITOR



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Keith Burden MANAGING EDITOR: Eric Thomsen ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Ken Akers, David Brown, Danny Conn, Elizabeth Hodges, Ida Lewis, Ray Lewis, Deborah St. Lawrence, Sara Poston, Stephen Nelson, Jack Williams LAYOUT & DESIGN: Randall House Publications DESIGN MANAGER: Andrea Young DESIGN: Sondra Blackburn, Marianne Mandrell PRINTING: Randall House Publications

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Letters: Have something to say?

Say it! The editors of *ONE Magazine* look forward to hearing from readers. Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are necessary and appreciated.

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ONE Magazine reserves the right to edit published letters for length and content.

ONE MAGAZINE JUST GETS BETTER AND BETTER WITH EACH ISSUE, AND THE ARTICLES ARE increasingly relevant as time goes by. With today's busy lifestyle, we are easily distracted from global issues regarding missions. *ONE* is an excellent reminder of how mission initiatives change our world in positive ways. It is my firm contention that Christ is our hope and only chance for peace on earth. Thank you for keeping us aware of the dedication of folks involved in missions at home and abroad.

—Martha Narron, Richmond, Virginia

SO MANY TIMES WE PASTORS ARE GUILTY OF ONLY TAKING TIME TO FIRE OFF AN EMAIL TO someone when we are upset or unhappy with something they've done. That's why I wanted to take a moment to drop you a note to tell you how much I appreciate *ONE Magazine*. It is professionally laid out, well written, and something that everyone in our denomination can be proud of. Just wanted to say thanks for all your hard work—It is greatly appreciated!

—Jim McComas, Canaan Free Will Baptist Church, Creston, Ohio

FROM THE EDITOR:

Suggestions needed! *ONE Magazine* will undergo redesign during 2014. If you have suggestions regarding the publication, from content to layout, please send your comments to editor@nafwb.org. The editorial staff welcomes feedback from readers.

Take a Walk Through History...

What do you really know about Free Will Baptists?

Perhaps you have heard the word *Baptist* all your life without stopping to consider where it originated. Maybe you didn't realize there are dozens of Baptist groups—and why would one group add "Free Will" to their name? How are they different from all the others?

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MILESTONES

Developing Rites of Passage in the Family-Equipping Church

BY BRIAN HAYNES

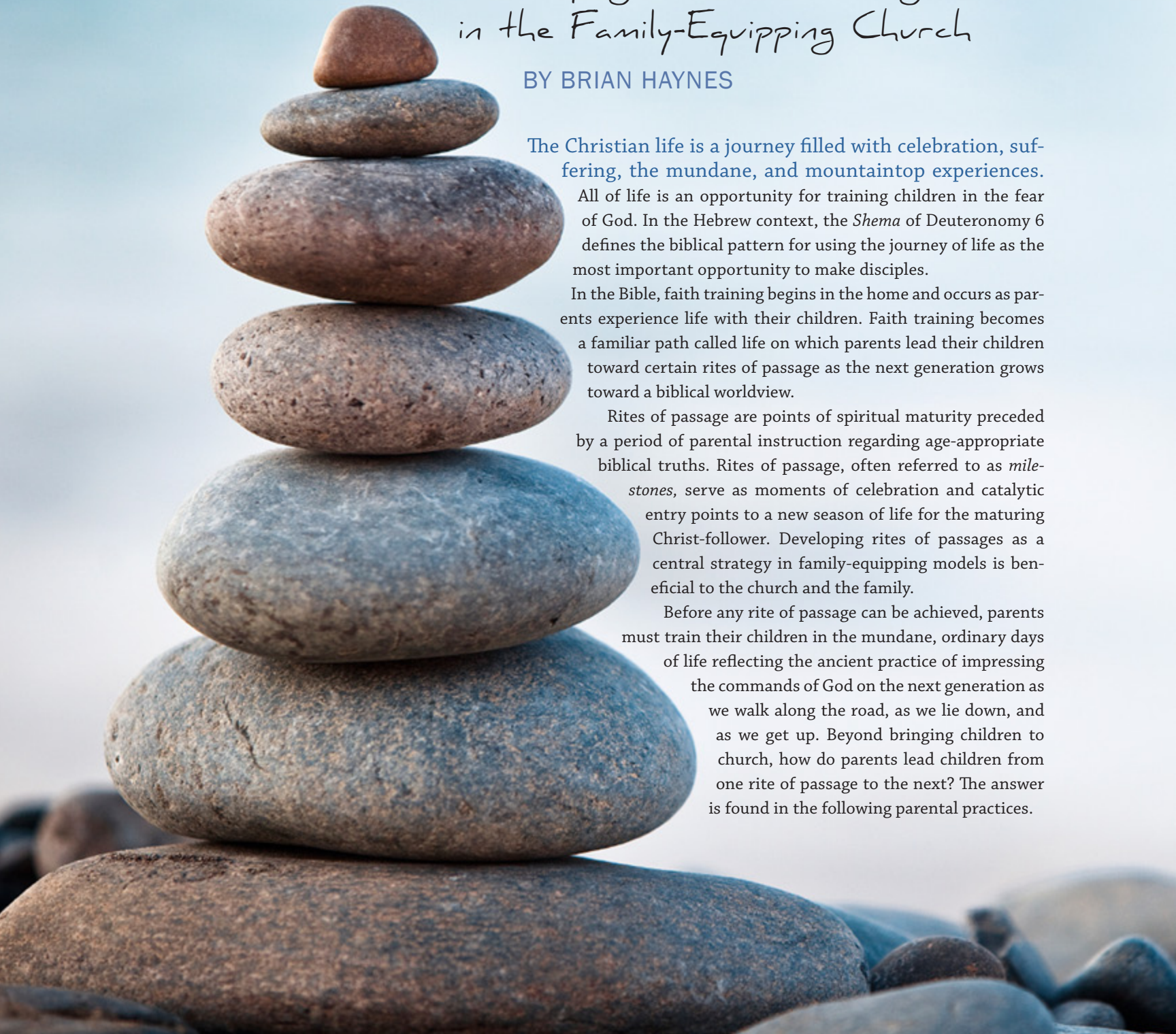
The Christian life is a journey filled with celebration, suffering, the mundane, and mountaintop experiences.

All of life is an opportunity for training children in the fear of God. In the Hebrew context, the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6 defines the biblical pattern for using the journey of life as the most important opportunity to make disciples.

In the Bible, faith training begins in the home and occurs as parents experience life with their children. Faith training becomes a familiar path called life on which parents lead their children toward certain rites of passage as the next generation grows toward a biblical worldview.

Rites of passage are points of spiritual maturity preceded by a period of parental instruction regarding age-appropriate biblical truths. Rites of passage, often referred to as *milestones*, serve as moments of celebration and catalytic entry points to a new season of life for the maturing Christ-follower. Developing rites of passages as a central strategy in family-equipping models is beneficial to the church and the family.

Before any rite of passage can be achieved, parents must train their children in the mundane, ordinary days of life reflecting the ancient practice of impressing the commands of God on the next generation as we walk along the road, as we lie down, and as we get up. Beyond bringing children to church, how do parents lead children from one rite of passage to the next? The answer is found in the following parental practices.



Formal Training

By design, God instituted the family as the central environment for spiritual formation. Embracing this concept as a parent requires the development of a formal platform to train children spiritually. The formal platform is time set aside each week to worship and examine the Scriptures as a family and in an age-appropriate and compelling way.

The role of the church in this process is two-fold. First, to teach parents how to lead effective faith talks and second, to provide or point out excellent tools and resources assisting parents as they lead faith talks. Using a Bible study curriculum that incorporates a family faith talk component helps parents establish a formal platform to train their children spiritually.

Informal Training

An equally important parenting practice involves spiritual training that is informal in nature. This training is not necessarily planned, but occurs each day as a family experiences the circumstances of life. Informal training involves modeling authentic faith and capturing teachable moments along the way.

Deuteronomy 6:4 states the commands of God are to be on “our hearts” as we lead our children spiritually. Sons learn how to be godly men, husbands, and fathers as they observe their own fathers in daily life. Daughters understand godliness as a woman, wife, and mother as they interact with their own mothers.

Capturing “God moments” or teachable moments is an art that Christian parents need to master in training their children. Each day provides a new set of situations and circumstances that parents may use to teach a key truth and bolster a child’s biblical worldview. As a child grows spiritually he achieves certain rites of passage. When this occurs the family celebrates.

Rites of Passage as a New Testament Family-Equipping Strategy

The strategic model consists of seven legacy milestones representing all life stages. Each milestone is a marker of progression along a life path of spiritual formation. By our definition a milestone is an event preceded by a period of instruction by parents and the church to be celebrated as God works in a person’s life. The seven milestones represent an alignment of discipleship ministries working in conjunction with the family.

LEGACY MILESTONES –

Rites of Passage:

MILESTONE 1: Parent/Baby Dedication

MILESTONE 2: Salvation and Baptism

MILESTONE 3: Preparing for Adolescence

MILESTONE 4: Purity for Life

MILESTONE 5: Passage to Adulthood

MILESTONE 6: High School Graduation

MILESTONE 7: Life in Christ

*Milestone 1—*Parent/Baby Dedication

Many churches already practice some form of infant dedication, understanding it as an important first rite of passage. The intent of the parent in this ceremony is typically to seek God’s blessing over their infant son or daughter. When practiced as a rite of passage, baby dedication becomes more about parents than about the new baby. Milestone 1 should begin with the theology of parenting and spiritual training. Fathers should be exhorted to embrace their biblical role as spiritual leader of the family.

*Milestone 2—*Salvation and Baptism

A second and most important passage is salvation and baptism. Family-equipping churches teach parents how to lead their children to Christ. The church also partners with the family by teaching children biblical core competencies in Sunday School, family worship, and other events. Using baptism as the celebration moment for salvation is both biblical and communicative as the church embraces rites of passage as a spiritual formation path connecting church and home.

*Milestone 3—*Preparing for Adolescence

The mere thought of adolescence causes anxiety for parents. Family-equipping churches help parents equip their children to live biblically in this traditionally tumultuous phase of life. During this passage, the church and the family serve together as guides for children ages 10-12, preparing for the storm of teenage life in a Western culture. The family faith talk and children’s Bible study for pre-teens partner to teach core competencies designed to bolster a biblical worldview headed toward the teen years.

Nothing in God's plan has ever replaced the home as bearing the primary responsibility for imparting Christian values and insuring godly nourishment and growth for each family member.

Milestone 4—Purity for Life

Milestone 4 enables parents to lead their middle school students to make a lifelong commitment to purity. Modeled after the familiar True Love Waits program, parents learn how to talk with their teenagers about sex through the filter of a biblical worldview. Through family faith talks and church ministries, students should learn the following core competencies: biblical purity, healthy relationships, identity in Christ, and biblical sexuality.

Milestone 5—Passage to Adulthood

Milestone 5 is a rite of passage from childhood to biblical adulthood. Parents are trained to lead faith talks with their teenagers around the following core competencies: biblical roles of men and women, spiritual gifts and service, and catechism.

Milestone 6—High School Graduation

High school graduation is a launching pad into life away from home. Central to this season are the core competencies of apologetics, courtship and marriage, God's plan for my life, becoming a person of influence, and basic life skills. Parents also learn about the importance of the biblical blessing to their son or daughter.

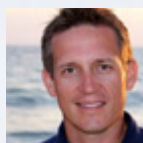
Milestone 7—Life in Christ

Life in Christ encompasses adults ages 18 to senior adulthood. Within this age range so many life-changing events occur. In any church, adults approach life from diversified perspectives. In the midst of all of this diversity there is one commonality: we are all pursuing life in Christ. A cursory study of the gospels reveals seven core competencies that Jesus taught His followers: prayer, Scripture, authentic faith, obedient follower, disciple-maker, generous living, and community. Doing family ministry well means equipping adults at every stage of life.

“The church was never intended to be a substitute for the home. Nothing in God's plan has ever replaced the home as bearing the primary responsibility for imparting Christian values and insuring godly nourishment and growth for each family member.”¹ Using rites of passage as the strategic plan for accomplishing such a grand vision truly reflects the essence of the family-equipping model and results in a unified church composed of families training children in the fear of the Lord. ONE

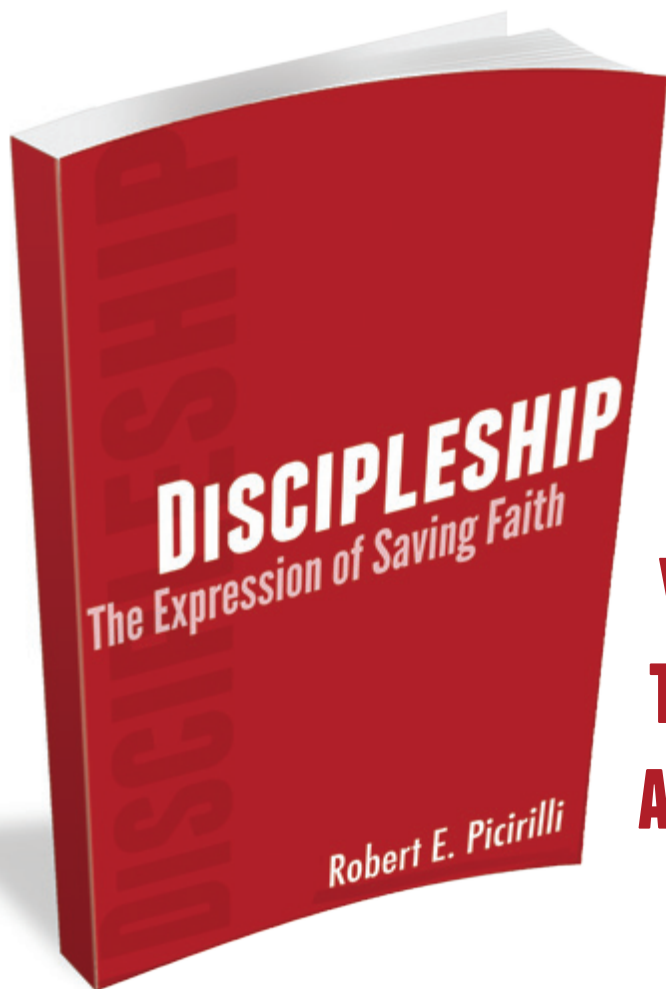
For a more complete study of rites of passage as a family-equipping strategy read **Shift: What it Takes to Finally Reach Families Today** by Brian Haynes.

To view examples of seminars for each milestone visit www.legacymilestones.com



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Brian Haynes serves as Lead Pastor at Bay Area First Baptist Church in League City, Texas. Brian is creator of the Legacy Milestones strategy designed to link church and home to equip the generations. Brian is married to his high school sweetheart Angela, and they have three daughters: Hailey, Madelyn, and Eden.

¹ Marvin Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 216.



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GRANDPARENTS:

More Than Cheerleaders

BY GARNETT REID

“Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations” (Psalm 90:1).

“Let’s see, Pops. So my dad is your son, then, right?” The wheels were turning in the mind of our pre-school granddaughter, Allison, trying to figure out those relationships. “Then you should tell your son to get me everything I want for Christmas because he’s supposed to obey you!” Smart girl! Use whatever leverage you can!

As a kid, I could sweet-talk my grandmother on my dad’s side and pretty much get my way. But my mother’s mother was a different story. She was a no-nonsense, hardscrabble, country farmer’s wife who meant what she said and didn’t put up with any special pleading. Seasoned by her nine children, ma-maw’s tough exterior wrapped itself around a heart of gold, and I knew that sooner or later I could wear down her resistance and get to her.

Her husband, my pa-paw, had become a Christian following two tragic events: his son died and a mule fell on him. People loved and respected him, me included. But my father’s dad, ravaged by drink, died years before I was born. All I knew about him was that my father hated him. So my dealings with my own grandparents resembled a P. D. James novel—interesting characters plus some real mystery.

GRANDS IN THE BIBLE

The same is true of grandparents in the Bible, including Methuselah, Noah’s granddad, and Abraham, a prolific grandfather once it all got going. Rehoboam’s grandfather was none other than David, who began a line of kings reigning on the throne of Judah culminating in Jesus, David’s greater Son, who Himself had an earthly grandfather named Jacob.

And remember that when Ruth delivered little Obed, David’s granddad, the neighbor women rejoiced, “Naomi has a son!” Then there’s Timothy’s grandmother Lois whose faith contributed to his own relationship with Christ.

In Old Testament times, the most influential member of the family was the grandfather. He led the household, known as the *beth ab*, a Hebrew expression meaning literally, “the house of the father,” consisting of his immediate and extended family. Like the hub of a wheel, the grandfather was the core of the household community. Interestingly, though, the Bible doesn’t focus on his power and authority, but on his concern for the well-being of the family as a whole and of each member in particular.



Duties of the Old Testament Grandfather:

- Model covenant loyalty to the Lord
- Lead his family in worship
- Teach the law to his household
- Tell the story of the Exodus deliverance from Egyptian bondage
- Manage the land to sustain and protect the family
- Provide the basic needs of food, clothing, rest, and shelter
- Defend the home against outside threats
- Represent the family “in the gate,” the town assembly
- See to the welfare of each family member
- Insure that the household ran efficiently
- Implement the decisions of the larger clan to which his family belonged

IN DAYS TO COME

So, as D6 grandparents concerned about leading our children and grandchildren to faith, how do we keep alive a believing hope for generations to come? Here are a dozen grandparenting ideas for nurturing intergenerational discipleship.

1. We model faithfulness as followers of Jesus.
2. We tell our families stories of faith.
3. We lead them by example in a consistent worship of God.
4. We nurture our children and our grandchildren in a loving, caring environment.
5. We help them embrace honorable traditions in the family. If there are none, we begin those traditions.
6. We share skills in living we have learned in all kinds of life experiences.
7. We defend the family’s honor by encouraging unity, harmony, dignity, and unconditional love.
8. We love our spouse so that our children will feel more secure in their own relationships.
9. We think through tough decisions with our children and grandchildren when they invite us to do so.
10. We tackle the realities and complexities of blended families with God-directed intentionality, realizing the beauty they can present.

11. We support the enforcement of discipline as implemented by our children toward their children.
12. We covenant to pray for them always.

GRANDPARENTING DO'S & DON'TS**DO**

+ Be that rock of support when crises swirl around the family.

