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A Free Will Baptist Magazine

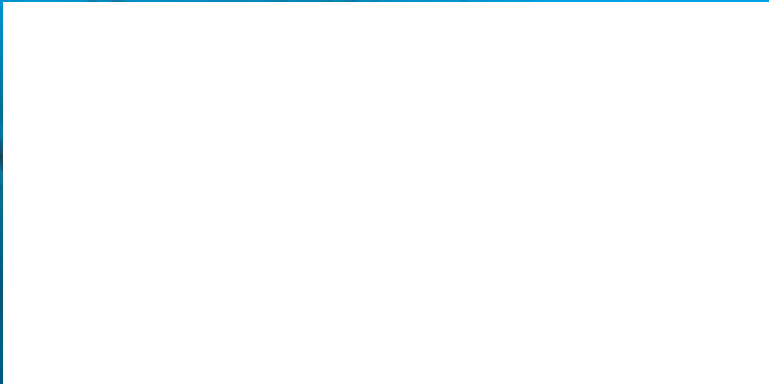
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First Glimpse >>

Signs

They appear gradually in late May, popping from the landscape like ambitious wildflowers. By mid-June, they are everywhere, a patchwork of color blanketing the Tennessee hillsides.

Signs.

Each proclaims the name of its political candidate and the position he or she is seeking in large, bold type. Some even make brash (and often untrue) claims: “The only choice for Tennessee” or “Leadership you can always trust.”

By Independence Day, the signs have become downright annoying, as candidates fill every nook and cranny of public space with corrugated plastic, jockeying for the best position from courthouse yard to fencerows, along the sides of state highways, and covering the windows of abandoned buildings.

Yet, as summer wears on, an amazing thing happens. The garish reminders of the coming election fade...or at least they seem to. The bright colors no longer draw attention, and gradually, the cluster of plastic simply disappears into the scenery. When the local news announces that early voting has begun, I am always startled. “What? An election? Already? How did I miss that?”

How indeed, with 10,000 signs scattered across my county?

I’m afraid the same is sometimes true regarding the return of Christ. After all, the biblical “signs” are certainly in place and have been for some time: wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 24:6); famine, pestilence, and earthquakes (Matthew 24:7); Israel’s return to its homeland (Ezekiel 37:22-23); extreme wickedness (Matthew 24:12); and rampant delusion and false teaching (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

While we differ on specifics, Free Will Baptists all agree that the second coming is serious business as humanity faces judgment and eternity. Yet, as life wears on, sometimes the signs and seriousness of the Second Coming fade into the scenery of



our lives, and somehow the final event in human history slips from our consciousness.

As we consider the Second Coming, we should take seriously three admonitions from the Apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1: ***The Second Coming will happen (verses 7-9)***. Let skeptics rant and doubters deny. Jesus is coming back. This truth is both comforting and concerning as we anticipate the moment we see the Savior yet dread it for a world filled with people who will face “vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel... who shall be punished with everlasting destruction” (verse 9).

Christ will come in glory (verses 9-10). No longer a suffering Savior, Christ will return as a reigning king. His return will mark the end of sin’s reign on earth and leave no doubt regarding His rightful place as Sovereign of the universe. He will act as righteous judge on all humanity, and His eternal kingdom will start.

We have a job to do (verses 11-12). Motivated by our concern for the unprepared, it is our job to proclaim openly the saving gospel. In short, as living “signs,” we must do our part to remind the world that He is coming back. **ONE**

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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.

Email editor@nafwb.org
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ONE Magazine reserves the right to edit published letters for length and content.

The August-September issue is one of the very best. “Midnight on Butler Road” by Jack Williams was exceptional. He is one of my favorite writers and a legend in his own time. It would be wonderful if someone would pull together all of his writings and publish them in a book. Maybe a joint effort by Randall House, Welch College, and the Executive Office?
—Bill Ezell, Joelton Tennessee

.....
Thanks for the wonderful adventure of Aunt Bea fishing. What a wonderful short story! Brother Keith (Burden) outdid himself. I always read “One to One” first.
—Jane Curry, Ada, Oklahoma

.....
On page 53 (2014 Convention Review, August-September edition), it should say that Brian Hughes is from Tippet’s Chapel Free Will Baptist Church in Clayton, North Carolina. Please make a correction. We are glad to have him and his family at our church. —Mrs. Billie Johnson, Knightdale, North Carolina

.....
From the ONE Staff: You are correct, Mrs. Johnson. Brian Hughes is associate pastor of music and youth at Tippet’s Chapel. Thank you for bringing this mistake to our attention. Our apologies to Brian.



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Where Do We Go From Here?

BY DAVID CROWE

For 75 years, Free Will Baptist Home Missions has served this denomination by planting churches in North America, endorsing military chaplains, promoting church growth and evangelism, preaching revivals, teaching seminars, encouraging pastors and missionaries, and educating our people about our wonderful heritage as Free Will Baptists.

For 19 of those 75 years, I have worked on the staff of Home Missions. I came 19 years ago to help Trymon Messer accomplish the things he felt God had called him to do as director of Home Missions. I worked for five years as director of missionary assistance and visited 20 to 25 mission works each year to encourage, educate, and equip our missionaries.

When Trymon hired Richard Atwood, he served as director of missionary assistance, and I became director of church growth and began visiting 45 to 50 established churches each year for revival, fellowship, encouragement, and public relations for Home Missions. I served in that capacity for six years. When Dr. Richard Adams retired, I became director of development, overseeing the Church Extension Loan Fund (CELF) while continuing my responsibilities as director of church growth. I served seven years in that capacity. On December 1, 2013, I became executive director of the Home Missions Department and find myself well into my first year in that capacity.

I review my history with Home Missions because I want you to understand how I came to this position and place. Many hours and days have been spent researching our history as Free Will Baptists. After 25 years of studying our heritage, I believe I have a good perspective of where we have been as Free Will Baptists. I have traveled across the denomination for 18 years, and I

have crossed all the “lines and boundaries” within our denomination as I attempted to serve all Free Will Baptists. I have a pretty good perception of Free Will Baptists. Knowing where we have been and knowing where we are helps us understand where we need to go from here.

So, where do we go from here?

I don't pretend to know where the entire denomination needs to go, but I feel that God has placed me in Home Missions and given me a vision of where the department needs to go. First, you will no longer hear us use the term *home missionaries*. We will refer to our missionaries as church planters because that's what we send them out to do.



Second, you will hear us call our department, North American Ministries. We have been called a lot of things over the years, such as Home Missions, National Home Missions, Free Will Baptist Home Missions, etc. None of these names are the official name from our charter. (I could give you that name, but this article is long enough already.) We are not changing our official name, but we will refer to our department as North American Ministries.

Home Missions is just one part—though it is a large part—of what we do. We also are the endorsing agency for Free Will Baptist military chaplains. We are the evangelism and church growth arm of the denomination, and we loan money to Free Will Baptist churches through the Church Extension Loan Fund. These are all important areas of responsibility, but I want to share some additional things we will do.

Church Planting

Dr. Brad Ransom was hired from a mission position in Oklahoma to be the director of church planting. He has graduate degrees in both church planting and church revitalization. Brad has already revised, updated, and upgraded all of our church planting materials and the application and evaluation process for church planting candidates. He brings a new level of professionalism and expertise to this position. We intend to plant more churches and see church plants become self-supporting more quickly.

Church Revitalization

Rev. Jim McComas came to Home Missions from an extremely successful 21-year pastorate in Creston, Ohio, to be the director of church revitalization. It has bothered me for years that Free Will Baptists have so many small, struggling churches that, while not mission churches, are not really vital self-supporting churches. Many close their doors each year.

We want to do some things to help these churches, so Jim, Brad, and I will offer specific help, seminars, conferences, and programs to revitalize these struggling congregations. Jim McComas brings enthusiasm and excitement to this position. His preaching is stirring and motivational, and his singing is always a blessing.

Chaplain Support

Our board selected retired Chaplain Kerry Steedley to be advisor in chaplain support for our department. As the endorsing agency for military chaplains, we want to be able to give Free Will Baptist chaplains and their families the recognition and support they deserve as they minister to men and women in our Armed Forces. Chaplain Steedley brings professionalism and a

wealth of knowledge and experience to guide us to an effective plan of support for these “ministers in uniform.”

Cooperative Efforts


We believe we can accomplish much more together than we can alone, so we will partner with other national departments to do more for the glory of God. Currently, we are partnering with International Missions to reach international students attending colleges and universities in the United States. We are partnering with Randall House and the Youth Evangelistic Team as they visit and minister in church plants each summer. We are partnering with our colleges to provide 10-week summer internships with church planters, thus building the pool of future church planters for Free Will Baptists. We are partnering with WNAC and Master’s Men for men and women’s ministries among Free Will Baptists.

We recently proposed a merger of Master’s Men and Home Missions that would bring the department under the umbrella of Home Missions. Master’s Men will remain intact, with all its present assets, but will minister and operate under the direction of Home Missions. This will enhance the mission and ministry of both departments, and enhance the opportunities for men’s ministries in our churches and denomination. We continue to cooperate with and support the Board of Retirement and FWB Foundation, as well as the Executive Office and Executive Secretary Keith Burden.

I have shared many exciting new directions in this article, but we want to accomplish still more for Free Will Baptists and for the Kingdom of God. God has placed me in a position I could never have imagined, working with some of the finest Christian servants I know. They encourage and support me daily. Our department of seven employees has a combined 105 years of experience at Home Missions. That blows my mind!

Home Missions didn’t start yesterday. This department has been faithful for 75 years under the leadership and direction of some of the finest men I have known. I don’t know why God has allowed me to walk in this place, but I do know I will follow the giants who walked before me (and it’s easy to follow the footprints of giants).

Will you support us as we begin the next 75 years? Will you help us have a record Mission: North America Offering this November? Will you partner with us as we partner with other departments, churches, and Free Will Baptist men and women across our denomination? Will you join us in North American Ministries? I believe with all my heart and soul that you will.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, your love, your kindness, your financial support, and your trust. 

The Importance of Church Revitalization

REKINDLE

BY JIM MCCOMAS



Change is probably the word that best describes 2014 at Home Missions. In addition to major changes in the administrative staff, many of our current programs have a new look and intensive planning has prepared us to launch several new areas of ministry. In fact, in the future you will hear our department referred to as North American Ministries because of the broad scope of our ministry. From the board and office staff to church planters in the field, a sense of excitement fills the air.

Not long after David Crowe became executive director of Home Missions, I joined the team to fill the position he held previously. I will never fill his boots, but I am honored by this opportunity. Because of the tremendous need in our denomination to help declining and struggling churches, my position received a new title—director of church revitalization.

Hundreds of Free Will Baptist churches are struggling to keep their doors open. Many more have plateaued and are on the road to decline. It is our hope and prayer that in the days to come, we will be able to provide practical help, support, and encouragement to these churches. Some of the projects being planned in this area are:

Leadership and Church Growth Seminars will be offered regionally to conferences or state associations interested in hosting them. Along with Brad Ransom, director of church planting, I have compiled a list of subjects our staff can offer in these conferences. We will tailor each seminar to meet the unique needs of those attending.

Ministry Database. When fully implemented, this database will allow us to connect small churches without pastors with trained Free Will Baptist ministers who have a heart for revitalizing churches.

National Church Growth Conference. We are planning the first nationwide Free Will Baptist-sponsored church growth

and leadership event, the “Acts 1:8 POWER Conference.” This historic event will take place Monday and Tuesday, May 25-26, 2015, at the beautiful Stone Castle Hotel and Conference Center in Branson, Missouri. Hotel accommodations will be reasonably priced, and there will be no cost for the conference. We are excited about this event.

Legacy Church Plants. We are developing a program where we can place a Home Missions church planter into an existing, struggling church to save it from closing its doors. We already have one of these plants, with another happening soon.

Evangelistic Outreach. I am personally committed to a ministry of encouragement to pastors, their families, and churches. I have enjoyed visiting churches across the country for revivals and conferences, and in the short time I have been traveling for our department, I have been blessed to see hundreds of decisions made by Christians, and at least eight precious souls come to Christ.

Hundreds of Free Will Baptist churches are struggling to keep their doors open. Many more have plateaued and are on the road to decline.

All of these exciting ministries will be provided at no cost to our churches, and they will all be financed from the Home Missions general fund. That’s why we are praying for a record offering in the Mission: North America Offering, Sunday, November 23.

As I travel across this country, I am finding great interest in this ministry of church revitalization. A host of our pastors have said, “This is something we’ve needed for a long, long time!”

It’s an exciting time in the Home Missions department. Please pray for our staff as we continue to minister—not only to our church planters but also to existing churches facing significant challenges. We have a need. I believe we have a plan and the tools to help.

Will you help make it happen and stand with us by contributing to the Mission: North America Offering this November? **ONE**

About the Writer: Rev. Jim McComas was senior pastor at Canaan Free Will Baptist Church in Creston, Ohio, for 21 years before joining the Home Missions staff in March as director of church revitalization. Learn more about Home Missions at www.homemissions.net.

*Why YOU Should Participate
in the Mission: North America Offering*

Why Give



BY
BRAD
RANSOM

*Since Home Missions church planters receive their support from money designated specifically to their accounts, does the Mission: North America Offering even help church planters? The answer is an emphatic **yes**. Although the Mission: North America Offering is undesignated, the money funds projects and office needs that help us support church planters across North America.*

Although it would be impossible to list all the benefits of the Mission: North America Offering, consider just a few as it relates to church planting.

The Mission: North America Offering allows office staff to provide necessary support including processing faith promises, publications, finance, the Church Extension Loan Fund (CELF), and much more.

It allows our directors to assist our team and visit church planters on the field for encouragement, as well as providing training and support. It allows

them to recruit new church planters and represent the department at state meetings across our denomination.

Unfortunately, from time to time, church planters face deficits and struggling accounts. Money from the Home Missions general fund is often used to bolster deficit accounts and to sustain new church planters until their individual accounts are strong enough to support their needs.

Training is essential to success, and money received from this annual offering is used to provide a host of events

and resources to sharpen the skills of our church planting team. Home Missions also provides a free biannual training conference (summit) to supply training and encouragement to church planters. Without funding, this event would be impossible.

The office staff provides a number of additional essential services and programs to help our field teams be successful in planting churches. Every dollar given to the annual Mission: North America Offering helps change lives and impact souls for the kingdom.

We value every individual and church that supports individual church planter accounts, but we also count on gifts to the annual offering to help sustain the general fund. What better way to learn the impact of the Mission: North America Offering than to hear testimonies from those who benefit from it the most, church planters:


“The national denominational exposure that Home Missions provides for church planters is invaluable to us.” —Howard Gwartney, Arizona

“I am so thankful for the church-planting Summit that our Home Missions Department puts together for us.” —Jeff Goodman, Arizona

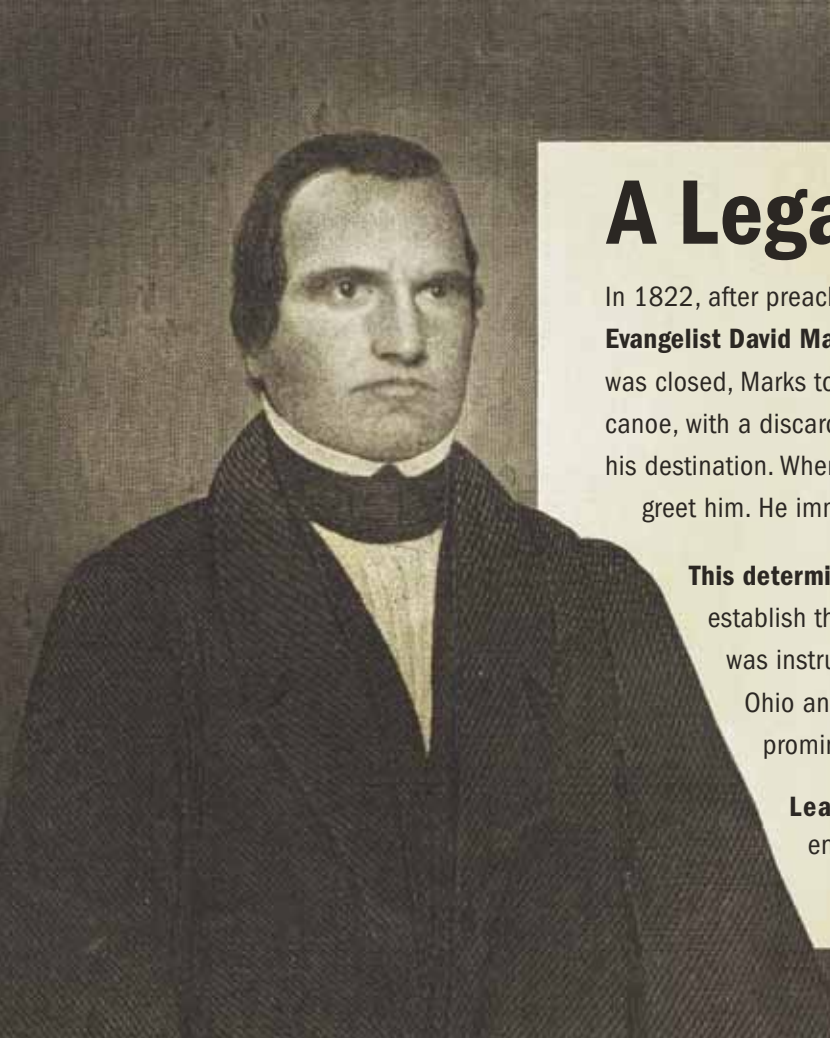
“The help [Home Missions] gives us through training and caring is basically like having an extra right arm in ministry.”
—Chad Kivette, Tennessee

“Words are inadequate to say how much Home Missions has helped our work, such as when we were in the red with our account, loaning the funds to build, etc. What a blessing they have been.”
—Dexter Guin, Colorado

“Our Home Missions Team in Nashville provides a support system that is crucial for our ministry. With them, we know we have a team who always has our families and ministries in the front of their minds and prayer lives.” —Josh Bennett, Arizona

We encourage every church to set aside Sunday, November 23, to promote and receive a special offering for Home Missions. Fifty church planters and countless numbers of others will be blessed by your generosity. 

About the Writer: Dr. Brad Ransom is director of church planting for Free Will Baptist Home Missions. Learn more at www.homemissions.net.



A Legacy of Determination!

In 1822, after preaching a revival in Portsmouth, Ohio, where 112 people accepted Christ, **Evangelist David Marks** turned to his next engagement across the Ohio River. When the ferry was closed, Marks took matters into his own hands, launching into the river in an abandoned canoe, with a discarded board for a paddle. The strong current swept him downriver, far from his destination. When he finally reached shore, a large crowd of curious slaves gathered to greet him. He immediately began preaching, and several were converted.

This determination was evident throughout the life of this influential man. He helped establish the Home and Foreign Mission Societies, published the first *Treatise*, was instrumental in starting Freewill Baptist Publishing, founded seminaries in Ohio and New Hampshire, took the gospel to the western frontier, and became prominent in the abolition movement.

Leave your own Legacy of Determination with an endowment through Free Will Baptist Foundation.

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Willing to

GIVE

By Bob Lewis

“Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing.”

(2 CORINTHIANS 8:2-3)



The amazing words above are part of Paul’s description of the churches in Macedonia that, despite their own desperate financial circumstances, were willing to give sacrificially to the greater need of others. The words that grip me are *they were willing*.

Some time ago, I found my heart deeply burdened for the need of the Home Missions church in Clarksville, Tennessee (180 Free Will Baptist Church pastored by Chad Kivette). They were trying to get into their new building and were, as we say, “tapped out.” They could not afford to borrow all they needed to finish their planned building but had maxed out the space in their

rented facility. I wanted desperately to help, but how?