- + Teach your grandchildren to save money.
- + Take every opportunity to have your grandkids in your home.
- + Find lots of ways to have fun with your grandkids.
- + Be positive with your family. Expect God to work!
- + Explore new worlds with your grandchildren. Find new adventures close to home and on far away adventures when you can.
- + Read, read, read to your grandkids.
- + As much as you can, get to know your grandchildren’s friends. But tread lightly.
- + Understand that your grandchildren—yes, yours!—are fallen and flawed.
- + Build respect in your grandkids for their parents.

DON'T

- Worry too much about spoiling your grandkids. S. A. and J. C. Bly explain:

“To spoil implies giving someone better than he or she deserves . . . The Bible is crammed with accounts of how God spoils us, that is, gives us better than we deserve. It’s called grace.”

- Think you know it all despite all of your living experiences. Be flexible and teachable.
- Keep talking about the good old days, but do share stories with your grandkids. Find a balance.
- Take your grandchildren’s side with one parent against another.
- Undermine parents’ discipline.
- Cast either parent in a bad light.
- Think your faith will automatically result in your grandkids having faith. They must embrace Christ on their own.
- Be surprised when God injects heavy doses of grace into a difficult situation.
- Despair if you’re called on to serve as a substitute parent in a second and un-

planned parenthood.

- Miss finding ways to get involved in your grandkids’ lives. Be there—at ballgames, recitals, parties, field trips, school events, and church activities.

THE CHURCH MUST HELP!

Ken Gangel displayed this motto on his study wall: “When a child is born, a family receives two precious gifts, a grandchild and a grandparent.” So, too, does the church. We have the privilege and responsibility of equipping grandparents to fulfill their roles to the glory of God and for the good of their families. Some of the ways we can do that involve:

- Assisting them in the transition to retirement
- Helping them understand how the aging process works
- Standing with them as they cope with physical and mental challenges as well as living adjustments
- Encouraging them to accept and even delight in this new identity
- Discovering new ways to serve the Lord
- Exploring ways to relate to their grandchildren and to the young people in the church
- Working with them to deal with loneliness and end of life issues
- Keeping their spirits up

FOR MY GRANDCHILDREN

As a grandfather of three, I want Alison, Katherine, and Wilson to love Jesus. I don’t want them to be so worried about their stuff and their image that they can’t be themselves. I want them to honor their parents. I don’t ever want them to think that they’re worthless, or that no one cares, or that life isn’t worth living. I want them to know that no matter what, Pops and Grams will love them. **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITER: Garnett Reid has been a professor of Old Testament studies at Welch College in Nashville, Tennessee, for nearly 30 years. He and his wife Carol do not claim to be parenting experts but are thankful for their two adult sons and their families.



BUZZING

Outside the Box

By Stephen Beck

I was 15 feet atop a ladder surrounded by tens of thousands of swarming bees when the man (safely behind his screen door) asked if I was interested in sharing my thoughts on God at an upcoming Rastafarian gathering.

The genesis of these rather unique circumstances came about as a result of a family meeting a year before. As one of those weird families without television or Internet at home, I posed a question to my family. “What can we do with our free time that will allow us to spend enjoyable family time together, minister to the people on the island of Saint Croix, and give us new and comfortable opportunities to share the gospel?”

Witnessing to a Rastafarian man in the middle of an angry swarm of bees is not the “comfortable opportunity” that immediately came to mind.

It is obvious at a glance that our family is definitely not of Caribbean descent. When knocking on doors and meeting people in the commu-

nity, it is often hard to overcome the “outsider” status in order to establish a comfortable witnessing opportunity. Sure, witnessing is not always comfortable, but my reference here is not to my own comfort or ease of mind, but the ease of those to whom I am witnessing. People are more likely to listen to what I say when they are comfortable with my reason for talking to them in the first place.

That brings me to chasing bees...and ultimately chickens and students. As a family, we set out to spend enjoyable family time doing interesting things that could be used in a broader context of ministry. We live in the tropics, so vegetables, fruit trees, and weeds grow year round. We began clearing bush for a small garden and ran into a wild beehive, so our family got bee suits. Yes, they even make kid-sized bee suits (that also double as a wonderful demonstration of Ephesians 6:11-17). Of course, most everyone in the commu-

giving away honey. Then a man from our church got interested, and we invented a 50-gallon bee vacuum.

Before long, our bees and little garden grew to become a large community garden; from a couple of laying hens to dozens and dozens of laying hens (and a few iguanas); and then, strangely enough, to coaching cross-country track.

Because absentee fathers are a big problem on the island of St. Croix, several boys from the Free Will Baptist school began begging to come and work on “my farm” (for free). When I reminded them that we would be pulling weeds and cleaning up after chickens, it did not deter them. I realize that allowing multiple teenage boys to run three miles (one way) to my house on their days off to shovel out my chicken coop sounds more like a violation of child labor laws than ministry. Maybe it was the novelty of the idea or the interaction, but day after day these students showed up. They watched,



Most everyone in the community thought I was crazy until I started giving away honey.

at times in bewilderment, at how our family interacted. We talked about things they enjoy doing, about chickens, about running, about life, about bee stings, and about God.

My children said they would enjoy running, so we began a school cross-country team. At a recent 5K race with over 100 participants, my runners took six of the top 10 places. As we near the completion of six years of ministry on Saint Croix, on this island of 60,000 people, I am referred to as principal or pastor. I am also known as the egg man, the chicken man, the bee man, and though you would never guess it

by my agility or my 5'10" 230-pound build, the running man.

When I visit neighbors, we exchange fresh produce and talk about bees and chickens and eternity. One neighbor, who would pretend not to be home when we would visit, will no longer let us walk past her house without coming out to greet us. The meandering story behind this narrative is in many ways so unplanned and unforeseen. Yet, it is exactly what we asked God to enable us to do with our family and our time. My prayer is that our family will experience ministry together, not be subjected to it.

Please don't misunderstand. Sharing eggs or gnips (a tropical fruit) is not a substitute for sharing my faith. I don't have the process down to a science. I do a poor job at sowing and reaping (with or without a bee suit), and there are always setbacks along the way (like the day a mongoose ate half of our flock of chickens). But, I am surrounded by a team of people who love God, are supportive, and make it possible for me to be a chicken farmer, a bee man, a running coach, a school principal, and by the grace of God, a light for Him. **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITER: Stephen Beck serves as principal of the Free Will Baptist school in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. Read more at www.st-croixfbw.com.

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GERMANS

ON MY WALLERMELON

BY JILL COLLINS



Okay. Admit it. We moms are Germ-O-Phobes. We purchase cute, quilted liners so our babies' hands never come in contact with the shopping cart. We carry hand sanitizer attached to our purse straps, ready to whip the bottle out at a moment's notice and obliterate some unsuspecting bacteria that dares find its way to our toddlers' hands.

I am no exception. When using a public potty, my four kidlets know the drill. Don't touch anything, especially not the flusher. Mama will flush the potty with the sole of her shoe when you are done. Wash your hands. Use soap—lots of soap. Open the restroom door with a paper towel. In light of all this, what happened one summer day should have come as no surprise to me.

The children gathered around the picnic table out back, waiting impatiently for their daddy to slice into the first watermelon of the summer. They watched eagerly as he expertly sliced it—first in half, and again lengthwise, then cutting each section into neat little red, white, and green triangles. Taking their slices, the kids bounded off into the yard to enjoy the juicy treat.

Suddenly, sobs. Silas, my youngest, wanted me know something was wrong in his little world. Questions flashed through my mind as I ran to check on him. Had he scraped a knee? Cut a finger? Busted a lip?

Finding him near the swing set, I surveyed the situation. A quick glance showed nothing amiss and no blood visible. Yet the tears continued to stream down the grimy, sticky, little face. "I dwopped my wallermelon," he managed to choke out between sobs. "And now, it gots Germans on it."

Our family exploded with laughter at his misuse of the word. This didn't seem to help his hurt feelings one bit. However, a fresh piece of "wallermelon" saved the day. Crisis resolved. A memory to tuck away? Not quite.

Later that evening, while reflecting on the incident, I thought about all we, as mothers, do to protect our little ones from the germs, dirt, and filth that can harm little bodies and make them sick. Oh, the lengths to which we will go. But what about our children's spiritual health and well-being? Are we equally diligent (or even more so) to protect little hearts and minds from evil, trash, and filth that can make them sin-sick?

Moms, we use antibacterial wipes at the door of the supermarket, especially during cold and flu season. But do we shield little eyes from nearly naked models on the magazine covers at the checkout?

We encourage vegetables at every meal, and maybe even a vitamin supplement to boot. But do we encourage a steady diet of God's Word—reading, studying, and memorizing with our precious ones?

We closely monitor dental hygiene, making sure children brush and floss daily, but find ourselves lax in monitoring

the plaque that can build up from unsupervised Internet usage. We are faithful in keeping immunizations up to date, protecting our children from sickness, yet do we allow a constant stream of bacteria into our homes through inappropriate television and music?

Moms, let's be diligent to help little eyes, ears, and minds to "Oh, be careful." Don't listen to the world or even well-meaning (but perhaps misguided) Christians who tell us, "You can't protect them from the world forever." Of course we can't. But young, tender hearts need protection; children are so impressionable.

Don't allow kids to become desensitized to the filth of sin through repeated exposure to music, television, Internet, or other "germs." Instead, let's build our children's spiritual immune systems through daily doses of Scripture, making God's Word a priority in our own lives, and modeling a lifestyle of purity and a desire for holiness.

It's a nasty world, physically and spiritually. Grubby hands, snotty noses, dirty faces...all make the mom in us cringe. But "how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water" (Job 15:16)? **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITER: Jill Collins is an elementary school teacher in De Queen, Arkansas. She and her husband Josh attend Daisy Free Will Baptist Church where she serves as church clerk, women's Sunday School teacher, and active member of WAC.



After the moving truck was loaded, and we piled into our car to leave sunny Florida to be home missionaries in Tennessee, my family asked me, “Have you lost your mind?”

Before long, I began to wonder if they were right. After a few months of itinerary, I realized that mission work and difficult life events were definitely affecting my family, including my marriage. My wife’s mother had moved in with us after being diagnosed with cancer and learning she had only a few short months to live. My wife was unable to travel with me to raise funds. So, each weekend, our two daughters and I piled in the car for another trip while my wife stayed home to care for her mother.

My girls and I grew closer during this time, but my wife and I slowly drifted apart. At first, neither of us noticed, but the devil surely did, and used her commitment to her mother and my commitment to itinerary as a tool to divide our home. I began to feel alone, as if no one cared but my girls. I could not lean on a church family because we left our friends behind in Florida and had not developed close friends in Tennessee. I began to wonder if I really was losing my mind.

Several friends had recently divorced, and I began to wonder if it would happen to us? Would our family be torn apart? My wife and I desperately needed to talk to someone who loved both of us and would not take sides. We needed mentors, but who?

I began to talk to my parents—not knowing that she had begun talking to them as well. My dad encouraged me while my mom encouraged her. They prayed for us daily and spoke of God’s will and the commitments we had made to Him and to each other.

Still, I continued to struggle, and finally reached a point where I just didn't care. I found myself clinging to the old adage, "Never make a decision while you are in the valley." Honestly, it felt as though I was going to live the rest of my life in the valley. I kept praying and listening to my mentors.

a devotional book by Dann Patrick, and I began to use it with my family each night. It was difficult, because I didn't want to do this. But, I knew in my heart it was what we needed to do for God to restore the love in our home. Each night we read and applied the verses and devotions to our daily lives. God

ily that prays together stays together.

I thank God for missions, moving, mentors, and my marriage. After our experience, I cannot help but wonder if other couples need a marriage mentor? I challenge experienced couples that have been married for a while and have experienced the ups and downs of marriage, to adopt another couple and mentor them as my parents mentored us. I encourage you to share your marriage knowledge through a growing, healing relationship. Imagine the importance of preventing even one divorce.

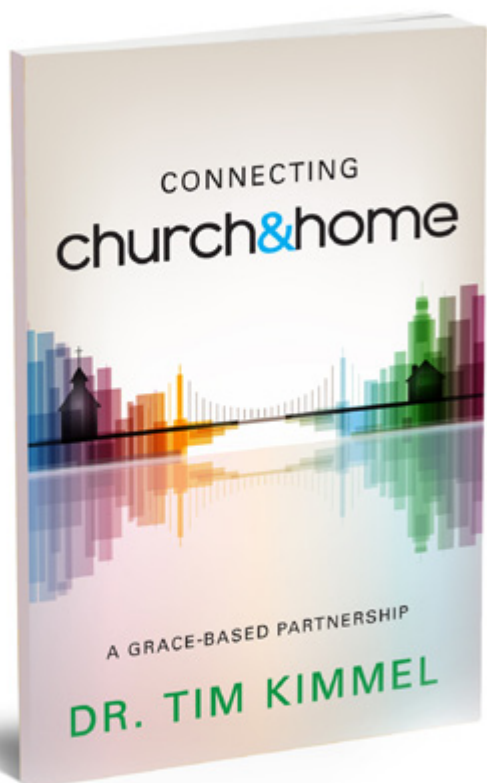
If your own marriage is the one in trouble, don't wait a minute longer! Set out to find a couple you love and trust and begin the healing process today. You don't have a moment to lose. **ONE**

MY WIFE AND I DESPERATELY NEEDED TO TALK TO SOMEONE WHO LOVED BOTH OF US AND WOULD NOT TAKE SIDES.

One day, it dawned on me that our family needed to return to daily prayer and devotions together. I had received

began to change each of our hearts, and now, I can say with conviction—and personal experience—that a fam-

ABOUT THE WRITER: Chad Kivette and his wife Paula are Joint Project home missionaries with the state of Tennessee and Free Will Baptist Home Missions. Learn more about Free Will Baptist Home Missions at www.HomeMissions.net.



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Building a Marriage That Lasts

BY DAVID SEXTON



Why is there such an alarming rise of marriages not surviving?

Statistics say that over 50% of marriages—even Christian marriages—end in the divorce courts. In light of such grim statistics, what can a couple do to create a solid marriage, a marriage that lasts? The recipe for a lasting marriage includes three key ingredients: commitment, dedication, and sacrifice.

Sadly, **commitment** is not a word often used to describe marriage today. Love for a spouse is far more than the ceremony in which the new bride and groom participate, more than an emotional connection fueled by some unexplained force. According to marriage by God's definition, love comes by commitment. In Malachi 2:14, God describes this commitment as a covenant—a formal, solemn, and binding agreement between man, woman, and God. Marriage is not just a physical or emotional union; it is a lifelong commitment, a choice.

Another key element of lasting marriage is **dedication**, a self-sacrificing devotion. How much time and energy do you invest into your marriage each day? Men and women dedicate themselves to jobs, careers, studies, ministry, and even recreation. How sad to achieve success

in all of these areas but lose your spouse or your family in the process!

Dedication begins the day a couple leaves mother and father to cling to one another (Genesis 2:23) and grows through continual daily devotion. Because dedication may not always come naturally or easily, each spouse must be willing to sacrifice to make marriage work.

Sacrifice simply chooses to put the needs of our spouse before our own. Often, we fail to see the needs of a spouse because we only see the relationship through our own eyes, not theirs. A wife often views her husband and his needs through her own pink sunglasses, while the husband sees his wife and her needs through blue sunglasses. Neither husband nor wife can see true physical and emotional needs until self-centered glasses come off and they see the relationship from a fresh perspective.

Sacrificing to meet the needs of a spouse is a choice that

must be practiced every day. Just as we keep an accurate account of the balance in our bank account, we always should know the “balance” in our marriage “love bank.” When we fail our spouse, we withdraw from that bank, and we must make deliberate sacrifices—physical, mental, and emotional deposits—to balance the account. These deposits include communication, quality time, simple acts of kindness, words of affirmation, respect, physical touch, and the list goes on.

Commitment, dedication, and sacrifice will create a beautiful and prosperous marriage when combined with one crucial ingredient, a hunger and thirst to please God. When our relationship with God is fruitful and grounded in His Word, our relationship with our spouse also will be honoring and beautiful.

Husbands and wives must choose to obey God by honoring their covenant to their spouse. How much have you invested in your love bank today? **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITERS: David Sexton and his wife Charity are church planters in Suffolk, Virginia. They have been married for 20 years and have four children. Learn more about their ministry at <http://crosspointesuffolk.com>.

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HOW TO HUG A PORCUPINE

BY JOHN REED

Ministering to dysfunctional families is sometimes like hugging a porcupine. They either flee, or they wound others. It can be painful, and sometimes even make you question your sanity. Mark Twain once said, “A man carrying a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.” When we decided to begin a church in Green Bay, Wisconsin, we felt impressed to go “to the least of these” (Matthew 25:31-46). Here are a few things we have learned along the way.

Porcupines think they are normal. Many times, multiple generations of dysfunction leave families “guessing at normal.” While I believe “normal” is just a cycle on a washing machine, people do some pretty bizarre things. Empathy is the key to unlocking the behavior of the deeply and repeatedly traumatized. As broken people, we follow patterns. We must explore the resources available to learn to minister to the hurting.



It is best to reach across—not down—to a porcupine. The “us and them” language in some Christian circles leaves me wondering what one has to do to move from the “them” status to the “us” status. Normally, that language comes from a list of sins, and depends on the person who makes the list.

When I look into the Bible, I find God’s definition of sin based more on certain responses to Him. He clearly wants us to trust Him and allow Him to meet our needs. Things that seem pretty tame at first glance—eating fruit, whacking a rock with a stick, and doing troop inventory—all elicited grave consequences from God. Why? These individuals attempted to meet perceived needs apart from God.

If acting independently of God becomes our working definition of sin, we will develop a whole new understanding of sinful behavior, one that helps us reach across, not down to others. We can put our lists away (Romans 3:10-23). People are attracted by humility and repelled by arrogance. When we accept that evangelism is, as one writer described it, “one beggar telling another where he found bread,” we will find ourselves far more effective in reaching the “least of these.”

PEOPLE ARE ATTRACTED BY HUMILITY AND REPELLED BY ARROGANCE.

Porcupines need community. When we realize that God is the only One who is normal, and we share His gospel from a heart of humility, it is only natural to create a community of strength and hope for those to whom we minister. Cultivating and sustaining a safe environment for new believers is never easy and must be protected at all costs. Life transformation is the work of God, both in redemption and in continuing discipleship. God uses trusting community powerfully to bring about such a transformation.

Jesus can heal a porcupine wound.

“Hurt people hurt people.” They just do. Once we are deeply wounded (and if you work with people, you

inevitably will be), it becomes a strong temptation to be self-protective. Any athlete will tell you that “playing not to get hurt” is a bad idea. Understand the theology that teaches when we are deeply wounded by others, Jesus can raise us up again (John 11:25, 26).

Some porcupines don’t want to hug. Jesus said that when we follow Him, He changes us. People will often let us work a lot harder on them than they are willing to work on themselves. It is important to identify genuine fruit of repentance in the lives of those we disciple. Ask a few basic questions: Is genuine humility present? Honesty? Integrity?

As a result of my early struggles as a Christian and the commitment of a few men who refused to give up on me, I find it hard to step away from broken people, even when little change is evident. Still, because time is so limited, I have had to learn discernment in my efforts with broken people. Repentance does have a distinctive look, even in someone who continues to struggle.

Saying “Yes” to yourself may sound like “no” to some porcupines. Self-care is not selfish. To be effective, we must learn to say no to many good things. Airlines encourage travelers to “first secure your own oxygen mask before attempting to help others.” Simply put, if we are dead, we are of no use to anyone else. This world has many noble causes, but understanding our limits and choosing our causes wisely are vital to long-term sustainability.

We all have quills. God uses hurting people to expose our own weaknesses and fatal flaws. Fear and pride hide in the crevices of our ministry terrain every day. When we are busy doing, sometimes it is difficult to identify sins such as pride, jealousy, envy, and insecurity. We begin to view people as “for us” or “against us.”

Just remember, we can learn as much from enemies as we do from friends. Avoid the “bondage of being right.” A friend of mine taped a saying on his mirror: “I am looking at the problem.” While that may be an overstatement, it is always a good idea to ask the question, “What part of this challenge is my own issue?” God resists the proud. He gives grace to the humble.

Reproducing your heart in others is imperative to long-term sustainability. Because evangelization of the “oft-overlooked” is my passion, I inadvertently neglected leadership development for a number of years. As a result, we burned out many people before we developed



WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED WHEN SINNERS ACT LIKE SINNERS.

a model of apprenticeship for leadership development. Today, we intentionally avoid doing things alone, but constantly involve others in an effort to replace ourselves.

Porcupine people matter to God. I am amazed at the number of mature Christians who have little or no “relational intelligence.” The old adage remains true: people don’t care what we know until they know we care. If we are not careful, the Christian life can become more about acquiring knowledge and telling everyone how much we know.

In contrast, if we love and care about people, they will begin to ask “about the hope that is within us.” This rarely happens when we justify “not liking” people because they act like sinners. We should not be surprised when sinners act like sinners.

ABOUT THE WRITER: John and Cheryl Reed are working as Joint Project Home Missionaries with the Home Missions Department and the state of Arkansas in planting a Free Will Baptist church in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Value, respect, and trust are key components in building relationships. You may not like another person’s viewpoint, but listening to them communicates respect and builds value. Once trust is established, it is amazing what people will allow you to share. “High standards” are sometimes just a smoke screen for refusing to love people.

Getting folks to put down their quills is a “sanctified art”. As we worked in an environment full of porcupine people over the years, we have learned that even porcupines can reproduce. We love this ministry to which God has called us, and we consider it the greatest privilege in the world (2 Corinthians 5:19). Next time you end up with a splinter, thorn, sliver, or even a quill in your hand, remember to pray for us. **ONE**

News Around the Nation



Easter Miracles in Marana

Brightly colored new outfits, sunrise services, egg hunts, and baskets filled with goodies are all pictures that most likely pop into your mind when you think of Easter.

As a church planter, Easter is our greatest opportunity for outreach, for sharing the message of the cross and Christ’s resurrection with our community. Last year’s Easter service brought several key families to The Springs FWB Church, as well as a 40% growth in attendance. We anticipated and prepared for the 2013 Easter celebration. Our faithful and awesome God did not disappoint!

Nearly 400 people were in attendance, with more than 200 first-time guests. Many visitors gave positive feedback and asked for more information about our church. The people sang praises and listened intently to the message from God’s Word. At the close of the service, 15 people acknowledged their need for Jesus. The Holy Spirit was moving.

Our congregation partnered with Mountain Faith Mission to collect a special offering. From the amount given, the mission will be able to build a kitchen for the children’s home. The kids’ programs were jam-packed, with over 90 workers and kids ranging from infant to age 12. The children were greeted enthusiastically and shown God’s love by amazing volunteers. Most important, they learned of Jesus’ love through His sacrifice and resurrection.



The spectacular day continued outside in gorgeous Arizona spring weather. Kids of all ages hunted for 3,000 eggs. Nearly 450 Sonoran dogs (hot dogs unique to our area) were served with chips, drinks, and desserts. Guests interacted with our people in a great afternoon of fellowship.

Our Springs Church “Peeps” stepped up in incredible ways. Volunteers arrived early to prepare for the day and the crowd. The congregation stayed busy preparing food, hiding eggs, greeting guests, working in children’s classes, leading worship, running behind-the-scenes sound and tech, bringing in and giving up seats in the service, and, ultimately, tearing everything down to do it again the following week. This Easter celebration would not have been possible without people committed to reach the Marana community for Christ.

“To Him who is seated on the throne, be all glory, honor, and praise. Amen!”

ABOUT THE WRITER: Ashley Bennett and her husband Josh are partnering with Jeff and Heather Goodman to start a church in Marana, Arizona, a community near Tucson. Learn more at www.TheSpringsChurchMarana.com.

Get to Know Your Hispanic Missionaries

God has given Free Will Baptist Hispanic ministry great missionaries whose lives are consumed with sharing the gospel with the Hispanic community. Building new churches is a way of life for these men and their families.



Pastor Fernando Bustamante has been involved in missions work for many years. This dedicated pastor’s focus is on the ministry constantly. If you go to the Bustamante home, you will usually find a full house of people eating, sharing fellowship, having fun just being together. I have always said you have to make a friend before you make a convert. The Bustamantes make “a family” before making a convert.



I invited **Alfredo Botello and his wife** to Mississippi for a mission conference for two reasons: to help the conference and to give them a break together. Pastor Alfredo called me two days before the conference and told me that his wife Ruth could not come. A man had been arrested, and she needed to stay with his wife and work with her husband while he was in jail. While Alfredo and I had a great week at the conference, Ruth led the man to the Lord.



Dr. Rufo Gomez and his wife Marie have built a great work in Lexington, Kentucky, and have started other churches in the United States and Latin America. Their two older boys are dedicated to the ministry. They understand why their parents are involved in so many lives. They also are following their father’s footsteps into the ministry. Their oldest son already has answered the call to preach.

All of these men freely share their time to teach at Gwen Hendrix Free Will Baptist Hispanic Bible Institute. They not only teach, they become involved in mentoring young people in ministries throughout the Americas. They look for every opportunity to win someone to Jesus. Their wives and children are just as involved in ministry. Why is God blessing their efforts? It is because they have given over everything to God for Him to use for His glory.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Rick Bowling, Director of Hispanic Ministry serves under the umbrella of the Home Missions Department.

a Father's Dream

BY JOHN GIBBS



One of the most fulfilling moments in a father's life comes when his child chooses to follow in dad's footsteps.

When our son Darin was a senior at Woodbine Christian Academy in Nashville, while addressing the school homecoming crowd, he shared his dreams and aspirations for his future. He mentioned several goals he wanted to accomplish, finishing the list with the statement, "I just want to follow in my dad's footsteps." Needless to say, his surprising words brought tears to my eyes.

As I traveled for the Home Missions team, spending many days away from home and from my family's daily activities, I dreamed of what my children would become. My wife Doris and I prayed that God would use both of our children in ministry.

When Darin finished his edu-

cation at Welch College, he began ministry as a youth pastor. That was his dream. Periodically, I would ask, "Would you like to pastor a church someday, Son?" His reply was always the same: "I don't think so, Dad; that's not for me." He was involved in ministry, and that was good enough for me. His heart for teens, parents of teens, and children was exciting. Still, I dreamed on.

Neither Darin nor I recognized that God was preparing him for a larger ministry, just as Jabez when he asked God to enlarge his territory. I never doubted his capability, but he assured us time and again that he was content to remain in youth ministry or in a supportive role. All

of that changed when God began to deal with him about becoming a pastor. My heart swelled with anticipation as his burden grew stronger. My dream was becoming a possibility!

After serving as associate pastor for five years, in 2011 I became senior pastor at First Free Will Baptist Church in Gastonia, North Carolina. The church understood I would continue until my 75th birthday in September 2013 before retiring from full-time ministry.

When the church began looking for my successor, Darin humbly admitted to the search committee that he would like to be considered. After much prayer and many father-son discussions, he submitted his name, resume, and vision to the deacon board. After weeks of prayer, fasting, and discussions, the church voted overwhelmingly to extend a pastoral call to Darin. His mother and I were

My heart swelled with anticipation as his burden grew stronger. My dream was becoming a possibility!

ecstatic. My dream had come true, and our prayers had been answered!

The transition was smooth and culminated in a wonderful service where I “passed the mantle” to Darin. I had a beautiful mantle made especially for the day. During the service, I lovingly removed the mantle, representing the calling and responsibility of a pastor, from around my neck and placed it on

Darin. I presented a Bible given to me when I began preaching in 1958, in St. Louis, Missouri. Then I turned to the 20-man deacon board assembled in the choir loft and “presented” the board to him. I challenged them to support and pray for him and to call him into account when needed.

I presented to him the senior saints represented by a precious 80-year-old

lady. I challenged him to lead the various ages of the church represented by a family of four—husband, wife, teen, and child. Then I turned to the weeping and rejoicing congregation and said, “Son, this is your flock. You are now their shepherd.”

The service concluded with prayer for Darin, his wife Kim, daughters Makenna, Olivia, Julianna, and Lyla. Doris and I joined our daughter Julie and added our prayers of blessing on our new pastor.

What a day! A father’s dream had come true. ☞

ABOUT THE WRITER: John Gibbs has spent more than 50 years in the ministry. He became a part of the Gastonia family in the summer of 2006.

A Note From Darin Gibbs:

I never dreamed my dad and I would work at the same church. It has been a tremendous blessing to watch him do what he has done for so many years—love people. Both of my parents have been an encouragement to many people, and to watch them in action is a real joy.

I honestly think my dad was surprised when I told him I felt God moving me into the pastorate. We prayed together, and spent many days talking through the pros and cons of being a senior pastor. Dad helped me understand that God was orchestrating this move and was strengthening my desire to move into this area of ministry. My wife Kim and I spent many days and nights praying that God would give us courage to do whatever He called us to do.

Many years ago, I heard Dad preach on Psalm 37. Verse 4 says, “Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” I’ve shared that verse with countless people. As I write this, my mind goes back to the marriage conference Kim and I attended several years ago when I shared the dream of pastoring with her. Looking back, I see God’s hand at every turn. What a comfort to know and serve a loving God!

It was truly an honor to have my dad pass the mantle to me. He placed it on me then prayed for God’s anointing. He gave me one of his first ministry Bibles. It is old and worn from many years of use. One of my daughters asked why Granddaddy gave me such an old, worn out Bible. I told her it was Granddaddy’s Bible, the one he used for many years, and it was a very special Bible. I don’t think she understands the significance, but I do.

You see, one day, I want to give her one of my Bibles, one that is old and worn, one that I also used to share God’s love with people...just like my dad.

Dad has given me many things over the years, more than I can count. On that day, he gave me something that will last forever. He gave me a legacy of pastoral faithfulness, and a challenge to press on. For that I am truly grateful.

Reverend Darin Gibbs pastors First Free Will Baptist Church, Gastonia, North Carolina.





Building the Family

RAUL CASTILLO

In Cuba, as in the United States and many other countries, the culture does not encourage strong, healthy marriages and families. In the following article, Raul Castillo tells how Cuban Free Will Baptists seek to prevent cultural norms from negatively impacting thousands of people within the Cuban church.

En el año 1998 fue creada la comisión de matrimonios de la Convención Bautista Libre de Cuba, con la misión de fortalecer y edificar los matrimonios y la familia cristiana. Para ello y desde esa fecha se creó un campamento anual para matrimonios, en nuestro Centro de Conferencias y Seminario “ Los Cedros del Líbano ”, en la ciudad de Pinar del Río, la provincia más al occidente de Cuba. En ellos se imparten conferencias, talleres, consejerías, predicaciones, actividades recreativas y tiempos de testimonios. La asistencia a los mismos, ha ido aumentando desde unos 20 matrimonios en su inicio hasta un promedio en los últimos retiros de entre 50 y 60 matrimonios, lo cual ha sido un reto en las condiciones difíciles que atraviesa nuestro país, en cuanto a economía, transporte entre otras, pero donde hemos visto la mano de Dios proveyendo en todas las áreas para la realización de estos eventos, que han servido para la edificación de dichos matrimonios y familias.

Translated by Jeff Turnbough:

In 1998, the National Convention of Free Will Baptists in Cuba created a commission with the goal of building and strengthening Christian families. From that time, we began an annual retreat for married couples, held in the western province of Pinar del Río, at Cedars of Lebanon Seminary. During this annual retreat we provide workshops, counseling, messages, conferences, testimonies, and recreational activities. Each facet of the retreat is executed with the goal of strengthening Christian marriages. The attendance has increased each year, from 20 couples the first year to 60 couples in recent years.

Attending the retreat is difficult in the Cuban context because of the economic challenges for most families, transportation, etc. Yet, we have seen God provide in all the details for these meetings, which in and of itself has served to edify couples and families.

Across Cuba

In February 2010, my wife and I were chosen to head this commission. Recognizing that lack of participation by married couples in the central and eastern regions of the country was due in large part to economic limitations, we decided to hold similar meetings in each region. We began in 2011 by organizing the first meeting in the central province of Ciego de Avila followed by another event in the eastern province of Camaguey in May.

Because follow-up with these married couples was something we simply could not do with an annual retreat, we also began organizing district and county meetings featuring lectures and workshops. These local events provide a way to equip couples in diverse areas such as biblical foundations of marriage, roles for couples, sexuality, communication, dealing with conflicts, finances, and so on.

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

EPHESIANS 5:33

In Local Churches

One objective of this commission is to provide every local church with these same resources. A leader in each church, under the leadership of the pastor, will meet with married couples each month, minister to their needs, and endeavor to connect them with the national work. This way, we are able to work with every interested couple in our churches. Today, several gifted and equipped couples are serving in this capacity. It is our prayer that we will see the fruit of our labors in stronger marriages and families. Also, we hope these leaders will help in the work across our country. As someone has said, "Local churches or a nation will be no stronger than the families of which they are composed."

During the 2013 annual retreat at Cedars of Lebanon, we will incorporate subjects and workshops to involve people from our men's, ladies', and single's denominational

departments (or commissions). We anticipate 500 brothers and sisters for this meeting, which is a significant representation of the 400 married couples and 5,000 members in Free Will Baptist National Convention of Cuba. This is a big goal for us. We share it with you with the request that you support us with your prayers.

Across Denominational Boundaries

Because of the high divorce rate and marital problems throughout Cuba, we want to take our ministry to Christian couples outside of our denomination, to the entire Christian community in Cuba. In spite of the challenges and work involved in this ministry, marriages saved and relationships strengthened encourages us.

I remember the testimony of one married couple that visited us from another province. Their pastor told us they decided to divorce the day before we met with them. But God intervened, and today their marriage is restored. They are serving the Lord in their local church! We have been blessed to see many marriages receive help, both in our churches and in churches from other denominations. These experiences have demonstrated to us the great need that exists among Christian couples in Cuba.

Before Marriage

A gap in knowledge about what the Scripture teaches often causes problems and conflicts. We have experienced the truth of Jesus' words: "And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free." Because of this, one of our goals is to teach biblical truths not only to married couples, but also to young Christians of dating age, so they are prepared to face marriage with more knowledge and spiritual maturity.

We end by giving God thanks for allowing us to serve Him in this area of ministry. The first and most blessed by this ministry is my own marriage and family. We are also grateful for all the brothers, sisters, pastors, speakers, Cuban, and non-Cuban friends God has sent our way to help us economically and spiritually. Thanks to this help, we have been able to continue advancing. We ask you to continue supporting us with your prayers, so that we can reach and help many other married couples and families. So many need this type of edification. We give God the glory He truly deserves. **ONE**



OUR Story for His Glory

“What a romantic life you lead!” our neighbor said as he tried to conceal a mocking grin. I wish he was serious, but he was actually being facetious. Alexei couldn’t help but chuckle as he stood in our living room, looking on as the paramedics loaded David into an ambulance to take him to the nearest hospital to have a cast put on his broken leg.

When we first arrived in Central Asia, this young, Russian father-of-three rented his home to our ragtag family, fresh off the airplane from America. He knew we had come here on business—our Father’s business. As a fellow believer, he and his family were eager to help us get settled and to be part of what we were sent here to do. Our children attended Russian preschool together, we practiced Russian lessons together, we shared meals together, and we worshiped together. During those times, I was always taking out my camera and snapping photos. I asked if they minded when I took pictures. Alexei just smiled and said in his broken English, “It’s okay; it’s for your family story.”

Our family story...what is it?

Years ago, as we prepared to come on this mission, it seemed almost a surreal adventure. People marveled at the journey that lay ahead. Many people even spoke longingly of their desire to do “such a great thing for God.” In some ways, it was a “romantic dream” to leave everything behind and embark on an exciting journey with only God as our guide. Well, it’s exciting, all right. And yes, every day is a new adventure. But it’s just an adventure called Life—life on the mission field, life as a family who said yes to God.

Every day, that same God reminds me He didn’t send us here to save the world, or even to save Asia. It is only God who saves. He sent us here to live daily for His glory in front of a lost and fallen people. It’s the same calling we’ve always had; now it’s just on the other side of the ocean.

God asks all of us to go all in—to give everything we have to serve the world around us with the love of Christ. The how and the where look different for every person, for every couple, for every family. For us to go, to do, to be what He intends for each of us, three foundational elements are crucial: faith, family, and friends. Faith is our core; family is our comfort; and our friends are the community through which God allows us to accomplish His work in the world.

Faith—Our Core

Faith is trusting God has a plan and purpose for our family and goes before us and with us. I remember when we first told our children we were leaving the parsonage of our country church in Tennessee to cross the ocean to a place they had never heard of, to a land they had never seen, to tell people they had never met about Jesus. Their first question was “Do we have to?” and their second was “Why?” Have you ever shaken your fist at God and asked Him those ques-

tions?