Having been the pastor of Fellowship FWB Church in Kingsport, Tennessee, for less than a year at the time, it was with some timidity that I approached our church board with a plan I felt the Lord had placed on my heart. In that board meeting, I asked for their blessing to challenge our church to take \$10,000 from our reserve funds and send it to Chad's building fund. I wanted to challenge our congregation to match the amount through a special offering. The board voted unanimously and enthusiastically to do it.

For several weeks, we prayed about the offering. There was no hype or high-pressure promotion. I simply challenged our folks to give something that would challenge their faith—something sacrificial. An amazing excitement rippled through our church as we began to anticipate that the Lord was doing something special among us.

When the offering was received on that special Sunday, our people more than doubled what they had been challenged to do. They gave \$ 25,202! With the money withdrawn from the reserve fund, and the offering our folks had given, we were able to send over \$35,000 to relieve the burden of a sister congregation.

Our church is not special. We are not large (100 or so), nor do we have wealthy members. The key to these offerings? *They were willing.* All across the country literally millions of dollars are held in reserve by our Free Will Baptist churches. It is good and biblical to set something aside for a rainy day, but what a blessing it would be if a portion of those funds could be invested in one of the many Free Will Baptist ministries hurting financially.

Many years ago, the Lord gave me a thought that has framed my ministry: Faith replaces the statement, "I wish we could" with the question, "Lord, how can we?" In other words, faith doesn't say, "We can't." Faith gives God a chance; it gets Him involved. The folks in Macedonia were in deep poverty, too poor to help anyone else, but *they were willing.* At some point, these folks asked, "How can we?" and God took care of the rest. They gave beyond their power.

I am praying that some pastor or layperson with a heart of faith will read this article and say, "Our church should do that." Our pews are filled with people who would be "willing" if they were challenged to do something big, something sacrificial. Are you ready to ask, "How can we?" **ONE**

About the Writer: Home Missions Board member Bob Lewis is a three-time home missionary church planter. Bob and his wife Brenda live in East Tennessee where Bob currently pastors. Two of Bob's sons, Tim and Brian, have been active in Home Missions church planting as well.

Hispanic Ministry North America Update

ANTIOCH, TN—Josue Rivera and his family are joint project missionaries with West Virginia and Free Will Baptist Home Missions. They have been leading *Iglesia Cristiana Roca de Salvacion* (Rock of Salvation Christian Church), and hope to, one day, continue in the ministry by planting more Hispanic Free Will Baptist churches.

More than ever before, the Hispanic field in the United States is ready for harvest. According to the most recent census, over 50 million Hispanic-speaking people now work and reside in America. Many react to this situation as if this group is a nuisance to society, yet the command to take the gospel to every creature still rings true. What an opportunity to fulfill the Lord's command to take the life-giving message of salvation in Jesus Christ alone to the Hispanic people in America.

The need for workers is great still. As Paul wrote in Romans 10, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" The majority of Hispanic culture has been raised to be loyal to the Roman Catholic Church. They have been taught that the only way to God is through Mary and the Church. They have not heard the gospel message that Jesus saves, that eternal life is available only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that only those forgiven by Christ's blood—not by Mary and the Church—enter into eternal life. The harvest fields are ripe, and sadly, the workers are few.

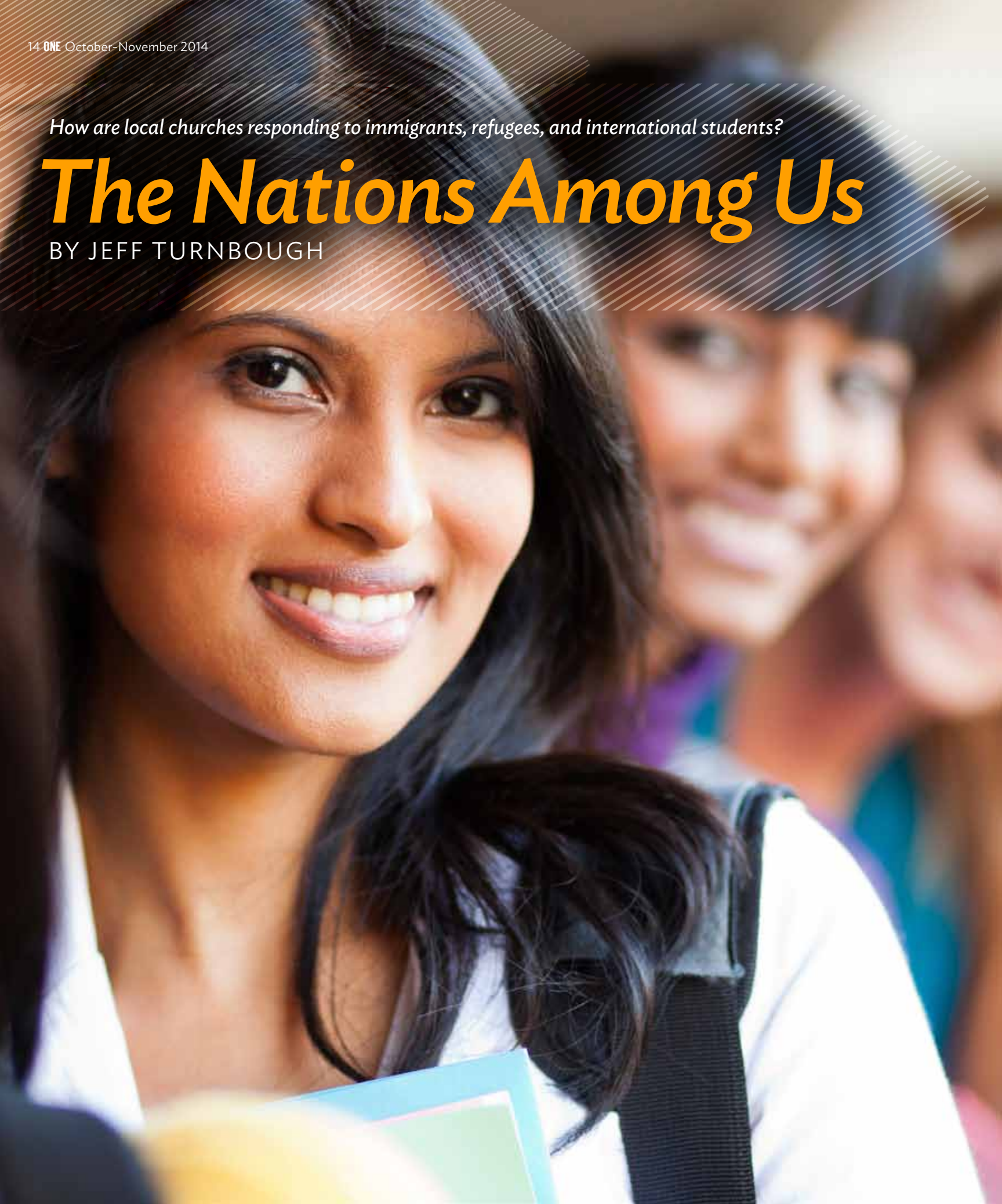
Free Will Baptist Home Missions ministers to nearly 3,000 Hispanics in 46 works across the United States. Many have attended the Gwen Hendrix FWB Hispanic Bible Institute in Inman, South Carolina, for ministry training. You can be part of this tremendous work for God by praying and giving. If you would like to get involved personally with Hispanic ministry, contact Rick Bowling, director of Free Will Baptist Hispanic ministry, at 877-767-7674. Please get involved today. ■



How are local churches responding to immigrants, refugees, and international students?

The Nations Among Us

BY JEFF TURNBOUGH



Sitting at the Missio Nexus* Conference in Chicago in September 2012 with 500 other North American evangelical mission leaders, I listened to *Operation World* statistician Patrick Johnstone share a startling statement:

“The good news: the Evangelical Church in the world is growing at phenomenal rates. The bad news: the Evangelical Church in the USA is declining.

Only churches among immigrant populations in the USA are growing. The high numbers of immigrants to North America hint at the strategic implications of bringing the gospel to them, and then in turn, helping them take it to their lands of origin” (See *The Future of Global Christianity: History, Trends and Possibilities*, by Patrick Johnstone).

This year (2014), international missions leaders in North America sponsored a nationwide conversation that asked how local churches are responding to the Great Commission opportunity to reach immigrants in our communities. Together, leaders of Free Will Baptist International Missions and Home Missions attended this conference. Because we see the importance of reaching internationals in the United States, the boards and leadership of Home and International Missions are seeking ways to collaborate. It is our desire and prayer for God to use Free Will Baptists to reach the least-reached, wherever they live.

The United States was founded by immigrants and grew because of immigrants. Its open-door policy, historically, has been a global attraction, providing a dynamic base that makes the U.S. one of the most diverse nations in the world. The first U.S. Continental Congress in 1782 proposed a motto on the Great Seal of the United States to mark this quality: *E Pluribus Unum*, “out of many, one.”

Historically, the immigration high came in 1900, when the foreign-born constituted nearly 20% of the population. Today, about 13% of the U.S. population

is foreign-born. Since the start of the recession in 2008, the number of undocumented immigrants has actually dropped.

In absolute numbers, however, the U.S. still receives more immigrants than any nation on the planet, according to *International Migration 2013*, published by the United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. This phenomenon has become a matter of great political debate. Matthew Soerens, a World Relief specialist in immigration, asserts that immigration raises three major concerns for many American citizens:

ECONOMICS. How does this affect my family, my pocketbook, and me?

CULTURE. Internationals are different than “us.” Will they fit in or change our culture?

LEGAL STATUS. Those who enter the USA unlawfully, or those who have overstayed their legal limit, are breaking the law.

Addressing Economic Concerns

- + Ninety-six percent of economists surveyed by *The Wall Street Journal* said illegal immigration had “been beneficial to the economy” on the whole.
- + Immigrants bring some fiscal costs, but they bring more economic benefits (*American Enterprise Institute*, 2013).
- + Three of four undocumented immigrants pay payroll taxes (*Social Security Adminis-*

tration, 2005).

- + Immigrants contribute as much as \$15 billion per year to Social Security (*Social Security Administration*, 2013).
- + The IRS provides special Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (I-10) for undocumented immigrants to file income tax returns.

Addressing Cultural Concerns COMPARED TO U.S. CITIZENS OVERALL, LATINO IMMIGRANTS:

- + Are more likely to attend church on a weekly basis (*Pew Research Center*).
- + Are more likely to be pro-life (*Pew Research Center*).
- + Generally work hard: 96% of undocumented males are employed (*Urban Institute*).
- + Commit crimes and are incarcerated at lower rates than native-born citizens (*Public Policy Institute of California*, 2008).

Addressing Legal Status BIBLICAL TRUTHS

- + Romans 13:1: All people must submit to the law and authorities.
- + 1 Timothy 5:8: We all should provide for our families, and that is increasingly difficult in some nations. America still offers the promise of opportunity if you are willing to work hard.

Facts

- + Of approximately 40 million immigrants in the U.S., about 11.5 million (29%) are present illegally (*U.S. Department of Homeland*

Evangelical Statement of Principles for Immigration Reform:

1. Respects the God-given dignity of every person.
2. Protects the unity of the immediate family.
3. Respects the rule of law.
4. Guarantees secure national borders.
5. Ensures fairness to taxpayers.
6. Establishes a path toward legal status and/or citizenship for those who qualify and who wish to become permanent residents.

Evangelical Immigration Table: www.evangelicalimmigrationtable.com

Security, 2011).

- + Federal immigration law states that unlawful presence in the country is a civil offense and therefore, is not a crime. It is incorrect to call undocumented immigrants “criminals,” unless we also apply this label to all who commit other civil offenses (parking fines, speeding tickets, etc.).
- + About 40% of undocumented immigrants entered the country lawfully, but overstayed their visas (Pew Research Center, 2006).
- + Immigrants come to the USA from every country in the world

Perspective

Many believers choose to view immigration as strictly a political issue, and allow their political views to inform their perspective. We must remember that the Bible should be the primary lens through which we judge all issues.

Scripture is clear concerning God’s perspective of the immigrant. The word translated *stranger* in the Bible can also be translated immigrant. The concept is exactly the same. “And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him” (Leviticus 19:33). The Old Testament refers to strangers (immigrants) 92 times and overwhelmingly, God instructs His people to love, welcome, and care for the immigrant. The writer of Hebrews reminds us to “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

While national political parties openly state how important the “non-white vote” is in American politics, believers know we can’t complete God’s kingdom work without a redeemed people from every tongue, tribe, and nation. It seems we should be doing everything we can to reach both legal and illegal immigrants with the love of Christ. And, by the way, you will break absolutely no laws sharing God’s love and good news with undocumented immigrants.

In theory, we place much value on the Great Commandment and the Great

Commission. Christ commanded us to love all people and to make disciples of all nations, or people groups. The reality in 2014 is that the peoples of the world live in close proximity to us. And many of today’s immigrants come from the world’s unreached people groups, the same people the church is trying desperately to reach with the gospel in their nations of origin. In His sovereignty, God is bringing the nations to live next door (see Acts 17:26-27).

The crucial question for local churches is: how are we responding to the Great Commission opportunity that comes with immigrants in our communities.

Only 10% of evangelical churches in the U.S. are ministering to immigrants (Faith Communities Today, 2010).

Sixty percent of immigrants in the U.S. come from a different religious tradition, and most do not know any Christians (Center for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013).

Millions of our neighbors are missing the opportunity for a transformational relationship with Jesus Christ. As Christians, we cannot ignore their need to receive compassionate love (meeting felt needs) and effective communication of the gospel (eternal need). What is your perspective about the immigrant people close to you?

Church Growth

We must seriously consider another matter. Churches in America are declining in numbers. Sadly, this includes many Free Will Baptist congregations made up of older, Caucasian, middle-class Americans. If the majority of people in the United States are of other ethnicities, Great Commission churches should reflect that change.

In 2014, society is typically more racially and ethnically diverse than the Church. If we are truly taking the Great Commandment and Great Commission seriously, our congregations should gradually reflect the diversity of the com-

What can YOU do?

1. Research. Discover the internationals living in your community.

- Watch the film *The Stranger* at www.thestrangerfilm.org.
- Visit sites such as:
 - <http://evangelicalimmigrationtable.com>
 - <http://gg92.org>
 - <http://worldrelief.org>
- Read *Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission*, by J.D. Payne
- Read *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion & Truth in the Immigration Debate*, by Matthew Soerens and Jenny Hwang Yang

2. Pray specifically for immigrants in your area and for God to give you opportunities to minister to them in practical ways—things they need and things you are capable of doing.

3. Read about what others are doing. Many churches across America are taking advantage of these opportunities. I highly recommend four case studies offered by Missio Nexus:

- Case Study: *Cherrydale Baptist Church Ministry to Immigrants*
- Case Study: *Embrace Catocin: Ministry to Students and Their Families (McLean Bible Church)*
- Case Study: *Truro International Programs & Services*
- Case Study: *Cedar Springs Outreach to Refugees and International Students*

To access these free case studies, call Missio Nexus at 678-392-4577.

4. Study the basics of cross-cultural ministry (FWBIM is happy to help).

5. Be intentional; go out of your way to do something.

6. Encourage your local church to welcome immigrants in ways that respect them (their culture, their heritage, etc.) yet invite them to enter our sociocultural context.

Receive training to become a church-based immigrant legal service
See <http://worldrelief.org/immigrant-legal-services>

“The U.S. is undergoing what may prove to be the greatest demographic shift in its history, and the Church is facing a pivotal decision in how it will respond to this change”

(Jenny Hwang Yang, Immigrants in the US: A Missional Opportunity, 2013).

Top seven countries in the world with the most Unreached People Groups (UPGs):

Country	UPGs
India	941
China	368
United States	361
Brazil	187
Canada	180
Indonesia	177
Mexico	161

2012 Refugee Arrivals to the USA by Country of Nationality	
Bhutan	15,070
Burma	14,160
Iraq	12,163
Somalia	4,911
Cuba	1,948
Congo, Democratic Republic	1,863
Iran	1,758
Eritrea	1,346
Sudan	1,077
Ethiopia	620
All other countries, including unknown	3,263
Total	58,179

munity around us. This multicultural mix defines our effectiveness as salt and light in the places we live. Does your church ethnic makeup mirror your community?

I have been a Free Will Baptist my whole life. I do not want to stand outside and criticize. I want to help. As a Free Will Baptist, I desire to be part of God's kingdom people, salt and light in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. Therefore, I want to embrace immigrants. I want to be part of a people who choose to love them, reach out to meet their needs, and who, ultimately, earn the right to speak with them about eternal, spiritual matters.

What can we do to remedy the situation?

If we are truly taking the Great Commandment and Great Commission seriously, our congregations should gradually reflect the diversity of the community around us.

Refugees

Two years ago, a Nepalese refugee showed up at the International Missions office in Antioch, Tennessee. He knew about Free Will Baptists because a Free Will Baptist in India traveled across the border into Nepal to minister to people trapped in a refugee camp. Later, the United Nations relocated these Nepalese refugees to Nashville, down the street from our offices. They started a church and requested help in finding a place to meet. Over 100 Nepalese believers were meeting down the street from me. What

The Northwest Community Church Model, Chicago, Illinois

David Potete, Gowdy Cannon, and the Northwest Community Church strategically offer the following ministries to impact "the strangers" among them:

- 1. Citizenship classes.** Northwest partners with World Relief to provide the legal means to do this. Classes meet year round, three times a week.
- 2. ESL classes.** English for adults is by far the biggest need of people in this neighborhood. People desperately want to learn English. We provide classes during the regular school year and a wide range of options...mornings, afternoons, and Saturday.
- 3. Homework help for school-age children.** The church offers free tutoring, because parents do not know English well and/or are too poorly educated to help their kids.
- 4. Bilingual Sunday service.** Northwest does not separate based on language because the Bible teaches that the church is one. Also, they believe Jesus died to tear down walls of hostility between people groups. Practically, it lets people worship in their heart language, but also helps people learn the language and culture of another group at the same time. Spanish speakers don't just learn English in this model, English speakers learn Spanish. Any English member of Northwest can tell you that *oremos* means "let's pray".

an opportunity to serve brothers in Christ!

Refugees, through no fault of their own, are pushed from their homes and nations because of political conflicts, war, famine, and natural disasters. Some find their way to the U.S., and the church has an opportunity—and a moral obligation—to reach out to them.

International Students

Last year, a friend in Missouri found a group of Saudi students studying engineering in his small mid-western town. These students are here specifically as learners. They expect to encounter a different culture, different ways of thinking, and even a dominant religion different from their own.

Students on university campuses are a significant group of immigrants. International students have unique needs. In most cases, they are here temporarily, so the best strategy is to think of meeting their needs, making friendships, and, hopefully, sharing the Good News. The most effective way to introduce the Good News into gospel-resistant places may be through a student who follows Christ, receives discipleship training, and returns to his home country to share his new faith.

Immigrants

People continue to migrate to the U.S. to find a better life, wanting to settle here permanently. In general, this group tends to have a set of immediate needs. Churches can help. Several Free Will Baptist churches are already doing this. Many immigrants arrive with very little. They need a place to live, climate-appropriate clothing, food, orientation to our society, or maybe just a friend. Will some immigrants take advantage of this kind of love? Yes. But ultimately, we do this for God, not them.

A Korean friend shared that when his family arrived with a rather large wave of

Top Places of Origin, International Students in the United States

Country	2012/13	Percentage of Total
<i>World Total</i>	<i>819,644</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>China</i>	<i>235,597</i>	<i>28.7</i>
<i>India</i>	<i>96,754</i>	<i>11.8</i>
<i>South Korea</i>	<i>70,627</i>	<i>8.6</i>
<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	<i>44,566</i>	<i>5.4</i>
<i>Canada</i>	<i>27,357</i>	<i>3.3</i>
<i>Taiwan</i>	<i>21,867</i>	<i>2.7</i>
<i>Japan</i>	<i>19,568</i>	<i>2.4</i>
<i>Vietnam</i>	<i>16,098</i>	<i>2.0</i>
<i>Mexico</i>	<i>14,199</i>	<i>1.7</i>
<i>Turkey</i>	<i>11,278</i>	<i>1.4</i>


immigrants, most were not Christians. They came with only the clothes on their backs. Christians offered immediate help. Today, he said, many of those

immigrants are Christians and faithful members of a local church.