We offered photos of impoverished children, statistics of the lost and dying, and even dangled a little guilt trip here and there. But, in the end, our middle son Conner had it right when he said in his little five-year-old voice, “Cuz God told us to...duh!”

And in the end, we have to trust that our Father, Creator, Savior, and Protector has a plan for us that is bigger and better than we can understand. And if He says go, then “Duh... let’s go!”

And when you go, and it gets tough, or you don’t see the glamorous results you anticipated, then fall back on that faith you have in God and His plans. Our family held to 2 Corinthians 9:13 while we were on the field, and even now as we serve stateside. Basically, Scripture says other people will give God glory because of our ministry, and our generosity proves our obedience to the gospel. It reminds us of the reason we do what we do.

Family—Our Comfort

Family brings the ordinary rhythm of life that provides comfort to our souls. It’s no coincidence that the word familiar shares the same root as family. It’s the place we fall back to when we need to find a place to totally be ourselves. It’s our center. It’s our comfort zone. It’s not the adventure or excitement that we are drawn to in family...it’s the familiar.

It’s the taste of Mom’s homemade chocolate chip cookies, the sounds of Grandpa whistling, of Little Sister humming. It’s the sight of Daddy reading his Bible, or a family pet waiting for you at the door with tail wagging frantically. Those things welcome you home.

I actually get a little twinge in my stomach as I picture myself standing just inside our huge steel gate with its many



The secure foundation we need to take the risk is not an excuse to avoid those risks.

locks and latches. Each day, we headed out the door of our home into our courtyard and walked up to that gate; it was the last step before heading out to a strange land where everything was different, unfamiliar. You look different, sound different, walk different, and even if you wear local clothes, they still know you don't belong. But you take a deep breath, say a little prayer, and pass through that gate. You spend all your energy and coping skills adjusting and adapting to the culture around you. You battle the weather, the traffic, the language barriers, and the customs. And you do it in the name of Jesus for the sake of the gospel. And it's worth it—every day.

In the evening, as the sun goes down, you head back down your little street towards home, and you come back to the gate. But this time, you wait until you walk through the gate and lock it behind you to take a little breath and say that prayer of thanks that God has brought you back home.

We must be cautious not to be lulled to sleep from its comfort. The secure foundation we need to take the risk is not an excuse to avoid those risks. Family is basecamp. It's where you refuel, recharge, and obtain the energy to go back out into the world and do it all over again.

Friends—Our Community

Friends are the community of people God prepares, wherever we are, to be conduits of God's love and recipients as well. No matter what city or even continent I have been, God has placed special people to walk beside me. Friends who encourage, instruct, comfort, and cherish. The ache of leaving friends in one place is soothed by the revelation of another God has waiting for you.

The new friend may be a different race, color, language, or background but is one who understands your heart, is there for your needs, and commits to serve with you as a part of God's bigger picture.

Alexei was right...it's not a romantic life we lead.

And he would know. He came to my aid when I had a wreck and hit the police chief's car. It was outside his gate our van slid on ice, right through our other neighbor's fence! It was his wife who gave me medicine for my hand when I burned it on the radiator and for my kids when they had chicken pox. He shares his generator when our electricity goes out—almost daily. It's his well we pump water from now that our area is without city water.

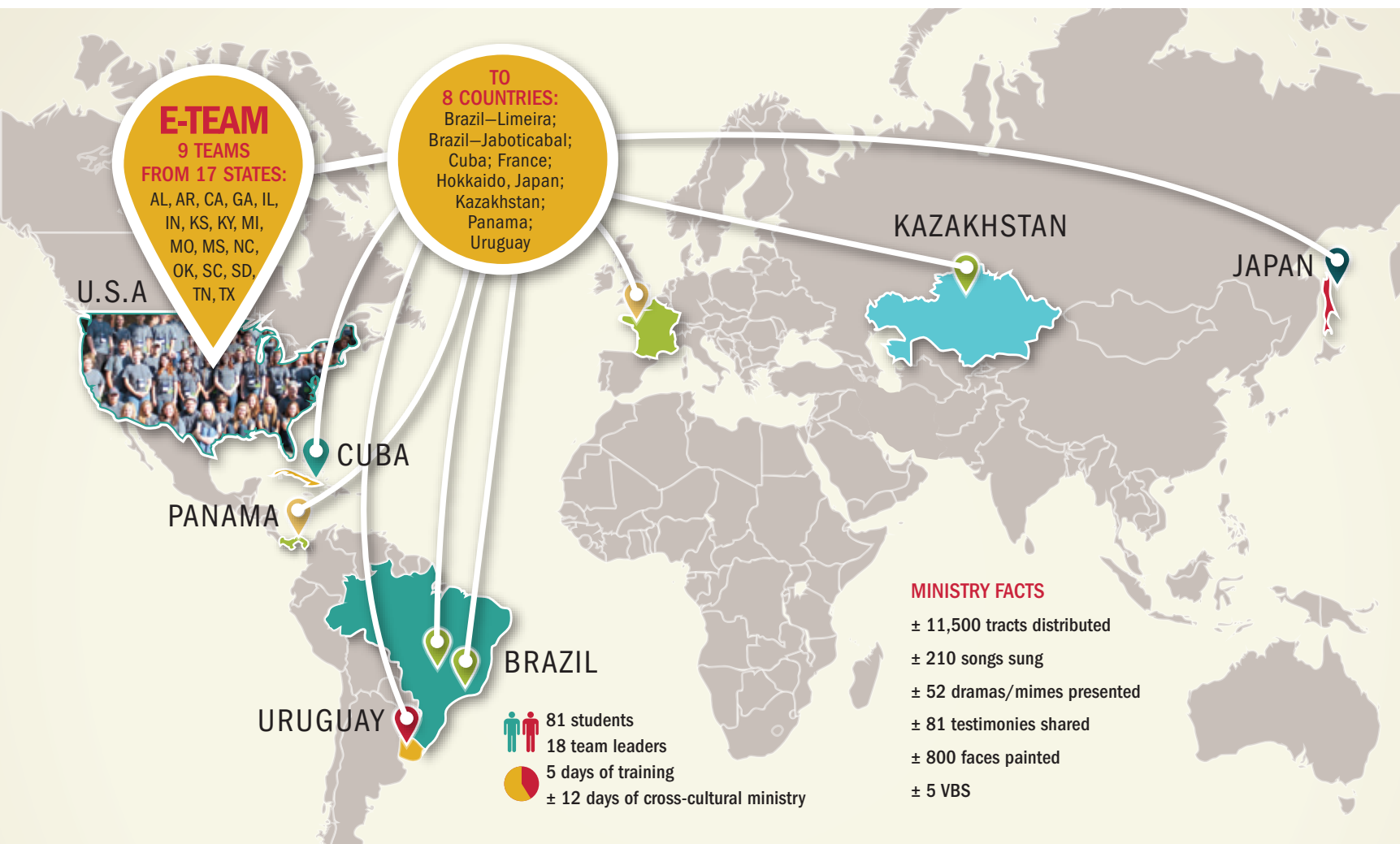
Together, we take it a day at a time. We rely on His grace. We share His love. And we give Him the glory. We don't keep a record of all our successes, or an accounting of conversions or baptisms. We just want to share His glory woven through the fabric of our family story. **ONE**

What is your family story?

Not sure? Follow these steps to figure it out.

- List major events in your lives that have been defining for you and your family. Write down God's hand in those events.
- **What are four things that define "who" you are as a family?**
 - What do you do to relax?
 - What is one special holiday tradition you have?
 - What is a family inside joke you share?
 - Finish the sentence, "in our family, we always..."
- Choose one verse to be a defining verse through which your family is able to filter its decisions, plans, and activities.
- **Pray God will show you what He has in store for the next chapter in your family story.**

News Around the World



VBS Takes Flight

PENONOMÉ, PANAMA—Whether held in a backyard, park, church, or activity center, Vacation Bible Schools offer missionaries opportunities to share the gospel with children who might not attend a Sunday service and to connect with their families.

May 27-31, 2013, an average of 40 “passengers” learned about God’s power over nature, life’s circumstances, sin, death, and our lives. Lori Torrison wrote, “At the final destination closing service...many parents took their ‘first flight’ to our church, enjoyed an in-flight snack and beverage, and heard the flight attendant’s instructions on how to exit this life safely.” ■



Training to Serve

NANTES, FRANCE—Training leaders is a necessary step in building a healthy church, whether overseas or in the States. How that is done may vary. Over a five-month period this year, Robert Bryan led a committee that prepared, promoted, and presented a series of monthly weekend seminars to help French Christians better serve their local churches. Training sessions covered topics such as relationships, life management, spiritual gifts, how to study the Bible, apologetics, and evangelism. ■

World Missions Offering Tops \$600,000

ANTIOCH, TN—International Missions rejoices in the goodness of the Lord and the faithfulness of His people. Once again, the denomination has responded to the need for reaching the lost around the world. As of June 30, \$604,284.43 has been received in the office. The largest WMO, before 2012's record response, was \$528,107.86 in 2008.

"Giving to International Missions and the WMO has never been a better investment," declares Danny Williams, chairman of the International Missions Board.

The 2012 total of \$1,010,935.64 was, by far, the largest offering ever received. The board's difficult decision to hold missionaries stateside due to our financial shortfall produced a crisis. "We will always be grateful for the way our people stood with us in 2012," says General Director Clint Morgan. "But, we are equally encouraged that the denomination is giving this year...simply to see the gospel taken to the ends of the earth."

WMO national chairman Mark Price focused on involvement. "A record-setting 870-plus churches have either sent in their offering or indicated they plan to participate in the 2013 WMO," says Price, "This is the way God intended us to work—all of us doing our part, no one person or church carrying the full load."

Gifts to International Missions, through the WMO or through monthly giving, help us labor together with the Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission! We praise the Lord for every person who is involved in this partnership. The full release can be found on fwbgo.com/news. ■

Annual Board Meeting Positive, Strategic

ANTIOCH, TN—The Board of Free Will Baptist International Missions met April 29–May 1, 2013.

Daniel and Katie (McDonald) Speer were appointed as two-year interns in Japan. **Josh and Lydia (Dankson) Provow** were approved for a two-year term as interns to an undetermined location. **Samantha H.** was seconded to a partner organization for two years.

Bobby and Geneva Poole tendered their retirement after a commendatory 53 years of faithful service in Brazil. They requested to be moved to retired status as of December 31, 2013. **Tim and Di Keener**, after 10 years of valuable service in France, submitted their resignation, effective June 1, 2013. Tim will pursue seminary studies as the couple continues to seek God's will for the future.

An unqualified approval of the audit was received from Blankenship CPA Group. The board approved a \$7.25 million framework budget for 2014 to be presented at the July 2013 meeting of the National Association of Free Will Baptists. The operational budget for 2014 will be approved at the December 2013 board meeting.

All board members (Danny Williams, AL; Jeff Manning, NC; Mark Price, OH; Nelson Henderson, AR; Rob Morgan, TN; Greg McAllister, CA; Tom McCullough, MI; Brad Ransom, OK; Janice Banks, OK) were in attendance.

The full release, as well as details about the appointments, resignation, and retirement can be found in news on fwbgo.com. ■



Four Baptized in Spain

SPAIN—Four people were baptized in a joint baptismal service in Spain on Sunday, June 9. The Villalba and Alpedrete congregations joined together to celebrate those following the Lord in baptism. Three from the Alpedrete Church (including MK Alejandro Johnson) and one from the Villalba Church braved cool, storm-threatening weather to publically declare their faith in Jesus Christ. ■

+Intersect >>>>

I Didn't Know!

I'm always encouraged when I read that Bible characters and writers didn't know some things. Take Jacob, for example. He wasn't aware that God was in that lonely place where he'd been sleeping. Balaam didn't know that the Lord's angel stood beside his mouthy donkey. And even Job admitted he really did not know what he was saying in his disputes with the Lord. Jeremiah's own people were plotting to assassinate him, and he was in the dark about it.

Then there was Paul. Oops! Even the great apostle didn't recognize Ananias the high priest when he broadsided the Sanhedrin chief in Acts 23.

In that vein, then, I offer just a few of the many things I didn't know in my more callow years (many of which I am still trying to figure out).

I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW...

- ... how fun it was to watch two little boys wake up on December 25 and discover what was under the Christmas tree.
- ... my Dad knew so much, now that I can't ask him so many things I need to know.
- ... how much I loved my first ministry calling as it led me into the Himalayas of God's Word.
- ... how I would miss going to school, and how determined I would be to go back again if not for too little time and money.
- ... that grace is accepting the fact that God accepts me, as Brennan Manning says.
- ... how much I love and miss people who are now gone from my life.
- ... what I missed in not reading more of the classic works in world literature.
- ... I would miss that frisky seven-year-old boy plopping down in my lap every evening.
- ... how helpful it would have been to have taken voice lessons.
- ... I should have asked many more questions and listened a whole lot more.
- ... to live more in the moment rather than holding out for all the "potential" I was told about that never came.
- ... how deep depravity runs in my heart and mind.
- ... and recognize my tendencies to push boundaries just to affirm myself.
- ... that I should have taken the creation mandate more seriously so that "all my work may be praise."
- ... people around me had such great stories I should have taken the time to hear.
- ... I should have worked more at becoming a fisherman.
- ... that I haven't prayed on my knees enough.
- ... how I would regret not praying more with our children.

... my enormous sense of relief and gratitude to God in hearing the words, "We were able to remove all the tumor."

... how much the routines of life shape my spiritual formation if I will embrace them as God's grace to me.

... to remember people's names and call them by name (Well, I did know that! I just didn't do it!).

... that there really is no such thing as an "independent" church. That's like saying a church is a "non-fellowshipping" church. They don't exist.

... that I was letting what people thought of me add so much pretense to my life.

... what great people my teachers have been.

... I would only get one chance to fly in my uncle's helicopter, and I turned him down.

... that I should have journaled consistently.

... how wonderful my mother's cooking was. I miss her dumplings, ho-cakes, fried potatoes, and collards.

... what a wonderful gift music would be in my life.

... just how special it was to watch number 56 play football for the Mustangs every Friday night.

... the gift of life that would come from the best organ donor ever, my wife Carol. Sign your organ donor card. Do it now while you're thinking about it.

... and still don't, how a mate could love me so unselfishly and unconditionally.

... how I would wish for one short snippet of video on YouTube® from my ball-playing days.

... that grandchildren could make you do things you wouldn't do for anybody else in the world, ever.

... how satisfying God would be for me in everything through Jesus His Son. **ONE**

Intersect: where the Bible meets life is a regular column written by Dr. Garnett Reid, a member of the Bible faculty at Welch College.

Legacy of Faithfulness...

"The young minister's preaching is like a tornado!"

That is how Dr. George Ball described Ransom Dunn, a Free Will Baptist preacher born in 1818. As a teenager, Ransom was deeply moved by pleas in *The Morning Star* (Free Will Baptist paper) for workers to evangelize the American West. Dunn answered the call and left for the wilderness of Ohio at age 18.

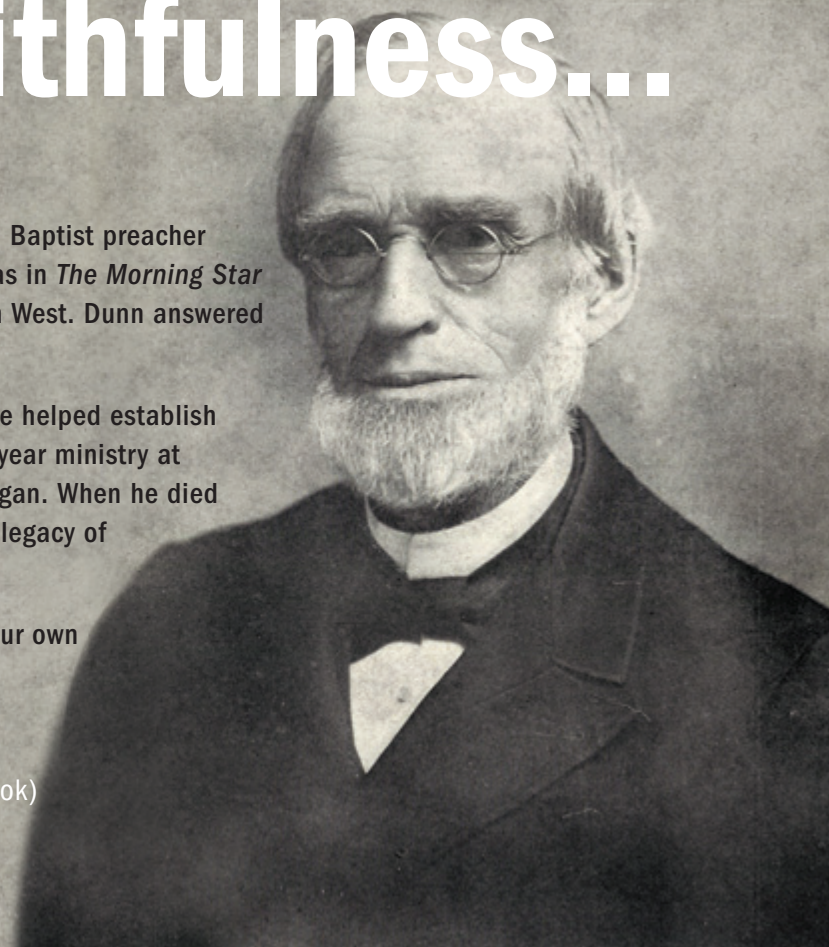
For 12 years, he preached in 10 states with thousands saved. He helped establish Geauga Seminary and Rio Grande College before starting a 50-year ministry at Hillsdale College, a Free Will Baptist college near Detroit, Michigan. When he died in November 1888, at age 82, Ransom Dunn had established a legacy of faithfulness that continued for generations.

What is your legacy? With an endowment, you can help start your own legacy of faithfulness! **Contact the Foundation to learn more:**



Free Will Baptist Foundation

www.fwbgifts.org | 877-336-7575 (now on Facebook)



The PENSION CRISIS



*A Welch College Presidential
Letter From J. Matthew Pinson*

Recently, we received a call from a student who said, “I really feel called to attend Welch College, but I just can’t afford the cost.”