The Great Commandment calls for us to love God and others. The Great Com-

mission calls for us to manifest that love by effectively communicating the Good News with all peoples. J.D. Payne says, “There is something missionally malignant when we spend thousands of dollars to reach the unreached people around the world, but we avoid and neglect the same people who live close to us.”

Individual Christians and local churches have a growing and imperative opportunity to show God’s love by meeting the unique needs of immigrants and possibly winning the opportunity to share the Good News with some of the least reached people groups in the world today—right here—in the United States of America.

Let’s pray that God will mold, shape, and change us to be used by Him to reach the nations that live in close proximity to us. Let’s start today! 

About the Writer: Dr. Jeff Turnbough is director of field operations for Free Will Baptist International Missions: www.fwbgo.com.

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Around the World >>

Lonnie Sparks With the Lord



Elkhart, IN—Former missionary to Côte d'Ivoire and Spain, Lonnie Sparks passed from death into life eternal on June 26, 2014, at his home in Indiana.

Lonnie and his wife Anita blazed a trail for Free Will Baptists in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, entering the country in 1958. In 1974, the couple began working in Spain and spent 23 years faithfully sowing the gospel in this hard place.

"At times like this we are called to remember the trailblazers," stated General Director Clint Morgan. "We at International Missions honor Brother Lonnie for his 38 years of service for Christ and Free Will Baptists."

Services were held July 1 at *Primera Iglesia Bautista Libre* of Elkhart, Indiana. Lonnie is survived by Anita, his wife of 59 years, and his son Noel. ■

Services Held in Unfinished Building

Brazil—The Nova América congregation gathered for the first service in their new building Sunday, July 13, 2014. The walls were not complete, and the building had no roof or floor, but it served as the gathering place for this group of believers. Walter Hernandez, overseas apprentice and Welch College senior, preached as Dr. Kenneth Eagleton translated for him. Kenneth said, "There was not a dry eye at the end of this emotional service."

Several years ago, churches from the Stone Association in Indiana raised money to buy property for the Nova América mission church to have their own building. Although it took time for the church to locate property with a clear title, they finally bought a lot with two small rental houses.

About the same time, a member preparing for missionary service was sent out. After two years in an internship in South Africa, she moved to Turkey where she is learning the language. Her local church used the income from the rental houses to support her.

This year, the church decided to build on their property. The lease on the rented hall where the congregation worshiped expired July 10 and the landlord asked for a significant rent increase. The goal was to have the shell covered by July 10 so they could leave the rented hall and begin services in the unfinished building.

They tore down one of the rental houses, leaving the other to serve as Sunday School rooms and a kitchen.

A group of about 40 people continue to put a tremendous amount of work into the project. Men from the church go to the construction site after work and weekends, doing the construction themselves. They raise funds through various projects to buy building supplies. The Lord has blessed their efforts and miraculously supplied their needs.

Pastor Paulo César and his wife Ana Paula planted this church in the Campinas neighborhood of Nova América (New America) about 11 years ago. ■



Bobby Poole Honored

Fort Worth, TX—Bobby Poole, retired missionary to Brazil, was honored at the convention in Fort Worth, Texas, in July. He arrived in the U.S. on July 8 to visit with family, share with churches, and attend the convention. Bobby retired January 1, 2014, after 53 years of faithful service in Brazil. He remained in the States until the middle of September and plans to divide his time between Brazil and the U.S. ■

International Missions Board Gains New Members

Antioch, TN—Delegates to the 78th session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists elected four new members to the Board of Free Will Baptist International Missions following General Director Clint Morgan’s report on Wednesday, July 30.

Jeff Manning (North Carolina) was reelected to another six-year term. Dr. Janice Banks (Oklahoma), previously elected to complete Paul Creech’s unexpired term, was also reelected. Robert Posner (Texas) was elected to complete Dr. Brad Ransom’s unexpired term (expiring in 2020). Jeff Nichols (Tennessee) was presented to replace Robert J. Morgan (Tennessee) whose term expired.

Robert and his wife Judy serve Collin Creek FWB Church in Plano, Texas, where he has been senior pastor for 16 years. Jeff and his wife Debbie reside in Nashville, Tennessee, where Jeff has served as executive pastor of The Donelson Fellowship FWB Church since 2005.

“We are blessed to have a board that understands the tactical and strategic nature of missions,” commented General Director Clint Morgan. “I believe Jeff Nichols and Robert Posner are men of passion and vision who will join the present members to lead us as we face current and future challenges and opportunities.”

Read the full article on www.fwbgo.com/news ■

Snapshots Around the World



Côte d’Ivoire: Three people were baptized Sunday, July 20, at the mission church in Tiassalé. More than 100 people have been baptized in Ivorian FWB churches in 2014.



France: More than 100 people attended the second *J’y Pense* event June 19. At least 60 unsaved people attended, and ten requested Bible studies. One man received a New Testament and went home and read until 4 a.m., then called Joel and Lydie to say he wanted to know more.



France: Robert Bryan taught seminars August 2-9, 2014, at Teen Street, a Christian conference for European young people, in Muenster, Germany. Around 4,000 young people (ages 13-17) attended the event.



Spain: Four women and three men were baptized at the Vilalba church in June.



Brazil: Pastor Nilvio of the São José FWB Church in Campinas, Brazil, baptized 11 people Sunday evening July 20.



Uruguay: Steve and Lori Torrisson will serve as Missionaries in Residence at Hillsdale College in Moore, Oklahoma, during the 2014-2015 school year. As they embrace campus life, they hope to give the students an enlarged vision of the world and their personal roles in the Great Commission.



Japan: A man burned his family’s Buddhist altar at Dale and Sandra Bishop’s home in July. His extended family does not know Christ.



Brazil: Five people were baptized Sunday, August 3, in the morning service of the Jaraguá FWB Church in Uberlândia, Brazil. In the evening service, many unsaved family members witnessed as baptism certificates were presented. Two people accepted Christ as Savior in the evening service.



Cuba: A team of 13 served in Cuba, August 2-7, 2014, assisting with the annual youth camp. Around 500 young people attended this camp. IM Staff members Mark McPeak and Sam McVay served as team sponsors. Featured speaker Tommy Swindol addressed the theme *¡Cuenta Conmigo!* (Count on Me!) from Romans 10:14. Other team members assisted with workshops, Bible studies, testimonies, and devotionals, and counseled and encouraged the Cuban young people. ■



What Is the Value of **VISION?**

By Norma Jackson Goldman

It's a probing question, isn't it: what is the value of vision?

Humans value their vision (the act or power of seeing with the eye); it is a primary health consideration because vision uniquely connects us to our surroundings and the people in our lives. Good vision means we can continue to work, enjoy the natural beauty of God's creation, and perform routine but pleasurable tasks that are the fabric of life. We do well when we work to optimize and maintain physical vision.

Vision also has another dimension. Webster says it is "something supposedly seen by other than normal sight...in a dream, trance or supernaturally perceived, as to a prophet." Believers value this aspect of vision because God communicates to humankind through visions, and we have hundreds of examples in Scripture where God reveals Himself, His plans, future promises, and things to come through visions. We do well when we study Scripture to understand and apply these visions from God.

Still another definition is "the ability to perceive something not actually visible, as through mental

acuteness or keen foresight." Believers would add "through the leadership of God's Spirit." It is this type of vision that we want to focus on, because God-inspired vision drives us to see the possibilities in raw material. Gifted sculptors see powerful figures in a block of marble. Musicians see grand oratorios in a keyboard while followers of Christ see thousands of people being won to faith in a plan of outreach. We do well when we apply our minds to such visions, maintaining a habit of openness to what He might reveal to us.

Proverbs 29:18 tells us that "where there is no

vision, the people perish.” Many would declare that vision is the responsibility of leaders—primarily those in spiritual or political realms of authority. But God (two of the most powerful words in Scripture) often grants vision to unlikely, obscure, and surprising candidates—like you and me. Many parents invest guidance, loving care, and prayer into their children, having a God-sent vision of who they can become in Christ. Likewise, godly businessmen or women have a Spirit-breathed vision of how a young

our principal work is to take it easy, relax, and produce little or nothing. Such a viewpoint is blatantly contrary to Scripture, and my prayer is that you would reject such a notion for what it is—a silly, Satan-inspired notion.

So again, what is the value of vision in your life? What might you accomplish, invent, sustain, or improve in the time you have left? Who might you invest in, encourage, mentor, comfort, or sustain with the resources God provides? How might things

Apathy and acceptance of the intolerable are tools of the evil one.

protégé can advance the cause of Christ, as they pour themselves and their experience into that person’s life. Even in the political arena, God gives people a vision of how justice and righteousness can be restored in our legislative and judicial system.

What is the vision you have today of how God can use the rest of your days on earth—few or many—to partner with Him in His great enterprise of redeeming a lost world to Himself? Sadly, we must contend with a culture that says in retirement

change in your home, your family, your church, or local mission field if you commit significant time daily in prayer and Spirit-driven effort to be an initiator of change?

Apathy and acceptance of the intolerable are tools of the evil one. He lies in saying you and I cannot possibly make a difference in our small circles of influence. We can.

If you have no vision of what God can do in and through you, ask Him for one and pray until it comes. **ONE**

About the Writer: Former magazine editor Norma J. Goldman enjoys a successful freelance career in her retirement. The award-winning writer lives near Houston, Texas. Learn more about retirement options at www.boardofretirement.com.



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DETERMINATION

By Clifford D. Donoho

My wife Kathy and I set out to plant our first church in April 1984. We have since completed three Home Missions church plants and are working on a fourth. My, how things have changed! We often get the question, “Why would you want to plant another church, and how do you keep going?” It is a one-word answer—determination.

Defining determination is simple: absolutely nothing worthwhile in life happens without effort. The only way you coast is when you’re going downhill. Paul said, “I fight to the finish.” That statement makes for good preaching, but church planting is difficult, and the dynamics and people have changed completely. We have moved from reaching Baby Boomers to Millennials.