Unfortunately, this is not uncommon. Students and their parents love our programs of study, our professors, and our campus life. But many are being hindered from participating in this life-changing mission because of the rising costs of a Welch College education. These rising costs have been caused by the worst economy since the Great Depression and unprecedented expenses for the college. Most of these expenses were triggered by new government-imposed rules on our pension plan.

As a result of adverse market conditions, in 2006, the federal government changed the regulations for organizations with traditional pension plans. These changes took effect in 2008. Welch College had one of these old-fashioned pension plans, instituted more than 50 years ago.

This change in federal regulations required the college to pay more than \$850,000 in unexpected pension expenses over five years in an attempt to bring the pension plan to fully-funded status—over \$850,000 in unanticipated cash expenses!

In addition to these extra cash expenses, the college has had to borrow more than \$2.3 million to terminate the pension. Not knowing what the market would do or what further changes governmental regulators might make, we ended the plan, distributing retirement funds to pension plan participants. This brings the total pension-related debt to more than \$3 million since 2008. All this came on top of the turbulent economy we and other ministries face.

NOW MORE THAN EVER,
WE NEED YOUR HELP TO
ERASE THIS DEFICIT. IF
110,000 PEOPLE (LESS THAN
ONE HALF OF FREE WILL
BAPTISTS) GAVE JUST \$28.63,
WE WOULD BE ABLE TO
RETIRE THIS DEBT.

In short, the college had no source of funding for this astronomical, unexpected expense. This came at a time when small denominational Bible colleges across the country are struggling because of decreased giving, and more and more students are staying home to attend lower-cost state schools.

Now more than ever, we need your help to erase this deficit. This will allow us to hold down tuition costs and give more scholarships to students who have answered God's call but cannot afford to attend Welch College. We will be able to help them find their place in God's kingdom and give them tools to fulfill that calling.

If 110,000 people (less than one half of Free Will Baptists) gave just \$28.63, we would be able to retire this debt.

Please pray and make a decision about what you can give to help us eliminate this pension deficit. Your gift will enable needy students who want to be part of this Christian community of faith and learning to fulfill God's calling on their lives.

Please be assured that Welch College is ever mindful of being a good steward of the funds you give us. We have diligently cut expenses and are recognized for our conservative and responsible financial practices. Thank you for supporting Welch College in this important effort. **ONE**



News at Welch College

Welcome Days Visitors Experience Welch College

Sixty-one high school students from 12 states visited the campus of Welch College April 18-20, for spring semester Welcome Days, according to Director of Enrollment Management Debbie Mouser. The enthusiastic high school students represented Florida (13), Michigan (9), Tennessee (9), Illinois (7), Alabama (5), Ohio (4), Georgia (3), Missouri (3), North Carolina (3), Virginia (3), Indiana (1), and Oklahoma (1).

The schedule included a tour of Nashville and opportunities for the visiting students to experience life at Welch College by attending classes, worshiping in chapel, and taking in the Music and Drama departments' production of "The Music Man." The students toured the campus, played games, and met President Matt Pinson during a Friday reception. Visitors also met with professors in their fields of interest and took in a financial aid seminar.

Visiting students participated in a survey rating their Welcome Days experience. They ranked the hospitality of their per-

sonal hosts and other students they encountered 4.96 and 4.80 (1=poor; 5=excellent) respectively. They gave a 4.94 ranking to faculty and staff hospitality and a 4.87 to "The Music Man" performance on Friday night. One student commented, "Welcome Days was an awesome experience. I look forward to being a part of the Welch College family in the fall."

Mrs. Mouser said, "The Enrollment Management Team was extremely pleased with the outcome of Welcome Days. Our Welch students were great hosts and made our visitors feel at home. Our faculty and staff were also acknowledged as being a valuable part of their experience on campus. We know that we will see many of these students as members of the Welch College family in the near future. We especially appreciate the youth pastors and sponsors who are committed to educating their youth about the value of a Christian education."

For more information about campus visits and events, contact the Enrollment Management Office at recruit@welch.edu. ■



Matthew Bracey Joins Welch College Team

Matthew Bracey will join the Welch College family as Registrar beginning July 2013. He will assume many of the responsibilities of the academic administrative assistant position formerly held by Lynsey Riggs, along with registrar duties, according to Provost Greg Kettelman. Mr. Bracey will also teach courses in history, law, and theology.

Matt is a 2008 graduate of Welch College (B.A., history) and holds an M.A. degree in theology from Beeson Divinity School and a J.D. from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. Bracey sat for the Tennessee Bar Exam in February, and he and his wife Sarah celebrated their first anniversary in May.

Dr. Kettelman, said, "Matthew Bracey is exceptionally well-prepared to assume his duties at Welch College. It is rare to find an individual who is so qualified to wear the various hats the college needs at this time. Thank God for His providential leading of Matthew back to his alma mater." ■

College Graduates 37

Welch College conferred degrees on 37 students from 14 states in commencement exercises at Memorial Auditorium on Friday, May 10, according to President Matt Pinson. Students completed degrees in multiple programs ranging from two-year associate's degrees to four-year bachelor's degrees. Forty percent of the class graduated with honors.

Dr. Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School, delivered the commencement address, highlighting the importance of the Heritage, Message, and Mission of the graduating class as they go forward to minister in the Ecotone that is the post-modern world. George has served churches in four states and has written over 20 books. He is also senior editor at *Christianity Today* magazine.

Michigan pastor Rick Locklear presented Thursday evening's baccalaureate message from 2 Timothy 2, encouraging graduates to take seriously their call to leadership and serve the Lord diligently and with excellence. Locklear, a 1980 Welch College graduate, has been involved in the work of Woodhaven Free Will Baptist Church in Woodhaven, Michigan, for over 28 years and serves as a member of the board of directors of the Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Dr. James Stevens, chairman of the Music Department, was named Academic Advisor of the Year. President Matt Pinson presented gifts to Business Program Coordinator Rebecca Deel and Librarian Carol Reid for 25 years of faithful service to the Lord through the ministry of Welch College.

The college commends to you and to the work of the Lord the members of the 2013 graduating class. ■

2013 Welch College Graduates with Majors and Honors

Associate of Science Degrees

Pamela Lynn Ham
Franklin, TN
Biology

Carol Spruill Holland
Waipahu, HI
Business

Russell Douglas Houske
Dover, TN
Ministry

Julie Marie Montero
Miami, FL
Biology

John Leonard Shamblin
Iuka, MS
Ministry

Wayne Thomas Smith †
Pamplico, SC
Ministry

Jesse Robert Timmons †
Florence, SC
Ministry

Gregory Allen Whitehead
Hampton, TN
Ministry

Christian Tyler Wilson †
Pleasant View, TN
Biology

Associate of Arts Degrees

Haylee Lanise Hubbard
Hot Springs, AR

Rebecca Jolene James †
Manor, GA

Bachelor of Science Degrees

Jacob Logan Culwell*
Springfield, TN
Business Administration

Amber Michelle Freeman
Glenwood, AR
Child Development and Learning
Licensure K-6

Nicholas Edward Hampton*
Pleasant View, TN
Psychology

Kelly Lynn Hicks
Taft, TN
Child Development and Learning
Licensure K-6

Rachel Ann Jackson**
Newport, TN
Child Development and Learning
Licensure K-6

Nicholas Blake Jordan
Iuka, MS
Youth Ministry

Stephan Alexander Knox
Ashland City, TN
Psychology

Matthew Jordan Looney***
Smithville, TN
General Christian Ministries

Catherine Lynn Pointer***
Russellville, AR
Child Development and Learning
Licensure K-6

Christen Paige Pointer***
Russellville, AR
Physical Education
Licensure K-6

Leigha Ruth Ramos*
Ashland City, TN
Early Childhood Education
Licensure PreK-3

Michael Anthony Shearon
Joelton, TN
Youth Ministry

Brittani Chari Sims**
Brighton, MI
Business Administration

Allison Leigh Wilkerson
Coker, AL
Psychology

Bachelor of Arts Degrees

Aaron Lee Pierce***
Tupelo, MS
Pastoral Ministry

Steven Christopher Reeder**
Doe Run, MO
Missions

Bethany Dawn Shope
Knoxville, TN
Missions

Gregory Mitchell Smith
Tawas City, MI
Pastoral Ministry

Robin-Lynn Marie Snow**
Tecumseh, MI
Missions

Kacy Rachel Stone
Morehead, KY
Missions

Montgomery Frank Thornsby
Paintsville, KY
History

Bachelor of Music Education

Rebekah Ayers Talbot***
Tuscaloosa, AL
Licensure K-12

Brittany April Brown*
Woodbridge, VA
Licensure K-12

Kristina Nichole Clem**
Decatur, IL
Licensure K-12

Christian Elizabeth Cyrus**
Ashland, KY
Licensure K-12

Kayla Lynn Gaddis
Marion, NC
Licensure K-12

*** Summa Cum Laude

** Magna Cum Laude

* Cum Laude

† Not Present



PART 1

Sudden Wealth:

Blessing or Curse?

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS



Some syndromes I wouldn't mind having. Sudden-wealth syndrome, for example, or at least the opportunity to have it and see if I can handle it (or tame it, or endure it, or whatever it is you do with a syndrome like that). I just know that I would give it a blue-ribbon try if I had the chance.

But that's not likely. I don't play the lottery. Don't do big-money scratch-offs or send cards to Publisher's Clearing House. Don't play the horses, even the Derby ones. And don't have a wealthy relative near death or have a wealthy relative at all, as far as I know. But in the spirit of full disclosure, one of us (he will remain nameless) admits once upon a time regularly playing the Reader's Digest Sweepstakes—never won a dime, not even a copper.

Just for clarity, sudden wealth is most often defined as a lump sum equal to a few of your annual incomes. Also for clarity, if it comes, this windfall likely will be from a family inheritance or insurance settlement unless you indulge in a get-rich-quick play and have unusual success.

Remember, too, that wealth for me may not be wealth for you. Whether it is \$10,000, \$10 million, or \$100 million, the problem arises not so much from the amount, as how you handle the amount. According to the Boston College Center for Retirement Research, two-thirds of Baby Boomers will inherit money, most likely during your later, middle-age years. So be prepared, you may be gob-smacked with sudden wealth...and the syndrome that often runs along with it.

What should you know about sudden wealth?

Anxiety, guilt, numbness, confusion—even sleep disorders—are common psychological snags for the suddenly rich. On the other end of things, some feel inordinately powerful, invulnerable, overly elated. Any one of these is a signal to go slow and easy. I did some legwork for a friend who was both executor and sole beneficiary of his uncle’s sizable estate. He told me at the very beginning, “I don’t want it. Won’t take it. Why didn’t our uncle split it between all of us? There’ll be trouble, and I don’t want trouble.” Social or familial strain or stress is common. Expect it.

Sudden wealth is often lost—all of it. Missy Sullivan in Wall Street Journal’s *Money* says, “New riches prove particularly hard to hold onto—and even harder to patiently nurture and grow.” Her research shows that 70% evaporates by the end of the second generation, 90% by the end of the third. We see it all the time. Think lottery winners, athletes, stars. And it happens to the rest of us as well. We run through inheritances at a gallop. We frivol away insurance settlements. A Texas family’s new business mushroomed: fleets of vehicles, private plane, dinners in New York or L.A., art works, limos and drivers—the works. Too quick. A few lost contracts, an economic stalemate, and the newfound fortune was just as quickly lost.

The more undisciplined you are with money now, the more apt you are to lose it all when a lump sum arrives. Check yourself: am I a conserver or spender? Do I grow it or blow it? Not much will change when a windfall comes, wealth preservationists say.

Presumption of an endless stream is another aspect of sudden-wealth syndrome. You function as if on a permanent vacation. You spend as if there is no end. You treat and treat and treat yourself or your family. You “buy” friendships. All sure signs of trouble, says Stacy Allred of Merrill Lynch Private Banking and Investment Group. My newly rich Midwest friend learned the hard way that a large insurance settlement grows suddenly small after new home, new vehicle, gifts, cruise, and frequent celebrations. He awoke one morning to realize that hundred of thousands had dwindled to a thousand. Don’t say, “That would never happen to me.”

Families come apart. In-fighting is common. “Wealth is a magnifier,” says Vic Preisser, managing director of the Williams Group, a family-wealth consultancy. “If you have problems, it will magnify them.” I know this, too, because of a modest inheritance a relative received from her grand-



The more undisciplined you are with money now, the more apt you are to lose it all when a lump sum arrives.

mother. She recently confided that her two brothers have not spoken to her in 12 years because the inheritance was not divided three ways. “I cared for my grandmother, took her food, stayed with her when nobody else would, but that didn’t matter to them. I don’t feel guilty, but I don’t I like what that small amount of money did to me and my brothers,” she says.

What should you do about sudden wealth?

Remember those psychological issues? They are signals to go slow and easy. Irvin G. Schorsch III calls the first blush of wealth the “honeymoon phase” and warns that the suddenly rich are very vulnerable early-on. It’s “too much, too soon,” he says. “I recommend they deposit their newfound wealth in a safe, insured account with an independent custodian or bank.” What you do next is this: step back. Wait. Gain perspective. Avoid early overspending and risky in-

vesting sprees. Restore your equilibrium and good sense. Take all the time you need.

Recognize that sudden wealth can be a blessing or a curse. No question, it is a trial, a testing of your faith, your will, your wisdom, even your character, but it can also produce blessings if you master it. I recommend James as a sound scriptural place to begin. Fill your mind, your heart with chapter 1. Soak in it because what James says is strategic to how you handle or mishandle money.

Ask for wisdom. Chew on what this new money means to you and what it does not. Then chew on it some more. Let James and the Holy Spirit guide you. Decide who you are and who you want to be before the Lord, with or without this new money. Then accept the money as a good and perfect gift from the Father, given to you for good and blessed purposes. Determine—think like Daniel here—that you will use this sudden wealth to bless and be a blessing, not

a curse. Set limits, boundaries for yourself and your family. Work on these together, especially with your spouse, and eventually with your children, even the small ones.

Spend nothing until you make sound plans that have three components: what to share, what to save, what to spend. Notice the order. Share: make gifts reach far and benefit the most people, especially God’s mission and ministries. Forego gifts to individuals except to meet urgent specific needs, not wants. Save: don’t stash this new money in fruit jars under the floor of your bedroom. Instead, develop a wealth growth and preservation plan. Finally, spend: wisely, graciously, happily.

Wealth is not evil. Wealth need not be a curse. Counting on it, depending on it, loving it, losing it—now that’s the curse! **ONE**

(In Sudden Wealth: Blessing or Curse, Part 2, Bill and Brenda will discuss responsibilities of those who leave inheritances to family members.)

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Bill and Brenda Evans live in Catlettsburg, Kentucky. Bill is former director of the Free Will Baptist Foundation and Brenda is a retired English teacher. Visit www.fwbgifts.org for more information on planned giving that benefits your favorite ministry.



Looking for a way to help both family and charity?

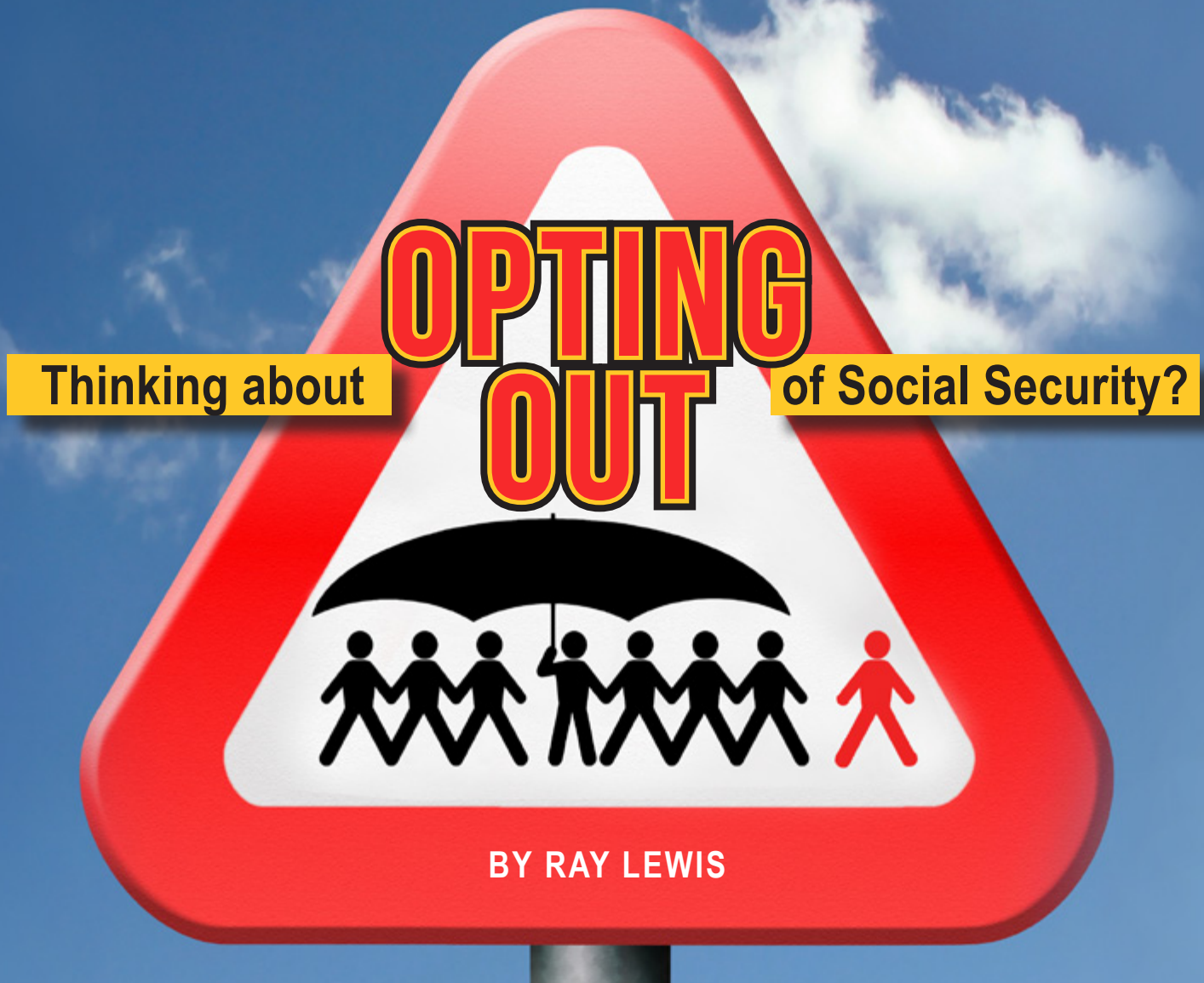
A popular option is the “Give It Twice” Trust.

This trust is often funded through an IRA or another type of taxable retirement plan. When your trust is invested, it produces new income that goes to your children for a number of years before distributing value to the ministry of your choice. This plan enables you to provide your children with an inheritance while enjoying income and estate tax savings from your gift.

Contact the Foundation for more information:



Free Will Baptist Foundation
www.fwbgifts.org | 877-336-7575



During my early days with the Board of Retirement, our office frequently received calls seeking advice from ministers on opting out of paying Social Security. Our advice was always the same. “Think very carefully before making that decision!”

For a few years, the tendency to “opt out” seemed to die down—that is, until 2013 rolled around. Once again, there seems to be a push to encourage young ministers to exercise this right. I have already addressed this issue more this year than I have in the past few years put together.

Is it possible for a minister to opt out of paying Social Security or self-employment tax legally? Yes. Until 1968, ministers had the option of entering the Social Security system. Beginning in 1968, it became a requirement. However, the new requirements also made provision allowing a minister to opt out with respect “to services performed in the exercise of ministry” if they had valid reasons for doing so.

REVISED REASONING

We typically hear three main reasons for choosing to opt out. The first is, “Social Security benefits won’t be available when I retire.” This is followed by, “I can do a better job investing my money than the government,” and “It’s not the government’s job to take care of people.”

The problem is that in the eyes of the Social Security Administration, none of these are acceptable reasons for opting out of paying Social Security. The minister’s reasons for opting out cannot be based on personal or political views regarding government or the Social Security system. Objections for religious reasons must be the only governing principle used in this decision.

FORMS AND FACTS

To opt out of Social Security, a minister must file *Form 4361* within the first two years of entering the ministry. If you are considering the decision, obtain a copy of this form and read it. Don’t blindly accept the advice of others. Understand what you are signing and agreeing to. After reading the requirements, pray about the decision first, and then consult a tax professional who works with clergy before signing.

Before a minister signs and files *Form 4361* with the IRS, certain requirements must be satisfied. When you sign the form, you certify “that I am conscientiously opposed to, or because of my religious principles I am opposed to, the acceptance (for services I perform as a minister...) of any public insurance that makes payments in the event of death, disability, old age, or retirement; or that makes payments toward the cost of, or provides services for, medical care.”

This statement indicates that you have an objection to receiving public insurance. It is not a statement about what you think about public insurance as a whole.

Also, the minister must certify that he has informed the licensing body of his church or denomination that he is opposed to the acceptance of public insurance benefits based on ministerial service on religious or conscientious grounds.

Let me encourage you to visit <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irspdf/p517.pdf> and print a copy of *Publication 517*. This document specifically deals with “Social Security and other information for the members of the clergy and religious workers.”

MORE THAN A CHECK

For those considering the opt-out option, it is important to keep in mind that Social Security provides more benefits than just a retirement check each month. Social Security offers insurance and disability benefits as well. If a worker becomes disabled, Social Security benefits might be the only source of income he has. Social Security can also provide vital financial protection in unfortunate situations where the head of the household is killed or disabled.

Think carefully before signing on the dotted line.

If you opt out, several items need to be put in place to ensure that you and your family receive care:

Make sure you have sufficient term life insurance. Financial advisors recommend ten times the amount of your annual salary, especially if you have young children.

Make sure you have sufficient long-term disability insurance. If you become disabled after opting out, you will not receive anything from Social Security.

Open a retirement savings account like the 403(b) Plan offered by the Board of Retirement. You might also invest in a Roth IRA. It is important to start contributing early and be consistent because if you opt out of Social Security, this may be your main (or possibly your only) source of income during retirement years.

Secure long-term care insurance and health insurance coverage to take the place of Medicare because when you opt out of Social Security, you also opt out of Medicare.

If you’re willing to take responsibility for yourself by planning for retirement and having the proper insurance, opting out of Social Security could work for you. Through the years, however, I have talked to many men who opted out of Social Security while they were young, and realized they had not adequately prepared for retirement.

Think carefully before signing on the dotted line. **ONE**

Brown on Green >>>>

Looking for Yield in All the Wrong Places

Be careful when “locking-in” low interest rates

We live during a time when it is difficult to find a good return on your investment. This is especially challenging for those who live off the interest. The best yield on five-year certificates of deposit (CDs) is a measly 1.6%. The ten-year U. S. Treasury bond returns 2.02%, and 30-year Treasury bonds only 3.2% as this article is being written. These rates do not generate much income, yet many investors have locked-in investments at these low rates.

Most economists believe interest rates have reached their low point, but it may be many months before they rise. Still, they believe the next move will be up rather than down. This causes problems for those who lock in low rates on long-term CDs or even longer-term Treasury bonds.

When interest rates begin to go up, they will face a difficult choice. A CD holder may decide to pay the early withdrawal fees to switch to a higher yield. The cost of these fees will discount their new higher rate of return. Those who own 30-year bonds have an even worse situation. They will lose 20% of the value of their bond for every 1% rise in interest rates.

A \$1,000 investment purchased when rates were 3.2% will lose \$200 of value when interest rates reach 4.2%. They will be able to sell their \$1,000 investment for only \$800. This will make it difficult to take advantage of rising interest rates.

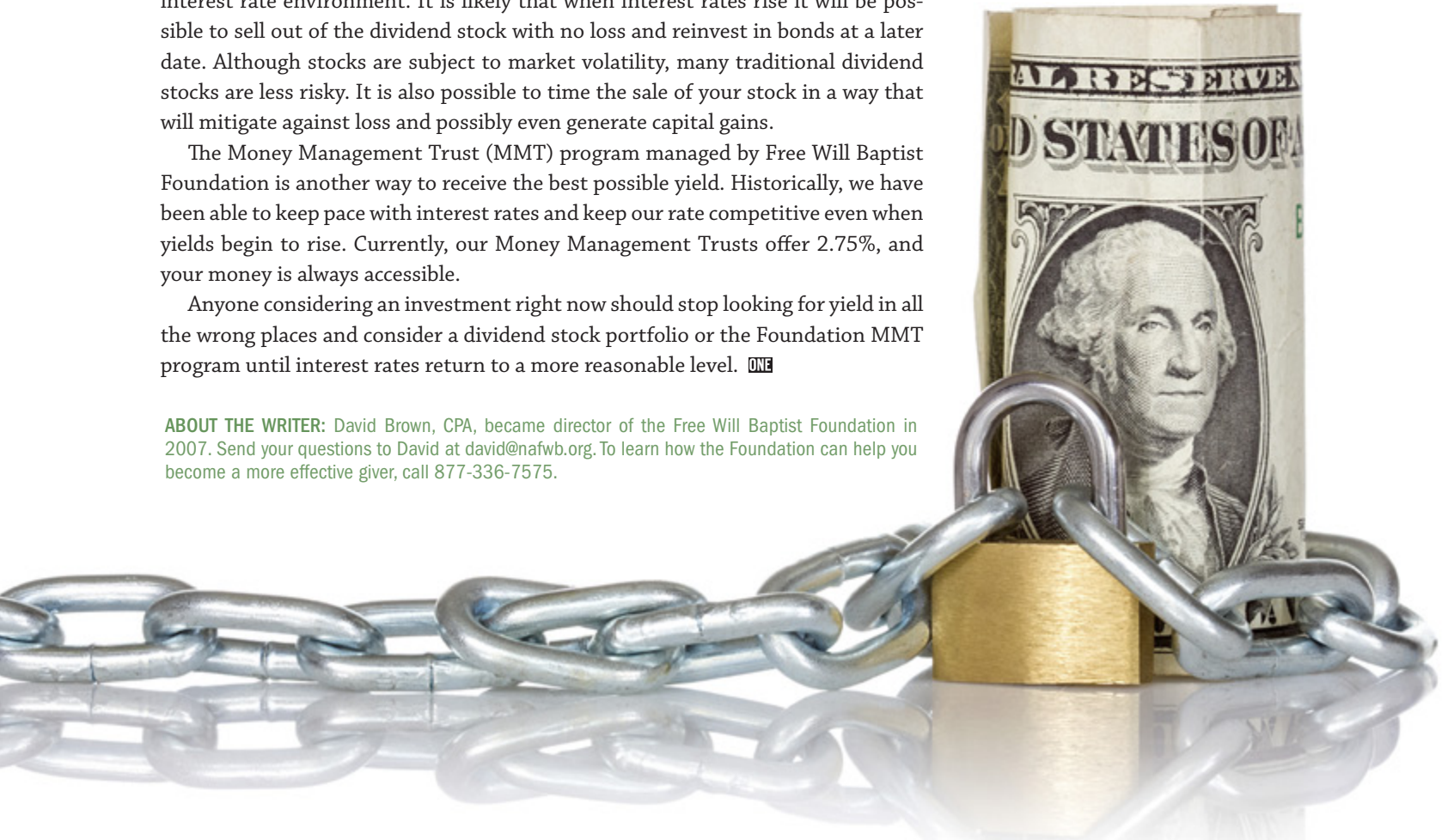
Many choose to invest in dividend stock for a higher yield in this extremely low interest rate environment. It is likely that when interest rates rise it will be possible to sell out of the dividend stock with no loss and reinvest in bonds at a later date. Although stocks are subject to market volatility, many traditional dividend stocks are less risky. It is also possible to time the sale of your stock in a way that will mitigate against loss and possibly even generate capital gains.

The Money Management Trust (MMT) program managed by Free Will Baptist Foundation is another way to receive the best possible yield. Historically, we have been able to keep pace with interest rates and keep our rate competitive even when yields begin to rise. Currently, our Money Management Trusts offer 2.75%, and your money is always accessible.

Anyone considering an investment right now should stop looking for yield in all the wrong places and consider a dividend stock portfolio or the Foundation MMT program until interest rates return to a more reasonable level. **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITER: David Brown, CPA, became director of the Free Will Baptist Foundation in 2007. Send your questions to David at david@nafwb.org. To learn how the Foundation can help you become a more effective giver, call 877-336-7575.

Most economists believe interest rates have reached their low point, but it may be many months before they rise.





Finishing Strong:

FAITH, MARRIAGE, FAMILY, CHURCH, AND WORK LIFE

... By *Norma Jackson Goldman* ...

As I write these words, I've set aside my work for the rest of the morning to attend the "celebration of life" service for a much-loved member of our church family. If you asked me to define servant leadership, his name would probably come to mind first. Bill loved the Lord, His Word, and His church. He loved his wife Elsie and their girls, and you could not miss his passion for any of these roles. It would be impossible to calculate the impact of his life and witness on this world and the next. In 2 Timothy 4, Paul summarized his life and work by saying, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." The same could be said of Bill.



He maintained a consistent testimony throughout his 52-year marriage to Elsie, in his relationships with his daughters, grandchildren, and all others in their extended family. In every setting—business, church, or play—he spoke often and lovingly of these important relationships and their impact on his life. He was deeply concerned for the spiritual welfare of his family and others God placed in his path. Bill pointed them to Jesus with obvious compassion.

It was in the context of the sick, hurting, and lonely that you could see his compassion most closely. He ministered faithfully to four critically ill friends of mine, all hospitalized at different times. After extended treatment, three of them went home to be with the Lord, and a fourth miraculously survived fungal meningitis. As Bill visited with her, she was deeply touched at his concern for her spiritual wellbeing. When Ellen was released after nearly six months of hospi-



HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED FOR THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF HIS FAMILY AND OTHERS GOD PLACED IN HIS PATH.

The people who worked beside him report the same godly, consistent witness over many years. While he skillfully led his organization to a high level of competency and productivity, he found time to inquire about staff concerns, families, and personal aspirations. His coworkers speak of his effectiveness as a leader but quickly emphasize his greater role as friend and spiritual mentor.

He was the same “go-to” person at church. His guidance helped his faith family through some challenging times, and his pastor routinely sought Bill’s wise counsel with confidence and trust. Of all the places he served, I believe he shone brightest in pastoral care. His face was a familiar sight in the hospitals in our community, and doctors and nurses felt comfortable calling for Bill’s assistance to meet the needs of those beyond his own church family, those who had no one to pray for them, read Scripture, or speak words of comfort.

talization, Bill contacted me to ask for a convenient time to visit my friend and her husband at home, believing she had spiritual needs to be met. Bill did not leave work unfinished.

Not many weeks after this incident, God determined that it was time for Bill to come home. Though he left a big hole in our congregation, we cannot help but rejoice with Elsie, knowing that he is with the One he has introduced to so many. Our pastor asked, “What will we do without Bill?” and in the next breath, he said, “I guess we will just have to be Bill to each other.”

Paul said, “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:8).

What are your plans for finishing strong? Will you be “Bill” to someone today? **ONE**

ABOUT THE WRITER: Former magazine editor Norma J. Goldman enjoys a successful freelance career in her retirement. The award-winning writer lives near Nashville, Tennessee. Learn more about retirement options at www.boardofretirement.com

Oklahoma Free Will Baptists
respond to the tragedy in Moore.

The Family of God

BY MIKE WADE



For years, I have enjoyed singing, “I’m So Glad I’m a Part of the Family of God,” but recent weeks in Moore, Oklahoma, have brought new and vibrant meaning to the words of this old song.

By the time you receive this edition of *ONE Magazine*, three months will have passed since an F-5 tornado ripped through our community. It is impossible for me to describe the destruction accurately. Even pictures and video cannot capture the enormity of the losses.



While my heart grieves for those displaced by the loss of homes, I am especially grieved for those who lost loved ones in this catastrophic event. Seeing the devastation firsthand, I praise God that hundreds did not perish.

Storms are a part of our world. These storms are not the first and certainly won't be the last. I am reminded of the storm recorded in Matthew 14. The disciples were terrified by high winds and rough waters as they crossed the Sea of Galilee. Jesus came to them, walking upon the water through the storm.



It is interesting to note Jesus did not prevent the storm. Instead, He came to them while the storm raged.

It has been my experience that Jesus rarely removes the storm, but in one way or another, He always shows up during the storm. Sometimes, He provides peace that passes all understanding. Other times, He sends help and hope through other believers.

Free Will Baptists have been greatly used by the Lord to provide help and hope during the months following the tornado. Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College has become a hub for a number of relief ministries responding to the devastation. They provided, and continue to provide, lodging for volunteers. They prepared thousands of meals on the campus to be distributed to victims and volunteer workers. The gymnasium has been transformed into

a distribution center for goods needed by those displaced.

Arms of Compassion, Oklahoma disaster relief ministry, was on the scene immediately, distributing generators to

It has been my experience that Jesus rarely removes the storm, but in one way or another, He always shows up during the storm.

those without power. They, along with Step Into the Water and Bridge Builders for the Cross, have done a wonderful job reaching out to those in need.

During these difficult weeks, I have made a startling observation. Volunteers from across the state and nation have poured into this area to help in this crisis. While I am sure that not every volunteer is a believer in Christ, I can say with complete confidence that the vast majority of volunteers came with Christian ministries.

As I have traveled through the devastated areas, I have seen group after group of volunteers. Their buses, trailers, and T-shirts make it clear that nearly all of them are associated with churches and Christian ministries. Praise God for His people!

Our Lord has not forsaken the victims of this tragedy. He has sent His people, the Family of God, to reach out with His love in a time of need. Thanks to all who responded—and continue to respond—in Christ's love. Trust me when I say the Lord made His presence felt...even in the midst of the storm. **ONE**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mike Wade is Executive Director for Oklahoma Free Will Baptists.

HELP & HOPE

at HILLSDALE

BY TIM EATON

“At historic Saint Bernard Pass, high in the Swiss Alps, travelers find a hostel run by monks and staffed by great Saint Bernard rescue dogs. During the last century, when winter storms rendered trails invisible, the monks would ring a great bell so lost travelers could find the hostel by following the sound of the bell.”

In the midst of tragedy, it is sometimes difficult to see the way clearly. After a deadly tornado just missed the Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College campus on May 20, the college family began “sounding the bell” for the surrounding community. The campus soon became a central staging area in the recovery of Moore, Oklahoma. The gymnasium, filled with items to help displaced families. Up to a hundred families visit the campus daily to access these items.

The dorms continue to house recovery volunteers. I cannot begin to number the organizations that have used the Hillsdale campus as a command post. The Hillsdale staff has worked long, hard hours to feed and house these workers. Almost every day, the staff and volunteers unload additional truckloads of goods for the recovery effort. During these days, we have taught, believed, and lived the truth of Jesus’ words, “Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of my brethren, you have done it unto me.”

ABOUT THE WRITER: Tim Eaton is president of Hillsdale FWB College. Follow the school on Facebook.

At this writing, Hillsdale has provided almost 4,000 nights of lodging for survivors, first responders, and volunteers. Staff members and partner church volunteers have cooked and served three meals a day from the cafeteria. Volunteers have come from the east to west coasts, Florida to Michigan, and occasionally from as far away as England and Israel. They have installed generators, worked in the debris field, completed home repairs, and helped the city of Moore restore parks and green spaces.

Hillsdale, many Free Will Baptist churches, and Oklahoma humanitarian ministries (Arms of Compassion, Bridge Builders, and Step Into the Water) have been joined by a coalition of partners including: CitiIMPACT Ministries, World Vision, Matthew 25, and Operation BBQ. During the first two weeks Operation BBQ headquartered on the Hillsdale campus, the ministry provided over 140,000 meals to volunteers working throughout the storm track.

We ask you to continue to pray that Hillsdale will be a witness to the Moore community. While the college has accepted the financial responsibility of this task, many have responded and given generously. Thank you for all you have done. **ONE**



LeaderProfile >>>>

Leadership comes in all forms and sizes, but the results are the same. Leaders influence behavior and make a difference in people's lives. Profiling leaders shows a diverse combination of traits, but impacting lives is always a common theme. by Ron Hunter Jr.

RYAN AKERS



What do people misunderstand about you? My sense of humor and sarcastic affection. If I am picking on you then I like you, and if I am not picking on you, I might be mad with you.

How would others describe your leadership style? They would say I am a dreamer, a big-picture guy, who knows where we need to go but knows others will need to handle the details I overlook in getting us there.

What are you reading right now?

Connecting Church and Home by Tim Kimmel

African Friends and Money Matters by David Maranz (help understand Haitian ministry)

Artificial Maturity and Generation iY by Tim Elmore

Sticky Faith by Kara Powell and Chap Clark

What are your top three books (other than the Bible)?