It’s a little scary to know the strategies that worked in previous church plants do not work now. The methods that reached people in previous decades do not work today, and I fear many Free Will Baptist churches will close their doors because they refuse to change methods of reaching the unchurched.

I recently read an article by Mark Miller that describes Millennials:

Millennials want ongoing feedback and coaching, Millennials want casual Friday every day or whenever they choose, Millennials think they should be able to create their own schedule. Working nine to five is an artifact of previous generations. Millennials aren’t all about the money. Millennials like transparency at work. They want to be part of a community; they understand its power. Millennials see the work place as flat. They believe it should be a place where the best idea wins, regardless of your title or tenure. (www.greatleadersserve.com)



How do we approach and reach Millennials? What will drive us as individuals and churches, to change our methods and refocus our strategies to make our churches attractive to the unchurched? Determination.

Free Will Baptists have some great new churches, with great church planters who continue to reach people. How? Determination! They have a driving passion within them that will not allow them to quit. The great people in life are just ordinary people with an extraordinary amount of determination. They don't know how to stop. They keep on going. They never give up.

Consider the terms Paul used in Philippians 3:13-14: press on toward the mark; for the prize. You can almost feel his intensity, his determination. The Greek phrase interpreted *press on* could be translated, "I overextend myself; I go for it with all I've got; I throw myself into it, straining with every nerve and ounce and muscle to reach the prize." Paul was a man of intensity and maximum effort. That's the way to live.

What would happen if Christians put as much energy into growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ as they do into making money or their favorite sport? Acts 20:24 reminds us, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and

We find Paul's last recorded words in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul was the model of determination. He never quit. More than anything else, I want to be able to say, like Paul, that I too finished the race, fought the good fight, and kept the faith.

Galatians 6:9 encourages the Christian not to be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Don't give up! Keep dreaming. You will reap a harvest at the proper time—God's time. We can reach both boomers and millennials if we continue learning and changing our methods to reach the next generation of the unchurched. We can rest assured in the promise of Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"

What God starts, He finishes. He doesn't leave us "out on a limb." We can be sure that if we do our part, God will do His part. Our new church in Tallahassee, Florida, is a place where we don't care about a person's past. We are interested in the direction he or she is headed now. You see, that's what matters—today, not

More than anything else, I want to be able to say, like Paul, that I too finished the race, fought the good fight, and kept the faith.

the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

This is Paul's life verse. He made it clear he would not stop; he would never give up or quit. He would keep going until he experienced all God has for him. He wanted to finish the purpose for which God made him. Paul was *determined* to finish what he started.

I do not like the words quit or impossible. God says all things are possible in Him. Yet the world is full of quitters, those who throw in the towel at the drop of a hat. They give up on their business, their marriage, their kids, relationships, and dreams.

yesterday. It is crucial to find the right direction and keep going.

Paul clearly described the crown waiting for him in Heaven. He was anticipating the eternal rewards, the result of remaining faithful. I can't help but think of the words of the familiar gospel song: "I have decided to follow Jesus. No turning back, no turning back." That's determination! **ONE**

About the Writer: Cliff Donoho answered the call to preach in 1977 and received his first pastorate in 1979. He has spent most of his ministry as a church planter, and he is currently planting The Oaks FWB Church in Tallahassee, Florida. Cliff and his wife Kathy have two children, son Chad and daughter Janice.

GPS:

New Directions in Church Planting

By Howard Gwartney

Have you ever been driving in a strange city, encountered a roadblock or construction detour, and tried to navigate an alternate route?

Traveling in unfamiliar territory can sometimes be nerve-wracking, difficult, exasperating, even downright frightening, and it is always helpful to have a GPS unit—or at least a good map—to help you find your way. Church planting can be that way sometimes as well.

THE PLACE

Meeting in rented facilities can create some problems, especially if you set up every Sunday from a ministry truck or trailer. You arrive at the location (a school in our case) and perhaps the custodian isn't there to let you in the building, or maybe the building is filthy from an activity the night before. Once we were told we couldn't continue meeting in the school after a certain date and had to scramble to find another location. Sometimes you have to turn in a new direction.



THE PERSONNEL

Not only is the meeting place an issue; ministry personnel can create a roadblock and force your ministry in a new direction. We have been blessed with great lay leaders. Pat Thomas, Nathan and Brooke Cowan, Drew and Ashley Bigley, Seth and Jeremy Patterson, Bob and Shirley Carr, and Dale and Sandra Belcourt have all been vital to the work in San Tan Valley. What an encouragement to have people you can count on week after week.

THE PROGRAM

Certainly the place you meet and the personnel you have affect the program you provide. I have often referred to Christ's Church Free Will Baptist as "high-tech traditional." We have a band, a worship team, and use comput-

ers, tablets, cameras, video projectors, and big screens, and we sing hymns as well as some of the new praise choruses. We are extremely selective and purposeful in our music. Too often, churches target a certain demographic, and in doing so, they exclude people.

Our building lease limits our program. Currently, our auditorium seats 175, with two restrooms, a nursery, and a foyer. We don't have a classroom or even a closet! Consequently, we don't have Sunday School, and children's church meets in the foyer. We are in the process of moving a portable manufactured building onto the property for classroom space.

THE PEOPLE

In spite of all the twists and turns faced in a church plant, the work is about reaching people. When I applied to the Home Mission Board a second time, after planting East Valley FWB Church in Mesa, Arizona, we hoped to go to southeast Mesa to begin our current work. I was shocked when I received word that the board wouldn't send us to southeast Mesa. They reasoned that it would be too close to the East Valley church, and people might leave and come to the new work.

At the time, I thought the decision was shortsighted and limited. After all, Free Will Baptists have 20 churches in the Nashville area, and its population is only 650,000. Mesa has a population of 480,000! Surely, a town that size could have two Free Will Baptist churches. To be honest, I was appalled.

After a trip to the area that is now San Tan Valley, after some soul-searching and prayer, I knew if I was going to be a Home Missions church planter, I had to submit to their authority, and I let God point me in a new direction.

Now, I cannot imagine serving any place else. God has given us wonderful people with whom we serve. Every Sunday, we have lost people in our services, and we hope to see them saved soon.

THE PRODUCT

Today, another Free Will Baptist church is close to being self-supporting. No, we do not yet have our own building. We are still leasing with an option to buy the property where we meet now. Will we be here a year from now? We hope so, but perhaps not. The Lord might just lead us in another new direction. I just want to be willing to go where He leads. **ONE**

About the Writer: Howard Gwartney pastors Christ's Church Free Will Baptist in San Tan Valley, Arizona. Learn more: www.christschurchfwb.org.

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DRS. LES &
LESLIE PARROTT

It was a circular conversation over who was pulling more weight on the home front. In short, we were having a chore war. And each of us had drawn a battle line. We both dug in our heels and were dead set on proving the other person wrong.

“It would be nice if you could actually lend a hand on occasion,” Leslie said, sardonically.

“Seriously?” Les retorted. “You’re actually going to say I don’t help out?”

“Do I need to?”

“Apparently!”

“Okay, then, you don’t help out.”

“What do you want me to do that I’m not doing?” Les asked the question as if Leslie would have to think long and hard to answer it. She didn’t.

“How many do you want?”

“C’mon.”

“Let’s start with taking out the trash?”

“I do take it out!”

“Then why did we have a heaping pile of trash in our garage for the past two weeks?”

“Oh, that’s rich! You know I was traveling and...”

“And you didn’t take it out before you left.”

We jabbered on like this throughout the day, hopscotching to various chores—cleaning bathrooms, yard work, and so on. And when we weren’t talking about it, we were building up our cases and reloading our ammunition for when the battle ensued once again. Each of us was far more concerned with winning the fight than with resolving it. We were in a serious power-struggle, a world-class game of blame, and dangerously close to belittling each other with true contempt. In short, we were having an honest to goodness *bad* fight.

Of course, we didn’t really know it at the time. In fact, early in our marriage we didn’t even make a distinction between a good fight and a bad fight. We just thought a fight was a fight. But that’s far from true. To deal effectively with any conflict, a couple has to know the difference between a good fight and a bad fight.

When the Gloves Come Off

Professionals used to believe that couples who were more prone to arguments were the least satisfied with their marriage. The studies that led to those findings, however, failed to distinguish among the kinds of fights the couples were having. Truth be told, the difference between a marriage that gets happier as times goes on and one that grows more miserable is not whether the couple fights but *how* they fight.

All fights are not created equal. A “good fight” in contrast to a “bad fight” is helpful, not hurtful. A good fight stays clean while a bad fight gets dirty. Ninety-three percent of couples who fight dirty will be divorced in ten years, according to researchers at the University of Utah. In the end, bad fights lead to marriages that are barely breathing

and eventually die. In fact, researchers now predict with 94% accuracy whether a couple will stay together or not based solely on *how* they fight.

Not whether they fight, but how they fight. The line separating good fights from bad is not fuzzy.



Research makes
the difference clear:

	Bad Fight	Good Fight
Goal	Winning the Fight	Resolving the Fight
Topic	Surface issues	Underlying issues
Emphasis	Personalities and power-struggles	Ideas and Issues
Attitude	Confrontational and Defensive	Cooperative and Receptive
Motivation	Shift Blame	Take responsibility
Mode	Belittle	Respect
Manner	Egocentric	Empathic
Demeanor	Self-Righteous	Understanding
Side effect	Escalation of tension	Easing of tension
Result	Discord	Harmony
Benefit	Stagnation and distance	Growth and intimacy

The list of qualities that make up a bad fight could go on and on. But if you were to boil the essence of a bad fight down to a single ingredient, if you were to sum it all up in a word, it would be pride.

Pride Fighting

The Bible says it straight: “Pride leads to conflict” (Proverbs 13:10). It’s that simple. A prideful spirit keeps us from cooperating, flexing, respecting, compromising, and resolving. Instead, it fuels defensiveness and discord. It stands in the way of saying “I’m sorry.” It lives by the motto, “The only unfair fight is the one you lose.” Self-centered pride is at the heart of every bad fight.

Let’s be clear: healthy pride, the pleasant emotion of being pleased by our work, is quite different from unhealthy pride, in which our egos are bloated. The latter is laced with arrogance and conceit. And that’s what we’re talking about here.

We don’t have to be egomaniacs to suffer from unhealthy pride. It has a way of secretly seeping into the crevices of our conflicts even when we make a conscious effort to avoid it. That’s what makes it so toxic and devious. “Through pride we are ever deceiving ourselves,” said Carl Jung. “But deep down below the surface of the average conscience a still, small voice says to us, something is out of tune.”

You know the feeling of being out of tune. We all do. It’s born of the tension between being the kind of person we want to be and our fear of being snookered. We don’t want to be prideful, but we also don’t want to be duped. That’s what causes pride to kick in. That’s when we realize, deep down, that we’ve taken the low road. More often than not, this sinking feeling becomes even more difficult to admit to ourselves, let alone our spouse, so we perpetuate the pride.

The antidote to unhealthy pride is humility. The word from which we get *humility* literally means “from the earth.” In other words, humility steps off its high horse to be common and lowly. Humility isn’t for cowards. It’s risky. Humility makes us vulnerable to “being played” or made to look the fool. But it also makes possible everything else we truly want to be.

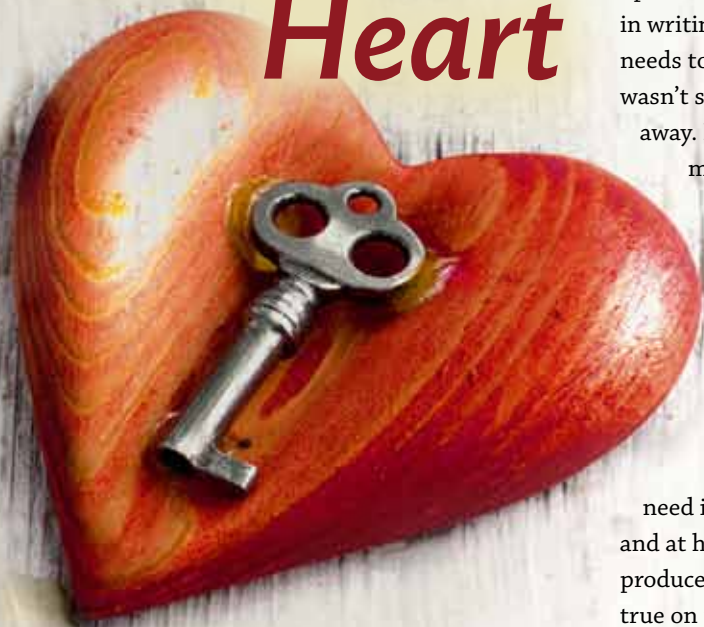
William Gurnall said, “Humility is the necessary veil to all other graces.” Without humility, it’s nearly impossible to engender kindness and warmth with our spouse. Without humility it’s impossible to fight a good fight—the kind that brings you closer together. **ONE**

About the Writers: Les and Leslie Parrott are *New York Times* best-selling authors and co-directors of The Center for Relationship Development at Seattle Pacific University. Their books include *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts*, *Love Talk*, and *The Good Fight*. Visit www.LesandLeslie.com.



An interview with Walker Moore, author of *Escape the Lie*.

The Orphan Heart



So many people are not living the life God intended because they are held back by the wounds of the past. Walker Moore unlocks the door to help readers escape the deep-seated problem known as “the Orphan Heart” in his new book *Escape the Lie* published by Randall House.

Walker Moore is founder and president of Awe Star Ministries and has been working with families through ministry for more than four decades. He desires to help people recognize the symptoms of the Orphan Heart while leading them down a path to recovery, healthy earthly relationships, and most important—a relationship with the heavenly Father. Recently, the Randall House staff asked Walker to share more about his life, his book, and his mission:

You’ve preached the Orphan Heart message for several years now. Why did you decide to turn it into a book?

It became a book because so many people asked for it. Whenever I taught on this topic, almost everyone who came up afterward asked, “Do you have this in writing? My brother, my friend, etc. needs to have this message.” The book wasn’t something I decided to do right away. Instead, it was a response to the many people who told me they needed the Orphan Heart teaching in print.

You spend a great deal of time on the mission field. How does the Orphan Heart message apply there?

We all long for a father, so that need is the same on the mission field and at home. But all an orphan can produce is more orphans, and that holds true on the mission field. For a long time, I didn’t understand how I could take students on a mission trip and have them fail to experience joy. Learning more about the Orphan Heart has helped me realize that it’s impossible for someone with an Orphan Heart to bring freedom to someone else. They simply can’t find joy in sharing sonship, because they don’t have it themselves.

If the Orphan Heart is so widespread, do you think it’s truly possible for people to “escape the lie”?

Yes, because that’s the whole message of the Scriptures. That’s why Jesus came: to set us free from all the world’s bondage, from our fallen nature. We can absolutely be His children, so free that

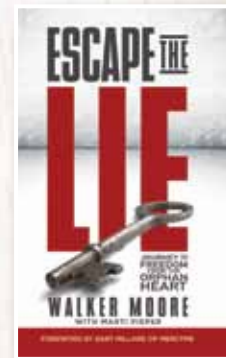
we enjoy our Father and celebrate in His presence. Even when I’m by myself in the middle of the jungle, the knowledge that I’m His favorite child gives me great joy.

You say that when you preach on the Orphan Heart, you don’t get many questions. Instead, people line up to tell you stories. What do they say?

They come up to me and say, “You’ve just described me. That’s my life.” And then they tell me about their experiences: rape, abuse, a father who ignored them, or a father who tried to be successful at their expense. I hear story after story of people who identify with the Orphan Heart message. It’s a universal theme, and many people share their stories with me because they so identify with it.

Why should we read *Escape the Lie*?

There are two reasons for reading this book. First is for your personal journey, because even if you escape the lie and embrace sonship, you might discover some areas in your life where you aren’t free. Sometimes, God wants to shine a light on an area of your life—like the Orphan Heart—that you didn’t even know existed. The second reason is that you can help others—people you work with, live with, and are friends with—by reading this book. **ONE**



Order your copy of *Escape the Lie* at www.RandallHouse.com.

Leader Profile >>

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.

Angie Outlaw

It was a memorable Sunday at the First FWB Church in Springfield, Ohio, in September 1972, when Floyd Wolfenbarger stepped down from the pulpit, grabbed a plate of Homecoming potluck, and headed to the hospital to meet his wife Yvonne to usher in the birth of their first and only child.

Angie's introduction to the world solidified her connection to Free Will Baptists and the church. Raised in a pastor's home in both Ohio and Arkansas, Angie learned early the lessons of obeying the call of God and finding security in following His plans.

Those early life lessons were put to the test when Angie and her mom moved to Tennessee after the tragic death of her father when she was only 12. This unexpected life change set off what Angie describes as "a stream of events that prepared me for a time of surrender to God's calling on my life." It was during her teen years in Nashville, with the influence of a strong youth group, and a specific moment on the 1989 YET Team, she firmly committed to the "wherever, whenever, whatever" of serving God.

She married her high school sweetheart David Outlaw, and together they signed a "blank check" to God and allowed Him to fill in the details of their future. Graduate school for David, a social work degree for Angie, and 13 years in youth and pastoral ministry set the backdrop for God's plan to use them and their five children as missionaries in Central Asia.

Angie and David, with hearts for hospitality and discipleship, used their gifts on both sides of the ocean. She describes David as a kind-hearted, crazy-intelligent, big-idea guy, and sees her role as helping him work out those big ideas for the Kingdom. They currently serve stateside with FWBIM but continue to use their gifts and training to equip believers, families, and church leaders around the world.

Angie describes her life with five kids as "crazy...but good crazy." When asked about her ideal setting for quiet time, she longs for an hour of solitude with worship music, a cup of hot tea, a lovely journal, and an assortment of highlighters!

But then she snaps back to the reality of five kids, an exchange student, and a constant flow of guests in and out of her home. She fights for every moment when she can retreat to her favorite chair and catch up on daily readings from the *Chronological One-Year Bible*. And when asked about prayer, Angie added, "I truly understand the words of the old hymn, 'I Need Thee Every Hour.'" At this point in life, though, rather than having a sweet hour of prayer, I sprinkle it throughout the whole day."

Angie, you are a great leader! ONE



Get to Know Angie

What is your ideal date?

Food and books, anywhere without the kiddos.

What are the names, ages, and one-word descriptors for your children?

Carson, age 18 – *Friendly*

Tori, age 17 – *Driven*

Conner, age 14 – *Writer*

Schaffer, age 11 – *Funny*

Libby, age 9 – *World-changer*

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

Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith and Community by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Grace-Based Parenting by Tim Kimmel

A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael by Elizabeth Elliot

What is your biggest failure?

Trying to be perfect.

What would you like to see in regard to Free Will Baptists in five or ten years?

A group that still exists for my children and grandchildren that is a cooperative, diverse group of believers, tied by theology, not by methodology. One where our agencies work together with the sole purpose of raising up and equipping thousands of believers to engage culture, impact society, and take the gospel to the most unreached corners of the world...at whatever the cost!

Paper or Plastic Questions

Mountains or Ocean? Mountains

Music or Talk Radio? Music

Coke or Pepsi? Diet Coke

Facebook, email, twitter, or texting?

Facebook

Mac or PC? PC...I know, I am lame.

Socks or house shoes? Bare feet



Randall House Launches Academic Imprint

Nashville, TN—Randall House recently launched an academic imprint: Randall House Academic. The imprint will develop and enact a long-term and systematic plan within Randall House’s book division to produce theological, historical, and reference-oriented books written primarily by Free Will Baptist scholars. These academic works will target pastors, serious Bible students, and provide texts for colleges and universities. The academic editor will be proactive, planning specific works and finding appropriate authors to write them, rather than waiting for manuscript submissions.