When Helping Hurts by Brian Fikkert

Crazy Love by Francis Chan

A Mind for God by James Emery White

The Hole in Our Gospel by Rich Stearns *honorable mention

One Indulgence? Cinnamon Rolls - I can buy an eight-pack with a tub of icing and destroy them in one sitting!

Why are you Free Will Baptist? Obviously, I was born and raised Free Will Baptist, but I am also proud of where we have come from and where we can go together. I'm thankful for the leadership of our denomination that is setting the course, standing on God's Word, and chasing after the things He would have us do.

Paper or Plastic Questions

>> *Mountains or Ocean?* Ocean

>> *Music or Talk Radio?* Silence, the speakers in my truck are broken

>> *Coke or Pepsi?* Pepsi

>> *Email or Texting?* Email, but I text more than email

>> *Mac or PC?* Mac, there is no other way! If given a PC, I would abandon it for a stone tablet and chisel

>> *Socks or house shoes?* Neither, let my feet breathe!

What qualifies Ryan as a gifted leader? Could it be pinning to Pinterest with his wife, working as a youth pastor, his gift of sarcasm, or having a heart for missions? While all may apply, Ryan's attitude to the Mac or PC question earned him major kudos with this writer.

Ryan grew up with a solid Christian foundation and parents who provided a biblical trajectory. His parents were very involved in youth ministry at Cookeville Free Will Baptist Church in Tennessee. During his junior year of high school, Ryan answered the call to youth ministry, and God eventually led him to Calvary Fellowship FWB Church in Missouri, where he works with students and families.

Ryan has been to Haiti multiple times, ministering with his dad on mission trips. God continues to build Ryan's leadership and teaching abilities to help him connect to his students in tangible ways. He understands that successful youth ministry occurs when parents engage in their kids' lives outside of church, and they grow spiritually as a family.

He understands the importance of investing in his marriage, which is why he often helps his wife Lindsey with craft projects she finds on Pinterest. When asked about the ideal date, Ryan said that they enjoy dressing up for dinner and catching a play or musical at the Fox Theater in downtown St. Louis.

The rudder of leadership consists of continuing to develop one's biblical worldview and values. Ryan's quiet time takes on different shapes as he digs deep into the Scripture at bedtime or reads a single verse in the morning that keeps him thinking all day. He uses his love for God's Word to challenge his students to dive into Scripture as they seek wisdom for their decisions.

Ryan, you are a great leader! ONE

News From MM

Deep South Tournament Sets New Record



Albany, Georgia—A record 84 golfers took part in the 2013 Deep South Tournament, March 1-3, at Stone Bridge Golf Course in Albany, Georgia. In spite of rain and unseasonably cool temperatures in the 40s, the 42 teams enjoyed three days of fellowship, competition, and terrific food.

Wayne Overton and Ben Cantrell walked away with the Championship Flight, first-place trophy with a 19-under-par 197. Ronnie Brown and Ronnie Yance finished second. Jeff Pugh and Adrian Nottonson finished third, and Alan Sailors and Terry Trink rounded out the Championship Flight trophy winners, finishing fourth.

First place in First Flight went to John Grove and Sam Lucky and second place to James Buchanan and Wyman Keennon. Final trophies were awarded to winners of the Second Flight: first place to

Crawford Page and Douglas Tidwell and second place to Keith Burden and William Smith.

Despite the poor weather, most teams look forward to returning for the 2014 Deep South Golf Tournament at the Stonebridge Golf Course.

Master's Men Director Ken Akers said, "Thanks to all the golfers, hole sponsors, and especially First Free Will Baptist Church of Albany, Georgia, for hosting the group. This event is so much more than golf. The money raised by the Deep South tournament helps underwrite disaster relief, carry out training events, and produce materials to help strengthen Free Will Baptist men and their families. While it is a great golf value, the Deep South is an even better eternal investment." ■

Master's Men Releases New Volume in the Direction Bible Study Series

Antioch, TN—Master's Men announces the release of the latest in the Direction Bible Study series designed for small groups. The study, "A How-To Manual for Christian Living, Part One" provides practical, real life lessons from the Book of James in an easy-to-use, reproducible format.

Director Ken Akers said, "Go into any bookstore in America and you will find a 'how-to' section on every topic you can imagine. But the best 'how-to book' ever written is the New Testament book of James. In just over 100 verses, James gives Christians 54 guidelines for living. If you need a how-to for successful Christian living, this is it."

To order the new study, or to order previous titles in the series, visit www.FWBMastersMen.org or call 877-767-8039. ■



HOW IN THE WORLD SHOULD WE LIVE?

BESIDE THE SPARKLING BLUE WATER OF THE HILLSBOROUGH RIVER IN DOWNTOWN TAMPA, FLORIDA, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS MET FOR ITS 77TH ANNUAL CONVENTION. THE CALM, RIPPLING WATER DID NOT REFLECT THE CAREFULLY ORGANIZED BUSTLE OF NEARLY 5,000 CONVENTION ATTENDEES SWARMING INSIDE TAMPA CONVENTION CENTER. THEY WERE ALL HURRYING (AFTER STOPPING TO CHAT WITH 25 DIFFERENT PEOPLE) TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SEMINARS, LUNCHEONS, BUSINESS MEETINGS, COMPETITIONS, SERVICE PROJECTS, AND A MYRIAD OF OTHER OPPORTUNITIES.

2013 National Association
of Free Will Baptists
Tampa, Florida • July 21-24



The 2013 convention theme was both timely and challenging, asking “How in the World Should We Live?” Speakers, seminars, services, and panels focused on practical application of biblical living in a world filled with rapidly changing ideas and values. In both business and worship, convention events delivered a much-needed fresh perspective for pastors, ministry teams, and laity.

We Should Worship

Convention services were moving, from the convention orchestra and praise team to congregational singing and unforgettable special numbers, as Kevin Justice led the convention into worship. Congregations—from preschool to the main auditorium, and every age between sang, prayed, and worshiped enthusiastically each night, engaging in authentic fellowship and corporate devotion to God. The speakers challenged and encouraged convention attendees to live peaceably, in the Spirit, godly, by every Word of God, and by faith.

Florida native Tim Owen, board member for Randall House Publications, moderator of the Florida State Association, and pastor of Piney Grove FWB Church in Marianna, Florida, taught Sunday School. During Sunday morning worship, Randy

Riggs, moderator of the Tennessee State Association and pastor of Good Springs FWB Church in Pleasant View, Tennessee, encouraged proactive peacemaking, based on Romans 12:18, which exhorts us to live peaceably among all men. Riggs reminded the congregation that Christ would have us bless, not curse, our enemies, that it may lead our enemies to conviction, grace, and salvation.

On Sunday evening, the congregation heard from Donnie Miles, pastor of Peace FWB Church in Florence, South Carolina. The Galatians 5:25 sermon on living in the Spirit urged listeners to not only walk in the Spirit, but to be led by the Spirit. Though obedience can be a struggle, walking is liberating; while sin enslaves us, living in the Spirit frees us. Miles’ message reminded congregants that being in step with the Spirit is fundamental to living and walking by faith.

On Monday evening, Will Beauchamp challenged listeners to live a godly lifestyle. Beauchamp, another Floridian, pastors his home church, First FWB Church of Tampa. He spoke from Titus 2, the passage from which John Newton drew inspiration for “Amazing Grace.” As he focused on grace and the salvation, education, and anticipation it brings, Beauchamp pointed to grace as the

essential component of living a godly lifestyle.

The Tuesday afternoon Preaching Conference highlighted speakers Oral McAfee and Tim Stout. McAfee, pastor of Bristol FWB Church in New Brunswick, Canada, is moderator of the Atlantic Canada Association. Stout pastors Heritage FWB Church in Columbus, Ohio.

The Tuesday evening congregation heard from Larry Clyatt, longtime minister and current pastor of Harmony FWB Church in Lake Butler, Florida. He encouraged convention attendees to live by every Word of God, based on Jesus’ response to temptation in Luke 4:4.

The closing service Wednesday night was a powerful time of worship, as missionaries were honored, commissioned, and appreciated. After a stirring number by the 60-voice Hispanic choir from Ebenezer FWB Church in Miami, Florida, Larry Powell, retiring general director of Home Missions, spoke from Romans 1:16-18, challenging Free Will Baptists to step out in faith to continue reaching a lost and dying world, both home and abroad. The altars flooded in response.

We Should Serve

This year, both Impact Tampa and



Reach That Guy (sponsored by the National Youth Conference) facilitated local outreach and service, as 318 participants volunteered in the Greater Tampa Bay area, impacting over a thousand families from the Gulf to Central Florida.

While Reach That Guy students worked at food pantries and homeless shelters, and packed school bags for needy kids, Impact volunteers distributed more than 500 flyers and made improvements to Camp Eagle in central Florida. In addition, many convention-goers donated blood during the Wednesday Red Cross Blood Drive.

We Should Remember

The 2013 convention was marked by transition, as a number of long-



time convention staffers stepped down from their positions. Dari Goodfellow, convention registration coordinator since 2000 relinquished her position to Debbie Burden (TN) in light of her upcoming October 31 retirement. Joining her in “retiring” from the convention team were husband Sandy Goodfellow (convention computer support) and Mike and Sherry Anderson (TN), husband and wife duo who have served as convention recording coordinators and technical support since 2000.

Convention Music Coordinator Chris Truett also stepped aside from his position to focus on his new role as executive pastor at Bethel FWB Church (NC). Kevin Justice (NC) stepped in to coordinate the music in Tampa. He is music minister at Unity FWB Church, Greenville, North Carolina, and a member of the Music Commission.

Jack Williams, convention staff writer (and long-time convention manager), missed his first convention in 43 years, as he continues to recover from a stroke suffered in November 2012.

We Should Do God's Business

General Board 2013

On Monday, July 22, the General Board heard reports from nine national agencies and four commissions as Moderator Tim York guided board members through the four-hour,

40-minute meeting to adjournment in the Grand Ballroom of the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel.

Along the way, General Board members approved several recommendations, including a 2013 denominational budget of \$24.5 million, and a resolution reaffirming the denomination's commitment to biblical marriage.

They also approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee stating that all ordained ministers, ordained deacons, and one lay delegate will be allowed to represent their church at the national convention when the church pays the representation fee. This will encourage participation by local church delegates.

The board also recommended an amendment to the charter of the Board of Retirement and Insurance, making it possible for the board to offer the retirement plan to Free Will Baptist groups that are not part of the National Association and do not have a plan of their own.

Clerk Randy Bryant read the names of 22 appointments to 2014 national committees: Credentials Committee (5), Nominating Committee (7), Resolutions Committee (5), and Obituary Committee (5).

Free Will Baptist Executive Office

After giving attendees a “warm welcome,” to sunny Florida, Executive Secretary Keith Burden shared a solid financial picture for the Executive Office, despite ongoing economic uncertainty. He celebrated the continuing success of *ONE Magazine*, which reaches more than 55,000 Free Will Baptist households.

He thanked Convention Registration Coordinator Dari Goodfellow for 22 years of work in the Executive Office and introduced Debbie Burden as her replacement as convention registration coordinator. He also thanked

6 SIGNS YOU ARE AT A CONVENTION IN FLORIDA:

- 1 Tiki huts in the exhibit hall, citrus sippers (that enable you to drink straight from an orange), and coconut patties
- 2 Humidity...and more humidity
- 3 Hanging Spanish moss on live oak trees
- 4 30 varieties of palm trees
- 5 Tacos, Cuban sandwiches, rice and beans
- 6 Beaches



CONVENTION AT A GLANCE 2013

REGISTRATION

National Association – 3,206

National Youth Conference – 3,581

Women Nationally Active for Christ – 653

Total* – 4,850

*Individuals. Some attendees register for more than one convention.

THEME

How in the World Should We Live?

SPEAKERS

Sunday School – Tim Owen (FL)

Sunday Morning – Randy Riggs (TN)

Sunday Evening – Donnie Miles (SC)

Monday Evening – Will Beauchamp (FL)

Preaching Conference – Oral McAfee (Canada),
Tim Stout (OH)

Tuesday Evening – Larry Clyatt (FL)

Wednesday Evening – Larry Powell (TN)



LIVE STREAMING TOTALS

(Through Tuesday)

Total Visitors – 6,479

Unique Visitors – 3,720

2014 BUDGET

Executive Office – \$853,200

Welch College – \$5,188,988

FWB Foundation – \$714,759

Home Missions – \$5,000,000

International Missions – \$7,250,000

Master's Men – \$148,443

Retirement and Insurance – \$475,000

Randall House – \$5,016,500

Theological Commission – \$8,850

Historical Commission – \$3,860

Media Commission – \$3,000

Music Commission – \$3,575

Total – \$24,666,175

Convention at a Glance (continued)

ELECTED IN TAMPA

FWB FOUNDATION (2019)

Donnie Miles (SC)
Wendell Walley (CA)
Hubert Stafford (GA)

BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS (2019)

Jeff Jones (NC)
Frank Wiley (OK)
Frank Webster (MO)

BOARD OF MASTER'S MEN (2019)

Ken Oleson (OK)
Jason Vinson (AL)
Sam Lucky (FL)

BOARD OF RETIREMENT (2019)

Larry Clyatt (FL) (2015)
Rick Cason (GA)
Mike Gladson (TN)
Randy Wilson (OK)

COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY (2018)

Matt Pinson (TN)

HISTORICAL COMMISSION (2018)

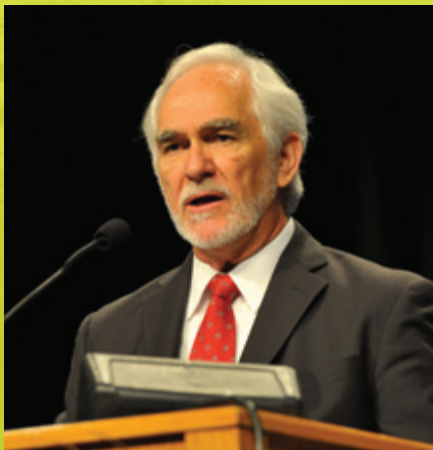
David Crowe (TN)

MUSIC COMMISSION (2018)

James Stevens (TN)

MEDIA COMMISSION (2018)

Stephen Lopes (TN)



Mike Anderson, Sherry Anderson, and Sandy Goodfellow for providing many years of computer support and recording and gave a nod to outgoing board member Rick Cash for 12 years of work on the Executive Board.

He urged delegates to make hotel reservations within the room block to help the convention meet contractual obligations and avoid crippling attrition fees.

Free Will Baptist Foundation

Foundation Director David Brown rejoiced over an increase of \$6.75 million in 2012, the second highest annual increase in the department's history, resulting in assets of more than \$48 million at the end of the year. The upward trend continues into 2013, with projected growth of \$5 to \$7 million. In light of these increases, the Foundation will begin setting aside realized gains to establish a grant program to benefit Free Will Baptist ministries, projected to begin by 2018.

Brown announced a partnership with Cornerstone Estate Planning to provide comprehensive estate planning for Free Will Baptists. The two organizations are sponsoring ongoing seminars for churches and associations. The Foundation will add Doug Little as a full-time employee in 2014, to serve as a field representative.

Home Missions

Retiring General Director Larry Powell marked 2013 as a milestone 75th year for Free Will Baptist Home Missions. From humble roots, the department has grown to include works in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and nine chaplains serving in the Armed Forces. This year, nine churches reached self-supporting status. Rev. Powell encouraged Free Will Baptists to reach out to the new

immigrant population exploding in the United States, taking advantage of the nations on our doorsteps.

Powell expressed praise for his staff: "I must express my profound appreciation to our faithful staff members...I appreciate their servant spirit, commitment, and excellent work."

He introduced David Crowe, current director of development, as new general director, effective January 2014. Home Missions Board Chairman Randy Wright thanked Powell and his wife Wanda for 12 years of strong leadership for the department. Brad Ransom (OK) will replace Richard Atwood as director of missionary assistance.

Master's Men

Director Ken Akers shared a long list of Master's Men activities in 2012-13: IMPACT Memphis, joint marriage enrichment conferences with WNAC, disaster response in Eastern Kentucky, CMI (Count Me In) conferences, and several sports fellowship activities.

He announced the publication of *A How-To Manual for Christian Living*, the latest in the *Direction Bible Study Series*, and encouraged Free Will Baptists to get involved in the ongoing relief efforts in Moore, Oklahoma. President Tim Eaton commended Master's Men and the denomination for the "heartwarming response" to ongoing relief efforts.

Board of Retirement

Retirement assets grew 9.5% in 2012, to more than \$45 million, according to Director Ray Lewis, and the department received more than \$2 million in new contributions.

Lewis honored outgoing board members Craig Cook and Jack Ward for 12 years of service on the Retirement Board. He proposed a change to the Board's charter that will "allow us

to offer our plan to Free Will Baptist groups that are not part of the National Association and do not have a plan of their own.”

The Board of Retirement will partner with Guidestone Financial Services, benefit agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, to provide affordable health insurance to Free Will Baptists. The organization includes more than 12,000 churches and 67,000 ministry employees, and pays out more than \$200 million annually.

He also encouraged delegates to participate in the Labor of Love Endowment, established in 2012 to help Free Will Baptist ministers who do not have enough funds set aside to retire.

International Missions

Director Clint Morgan compared Free Will Baptist International Missions to a battleship, armed and ready to sail into dangerous waters to take the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. He emphasized the department’s continuing mission to labor with the body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission.

Morgan celebrated a two-year financial turnaround that allowed missionaries to return to their fields, thanks in part to a record-breaking World Missions Offering of more than \$1 million in 2012. The faithful giving continues in 2013, as the current WMO totals passed \$650,000 in July.

During 2012, the Mission recorded 1,425 converts, 45 new churches, and 1,100 baptisms as more than 36,000 international Free Will Baptists met across the globe on any given Sunday. Many new missionaries are currently preparing to go to the field.

Director of Financial Operations Rob Conley shared continuing financial challenges for the Mission and appealed to delegates for increased monthly giving, the staple of missions funding.

Jeff Turnbough, director of field operations, celebrated complete transition to national leadership in Panama in 2015. “This is *not* the end of missions in Panama,” Jeff stressed, “but the beginning of a new partnership.”

Morgan honored Carlisle Hanna (SC) for 60 years of missionary service, and saluted retiring missionary Patsy Van Hook (AR) for faithful service in France.

Women Nationally Active for Christ

WNAC Executive Director Elizabeth Hodges shared exciting updates regarding the department’s work in 2012. Four \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to women in Free Will Baptist colleges in honor of Dr. Mary Ruth Wisheart. Recipients included Rebekah Gedeon (Welch), Amber Wilson (Gateway), Jessica Potter (California Christian), and second-year recipient Bre Rierison Lee (Hillsdale).

The Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship was awarded to Myriam Le Louarn (France). Le Louarn is sister to missionary Lydie Teague and leads the youth program at the Nantes Church.

WNAC also sent \$3,000 to help complete women’s restrooms at the Bible Seminary (IBLAC) in Altamira, Mexico. They partnered with International Missions to refurbish the Missionary Guest House in Abi-

Convention At a Glance (continued)

GENERAL BOARD 2018

Alabama: Rick Cash
 Arizona: George Harvey, Jr.
 Arkansas: Tim Campbell
 Assoc. of Mexico: Luis Felipe Tijerina
 Atlantic-Canada: Oral McAfee
 California: Rick Scroggins
 Colorado: Mark Thomas
 David Marks: Tom Jones
 Florida: Jim Christian
 Georgia: Wayne Miracle
 Idaho: Gene Kissinger
 Illinois: David Shores

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2014 Wayne Hale (DE)
 2016 Tim Campbell (AR)
 David Shores (IL)
 Wayne Miracle (GA)

GENERAL OFFICERS

Moderator: Tim York (TN)
 Assistant Moderator: William Smith (GA)
 Clerk: Randy Bryant (FL)
 Assistant Clerk: Ernie Lewis (IL)

The following boards did not elect members in 2013: Board of Randall House Publications, Board of International Missions, and Welch College Board of Trustees.

CONVENTION NEWS COVERAGE TEAM

Editorial: Danny Conn, Dari Goodfellow, Emily Faison, Sarah Fletcher, Ida Lewis, Stephen Nelson, Deborah St. Lawrence, Eric Thomsen, Phyllis York, and Jack Williams

Photography: Sandra Akers, Victoria Thomsen, Rodney Yerby

Download convention photos at:
www.nafwb.yerbyphotography.com

djan, Côte d'Ivoire, and purchased a keyboard for the mission church that meets on the campus of Seminary of the Cross (SEBLAC) in Reynosa, Mexico. Free Will Baptist women also provided conference fees for Cuban women to attend marriage retreats in Cuba.

Hodges praised the 4,090 WNAC members from 22 states who gave \$497,225 to missions and ministry causes, including \$37,024 in gifts to the Steward Provision Closet.

Randall House

Randall House Executive Director Ron Hunter celebrated publication of 63 digital books this year, with 2,300 titles sold. Fall 2012 marked the highest sales quarter of curriculum in the history of the department, and the publishing house is debt-free for the first time in a decade. Randall House won eight awards from the Evangelical Press Association and nine awards from PIAS (Printing Industry Association of the South).

Hunter reassured delegates that Randall House will continue to provide resources using the King James Version, acknowledging the special place the translation holds in the hearts of Free Will Baptists. He updated listeners on the progress of D6 Digital Curriculum, currently delayed due to the difficulty of developing a complex-yet-simple interface that will provide ease-of-use for customers.

Hunter made note of extensive remodeling of the Randall House facility to update the aging property and add needed office space for the growing staff. "Our building still had fashionable looks from the '70s," he quipped. "But the changes will provide a more open work environment and enhance accountability and teamwork."

He shared the following vision: "Randall House remains dedicated to helping churches and families. The fu-

ture of our denomination depends on working together on the generational issues of evangelism, family, and discipleship."

Welch College

President Matt Pinson shared several challenges facing the college: a decrease in students willing to travel out of state, more competition by community and local state colleges, and the unstable economy. In addition, he explained the development of a "pension crisis" resulting from government-imposed rules on the college's pension plan. The new regulations cost the school \$850,000 over a five-year period. To avoid continuing losses, the college borrowed \$2.3 million in 2012 to terminate the program and fully fund participants.

In spite of the challenges, Pinson expressed gratitude. He celebrated the highest general fund gift total in the school's history at \$1.26 million. He pointed to increased freshmen retention, increased graduation rates, growing numbers of young men preparing for and excited about the ministry, a faithful and excellent staff, and a continued ranking as one of the top 50 southern colleges by *U.S. News and World Report*. He announced the launch of a new four-year degree program that will enable professionals to complete their degrees online. The program, along with a new website (www.welch.edu), gives the college a boost in the arena of educational technology.

In addition, the president updated delegates on exciting developments regarding the sale of the existing property on West End Avenue. The first stage of campus liquidation has been completed with the sale of the Cook Building, Ennis Residence Hall, the Missionary-in-Residence Home, and the President's Home. He also shared breaking news that the college has received a formal

letter of intent from a buyer to purchase the rest of the campus.

Commissions

Matt Pinson, chairman of the Commission for Theological Integrity, announced plans to publish a new issue of *Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought* by early 2014. The commission will sponsor the 17th annual Theological Symposium, October 28-29, 2013, at Hillsdale College in Moore, Oklahoma.

The Historical Commission launched a revised history website (www.FWBHistory.com) in February, according to Eric Thomsen, commission secretary. The site includes important historical documents available for download, including biographies, periodicals, minutes from national conventions, and more. The commission will distribute copies of "Free Will Baptists and the Sufficiency of Scripture," seventh pamphlet in the *Heritage Series* at the 2014 convention.

During the report for the Music Commission, Doug Little and Keith Burden thanked Chris Truett (NC) for his 10 years as convention music coordinator. Truett stepped aside from the position this year, and resigned his post on the Media Commission.

The Free Will Baptist Media Commission continues to improve and expand live streaming of convention services, including services from the National Youth Conference for the first time in Tampa. The commission will offer an online archive of convention services from previous years, beginning in 2014, with convention audio available for streaming at www.FWBmedia.com. The commission recognized Mike Anderson for many years of work with convention media.

For convention downloads,
visit www.nafwb.org.

CHANGING THE GUARD: *New Faces, Same Mission*

**NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE
JULY 21-24, TAMPA, FLORIDA**

A number of changes were obvious this year during the national convention, even for the National Youth Conference. The most notable changes in personnel included saying farewell to Jeff and Sherri Sloan as directors of the Youth Evangelistic Team and introducing Brandon Roysden as director of NYC, a position filled by Danny Conn since 2006. But these were not the only changes.

New quizmasters, emcees, and judges led the competition. A new band led worship on stage, and a new crop of teen staff members worked hard behind the scenes. New coaches guided new contestants. New faces throughout the conference—a constant development of new workers and leaders—as it should be. New life is essential for the good health and longevity of any body.

We must continually train, challenge, guide, encourage, and equip the next generation to stand firm in their faith and carry out the work of God, whether in a national event or a local church. That is the purpose for any discipleship process or program, including the National Youth Conference.

This changing of the guard naturally introduces new faces, new ideas, and new ways of doing things, but the mission remains the same—love God, love His Word, and teach the next generation to do the same.

Find more NYC photos at: www.nafwb.yerbyphotography.com.

NYC2013 AT A GLANCE

Registration 3,581

Competitive Entries 975
(new record)

Reach That Guy
318 volunteers

1,162 hours worked

Seffner Christian Academy

Landscaping

Cleaned classrooms

Worked on sports fields

New Hope FWB Church

Distributed 600 fliers in two neighborhoods

Bethesda Ministries

Stocked food pantry

Organized closets

Habitat for Humanity

Metropolitan Ministries

Red Cross Blood Drive

Echo

Buck-A-Week

Total Tuesday Offering \$3,469.18

2013 Ministries

Penn's Student Ministry

at University of Illinois

Jcrois (France)

Truth & Peace

105 participants

18 states and one foreign country represented

Trained 10 days at Welch College

Service projects at: Welch College, Pleasant

View Christian School, and Randall House

Served as NYC staff



NYC 2013 at a Glance (continued)

YET

Total Participants 13
Miles traveled 3,400

Ministries Served

Home Missions Churches:
· Mobile, AL
· Tallahassee, FL
· Clarksville, TN

Church Camp in Sumterville, FL

Family Ministries (TN)

150 altar responses
4 salvation decisions
1 call to ministry

AROUND NYC

PRESCHOOL

One parent said: “My son has come back to the room every night wanting to teach us about the Armor of God. Thank you for more than babysitting. The Bible has come to life for my three-year-old this week.”

456 WORSHIP

- More than 30 decisions/responses.
- Raised over \$230 for World Vision to allow three orphans in Africa to get an education and learn about Christ.

NYC SERVICES

- Responses every night.
- Six students shared “Stand Up Stories” about a time they were able to do something difficult because of their faith in God.



HE KNOWS MY NAME

2013 WNAC CONVENTION
Tuesday, July 23 – Tampa, Florida

FROM BADGES TO PROGRAMS TO NOMINATIONS, CONVENTIONS ARE ALL ABOUT NAMES. CENTERING ON THE THEME, “HE KNOWS MY NAME,” THE 2013 WNAC CONVENTION ENCOMPASSED A WIDE VARIETY OF NAMES.

CASUAL NAMES

Laughter and Latte, an informal, Monday late night “meet-and-greet” brought 100 women together for food and fellowship. The convention commenced Tuesday morning with a casual video greeting. WNAC President Diana Bryant and Florida Women Active for Christ welcomed attendees to their state, highlighting its beaches, attractions, and two unofficially recognized state symbols (sunglasses and flip-flops).

NEW NAMES

Tuesday’s business session included new names and information. In her annual report, Executive Director Elizabeth Hodges introduced attendees to their counterparts in Mexico, sharing names and a photo of these national women’s ministry leaders. Her presentation also provided a visual testimony of faithful giving by Women Active for Christ.

In the past year, WNAC helped fund the completion of a women’s bathroom/shower facility at IBLAC in Mexico; provided new appliances and updates for the guest house in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire; sent money to purchase a keyboard for the Seminary of the Cross, also in Mexico; and paid registration costs for 300 women attending a couples retreat in Cuba.

Mrs. Hodges noted the names of recent Wisehart Scholarship Recipients and announced the name of this year’s Cleo Pursell Scholarship recipient: Myriam Le Louarn of France. Delegates elected a slate of officers that includes one new name; Ohio WAC President Sarah Sargent will now serve on the WNAC Executive Committee. Women received a Save-the-Date flyer naming the location and date for the next WNAC National Retreat: September 3-5, 2015, at Embassy Suites Hotel in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

DOLLAR NAMES

In 2013, women collectively gave \$497,225 to mission-related causes, including \$37,024 in goods and cash for the Provision Closet. However, the WNAC office reported an \$8,000 deficit for the 2013 fiscal year. Delegates approved an operating budget of \$212,000 for 2014, with salaries frozen for the fourth consecutive year.

FAMILY NAMES

During her report, Elizabeth Hodges shared her heart concerning a possible opportunity for the organization, noting God's step-by-step guidance in this matter. She asked women to consider a recommendation from the Executive Committee that she study the possibility of WNAC joining the cooperative giving program of the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Delegates unanimously voted in favor of this recommendation.

Executive Secretary Keith Burden and National Association Moderator Tim York joined her in a follow-up session to provide women more information. The two men fielded questions, expressed their excitement regarding the possibility of greater WNAC participation within the Free Will Baptist family, and reassured women that they would have adequate representation as delegates of the voting body of the National Association. Details and recommendations will be published before the 2014 convention.



INTERNATIONAL NAMES

During the morning worship session, representatives from three mission fields—Pastor Bruno Ling of St. Nazaire, France; Cuban pastor's wife Ciraida Sanchez; and Marilyn Velasquez from the Chame, Panama, seminary—offered greetings and gratitude for the ministry of WNAC.

Missionary Lydie Teague of France spoke of her native country and its great spiritual needs. Her home region claims only 0.2% evangelical Christians, and over 80% of its residents have never owned a Bible. Charting her pathway to faith in Christ, Lydie shared her life mission to make disciples for Christ and her vision for 5,000 new believers in France.

At the request of ministry leaders in Central Asia, in March 2014, WNAC is sending a team of its Executive Committee and staff to teach and train women's ministry leaders at two conferences in this region of the world. WNAC challenges each local WAC group to pay one Central Asian leader's way to the conference (\$100).

UNIQUE NAMES

Morning and afternoon seminars offered women several name choices. *My Name Is Solo* lent perspective on living as a single. *My Name Is More* provided ideas for missionary support beyond dollars and cents, while *My Name Is Image* invited women's suggestions for creative, balanced missions fundraising. *My Name Is Reflection*, a final wrap-up session, gave national and state leaders an opportunity to evaluate the day's events and make suggestions for improving next year's convention.

ENDEARING NAMES

Mrs. Lorene Miley spoke to several hundred luncheon attendees concerning the importance of remembering the works of God's hand. Sharing snippets of her writings, recalling personal experiences and noting special memories, Mrs. Miley encouraged listeners to remember through journaling, personalizing the names of God, making a book of remembrance, and setting up memorial stones. In her characteristic soft-spoken manner, this pioneer missionary and former WNAC editor endeared her listeners and encouraged women toward greater love for the Word.

ABOVE ALL NAMES

"He Knows My Name" resounded throughout the day in the music, the missionary message, and the media presentations. Though many names filled the program, one name remained the focus—*Jesus, the Name Above All Names*.

WOMEN VOTED:

- To study the possibility of joining the cooperative giving program of the National Association of Free Will Baptists with details and recommendations to be published before the 2014 convention.
- To retain the wording of Articles 2 and 7 of the WNAC Bylaws.
- To award the Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship to Myriam Le Louarn of France.
- To reaffirm our stand against same-sex marriage and to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

WOMEN RESOLVED:

- To pray that WNAC continues in faithful service and commitment to our mission endeavors in fulfilling the Great Commission.
- To diligently pray for our country, our leaders, and those serving in our military.

Photo: Mark Cowart



KEITH BURDEN, CMP
Executive Secretary
National Association
of Free Will Baptists

One to ONE >>>>

It's the "Creature"

Her name was Jessica. She was a red-haired kindergartener with an abundance of freckles and thick-lens glasses. As I recall, this indomitable little girl first came to church with her older sister. Her sister and her husband had recently come to faith in Christ.

Shortly after the couple's conversion and baptism, we began meeting weekly for Bible study. As a result of working together so closely, we forged a strong, personal friendship. In time, they came to refer to me affectionately as "the preacher."

Jessica's mother was not a believer. In fact, she was far from it. Sensing a serious lack of religious training and positive spiritual influence in her life, Jessica's sister brought Jessica to church faithfully. Frankly, at times I wondered if church had any impact on this little girl.

That question was forever settled a short time later. One Sunday before morning worship, I was standing at the front of the sanctuary. Suddenly that little, pig-tailed bundle of energy burst through the back doors and proceeded to run down the center aisle. When she reached the halfway point, she saw me and came to a screeching halt. Turning to her older sister (who was in hot pursuit), she pointed in my direction and yelled at the top of her voice, "Look! It's the...creature" (a.k.a. preacher). To this day I wear that title as a badge of honor.

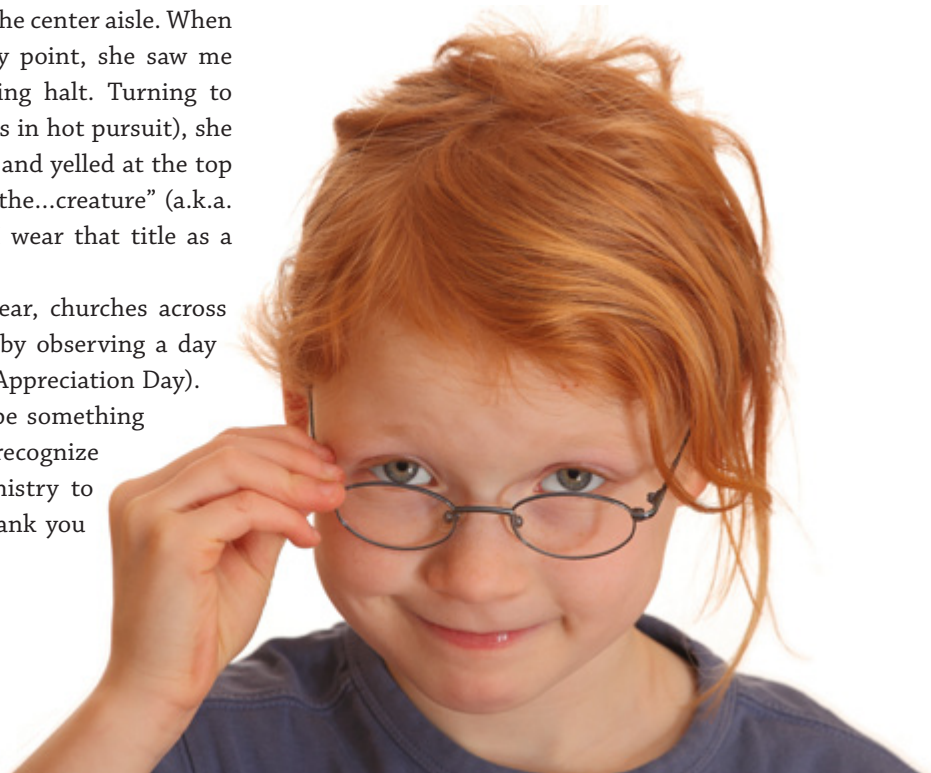
In the fall of each year, churches across America honor pastors by observing a day of appreciation (Pastor Appreciation Day). These special days can be something as simple as a service to recognize your pastor for his ministry to your congregation, a thank you

meal, or personal notes of gratitude with gift cards to his favorite restaurant. Or, it could be something as elaborate as an all-expenses paid getaway for him and his wife or a surprise upgrade of his personal automobile. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Perhaps your church has never observed Pastor Appreciation Day. If so, don't let that be a deterrent. If you take the initiative, others in the church will welcome the opportunity to join in the effort.

Many pastors labor in relative obscurity. They seldom receive words of commendation or expressions of appreciation. Doing so will be a great encouragement to him and could possibly reenergize his ministry.

Thank God for those who shepherd the flock of God and faithfully minister His Word. Don't assume they know you appreciate them—show it in some tangible way. Let's follow the admonition of the Apostle Paul, "And esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thessalonians 5:13). **ONE**





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