Randall House has named Charles Cook academic editor. He will work under the guidance of Michelle Orr, who leads the book division. Charles will continue to lead the growing congregation at Cookeville FWB Church (TN) where he has pastored for over four years. Charles and his wife Laura have two sons. Before coming to Cookeville, Charles worked for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in the Christian Guidance division and as associate pastor at Peace FWB Church in Florence, South Carolina.

Charles also served as a research assistant to the chair of Duke University’s doctoral program in Religion while completing a Masters of Theological Studies degree from Duke Divinity School. His time at Duke followed two years of study at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and undergraduate studies at Welch College. Charles currently teaches online courses in both the Philosophy and Biblical Studies programs of Hillsdale FWB College.

Michelle Orr said, “In recent years, Randall House has increased its standing in the publishing world and receives an average of 300 book submissions each year, but can only publish 10-14 titles. I am excited to work with Charles to develop authors and works in the academic genre.”

“I look forward to working with Michelle and the Randall House team,” Charles said. “In the midst of a changing denominational and cultural landscape, it is an honor to help facilitate rigorous reflection on God’s Word and the Word’s impact on lives, Christian communities, and the broader culture.”

Randall House Academic will start by releasing one book per year and begin working toward the addition of titles in the near future. We have been collecting names of Free Will Baptists who have masters and doctoral degrees, along with their specific areas of training. We will evaluate their research, writing, and body of work as we consider each new opportunity. Free Will Baptists have a number of bright, young scholars who will get a chance to write significant works for our denomination.

Executive Director of Randall House Ron Hunter said, “The timing is right as founding scholars of the modern day movement prepare to pass off the scene, Randall House will take an active role in helping to develop the scholars who guide our future. I am excited about working with Charles and Michelle to plan the necessary works to both chart and document our path.” ■



Vertical Three Website Launched

Nashville, TN—Randall House recently launched a new website at verticalthree.com. This redesigned site is the home for resources, all things NYC, and all other Vertical Three ministries. ■



Brown on Green >>

A Better Way to Settle Your Estate



Free Will Baptist Foundation has teamed up with Cornerstone Estate Planning of Atlanta, Georgia, to offer Free Will Baptist families a better way to settle their estates. We have held estate planning seminars in over 75 churches and helped over 400 families set up estate plans. We strongly encourage you to consider the Free Will Baptist Foundation Estate Plan for Life rather than a simple will. The Estate Plan for Life includes a revocable living trust, various powers of attorney, medical directives, guardianship papers, and a pour-over will.

The centerpiece of the plan is the revocable living trust (RLT). An RLT has several advantages over a simple will. In simple terms, the RLT is a container set up to own assets. When a RLT is established, everything a person owns (real estate, bank accounts, valuables, household goods, and other assets) is titled into the name of the trust. The person(s) who establish the trust are the trustees and also the beneficiaries. Their heirs are successor beneficiaries. When they die, everything in the trust goes to their heirs as beneficiaries and probate is avoided.

Avoiding probate is a good idea, since the costs of probate for an estate range between four and seven percent. Additionally, your heirs will likely wait a year or more before the estate is settled. With a trust, everything can be settled in a matter of days depending on whether assets (like real estate) must be sold.


The costs to settle an estate are often hidden, because when heirs receive their inheritance, it is net remainder after fees, and recipients often have no idea how much more they could have received.

Consider a \$300,000 estate using the

lowest estimate on fees at 4%. Instead of receiving the full \$300,000, the heirs will receive \$288,000: a loss of \$12,000. Using a RLT, the family could make a \$12,000 gift to a Free Will Baptist ministry by redirecting the fees the estate would have paid to an attorney and court fees.

However, the Estate Plan for Life includes other valuable provisions as well. Many of us don't realize how vulnerable we could be to state courts if we become incapacitated and can't make decisions for ourselves. The Estate Plan for Life includes all the documents you need for your family to stay in control in the event of incapacitation.

The Foundation's partnership with Cornerstone makes it possible for you to have all the necessary documents drawn up by an attorney in your state. The Foundation will hand deliver the attorney-prepared documents to you. We will stay in contact with you by calling every year to make sure your documents remain up-to-date. Finally, after the first spouse dies, we will come alongside the survivor to help with end of life issues; and when the final spouse dies, we will be with the family to help them with distribution of assets.

For peace of mind regarding your estate, I encourage you to contact the Foundation or Cornerstone Estate Planning today, to begin establishing your Estate Plan for Life. 

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.

High Risk and Hard Times:

An Interview
About Life Lessons

By Bill and Brenda Evans

If you live on the plains in a high-risk area, coyotes howl and tornadoes blow away property and lives. Husbands and sons die. Wives get divorced and have breast cancer. And that's just your town, your street, your house. Virginia Bunton has experienced all that. She is 84, a Christian laywoman, visionary donor, and great-grandmother in Liberal, Missouri. Recently, we asked what she has learned from the hard times she has faced in her life.

EVANS: Do you think hard times really make you a better person like people say?

BUNTON: Not always, but I've learned that good things can come out of hard times. I turned 16, graduated from high school the same day, and ran away from home with a girlfriend. Then I married a 21-year-old former sailor. Bad choices from the beginning! He drank, went off for days at a time, needed more women than me, and put everything on credit, so there was always debt. I'd get \$2 here, \$2 there, but when I shopped for groceries, I'd have to put some back because I didn't have money to pay.

Then he'd make promises or do something nice. One time he left with the truck and came back with my grandmother's old piano. I got piano lessons in exchange for a dozen eggs each time,

and I still play.

It wasn't all bad; a year into the marriage, my mother-in-law led me to the Lord. I also had my first son during that marriage. But I lived in fear, and after seven years, got a divorce. It was a difficult time.

EVANS: You've survived breast cancer as well. Then six years ago you lost Stephen, your first-born. Is the death of a child the worst thing a parent ever faces?

BUNTON: It has been for me. After the divorce, it was just Stephen and me, so we formed a bond. Later, I married Lee and we were blessed with Rodney. But Stephen and I stayed close, went for walks, talked. He had a heart for God but was bitter and lacked the discipline to restrain himself, so his family

broke apart. It was also the suddenness. He died in a truck accident—no other vehicles involved, no witnesses. So there were never good answers about what actually happened. But God is there, and He doesn't make mistakes. I've learned you have to go through hard things, see hard things, before you know just how good God is.

EVANS: In 1982, you also experienced the suddenness of a Mid-western tornado. How does it feel to physically lose everything?

BUNTON: God was so good. I didn't lose everything. One person was killed that day, but my husband Lee and my son Rodney, were spared. Oh my, I could have lost them! They heard it coming and ran into the garage where the door to the basement was. Just as they went into the basement, the twister blew the garage away, then the house. It also took three barns, most of our machinery, and the trees. That's one thing I learned. God can pull up a tree like I pull up a weed. I also learned He can take one thing but leave another. The kitchen was mostly spared, and even the dishes were not broken. When we rebuilt, we put those cabinets in the new house.

EVANS: How did you deal with that kind of loss?

BUNTON: I was hurt. It was like my parents had whipped me, and I thought, "God, what did I do that you did this to me?" I don't remember going to see the devastation but once. Lee was there every day, and I think he was hurt that I wasn't out there more. But I couldn't dwell on what was lost. We were already building a house here in Liberal. I was wallpapering the new house the day the tornado hit the farm. I was better off getting this house ready and not thinking about the one we had lost. I remember quoting Job: "The Lord gives, the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Tribulation brings understanding, you know.

You also learn that you are not alone, that you need people. Probably 100 different people helped us—neighbors, relatives, even strangers. They moved everything that could be salvaged into shelters or barns then spent days and days picking up debris strewn like salt and pepper over our fields—pieces of buildings, trees, bits of machinery. That was early spring. We could not have planted crops if they had not done that. Our pastor and his wife and my mother-in-law brought food every day for the volunteers. But I think the best thing I learned is that what you think you own is not really yours. It's all on loan from God.

EVANS: Sometimes when things are hard, we let our hearts go after our eyes and trust in physical things or even in other people rather than the Lord. Has that been an issue for you?

BUNTON: Let me say it this way: I've had nothing,

and I've had everything. I'm not attached to things, but I am attached to people. We were poor as dust when I was a child, moved around a lot, then lived with my grandmother. Dad was never good at making a living and didn't believe in government help, but he was a good father. We'd talk, and he was affectionate. I sat on his lap even after I was married. He taught me how to love my family.

When Lee and I married three years after my divorce, I learned how to take care of money. He wouldn't buy anything

I think the best thing I learned is that what you think you own is not really yours. It's all on loan from God.

but land on credit, not even houses. We always talked ahead of time: what to buy, where to put money. We didn't buy what we didn't need. We planned, saved, and looked forward to things. We were thrifty, not stingy. As the Lord blessed us, I began to feel a compulsion to benefit the Lord's work.

EVANS: How did that compulsion begin?

BUNTON: When I got saved at 17, I went to a church that taught tithing, so it started there. Later, God sent me a Christian husband, Lee, and we tithed. Then in the late 1960s, I read *God's Smuggler* by Brother Andrew, and the Lord gave me a compulsion to give that I've never lost. I've run a Christian thrift shop, volunteered at a Christian radio station, and still volunteer at a hospital. We also began to give to our favorite ministries. When Lee died in 2001, I kept giving.

And that's another thing; Lee and I made plans. Everything was in the safe—funeral plans, end of life plans, a living trust. At the end, Lee suffered so much and so long, that when his doctor told me that Lee wanted to die, I said, "Whatever Lee wants, we will do." All our family gathered, and they removed the ventilator. Lee seemed happy, but still couldn't speak. He lived on for maybe ten days. When the Lord took him, we were at peace. It was what he wanted. He was ready; everything was ready. But I still miss him sitting in his favorite chair.

Since then, I've made additional plans, including a gift annuity at Free Will Baptist Foundation. The income helps me with extra things like health insurance, long-term care insurance, things I need from Wal-Mart. When I'm gone, the residue benefits our denomination. My trust also gives some inheritance money to ministry. The compulsion to give just doesn't go away. My granddaughter sings a song called "Sow Mercy." That's what I want to always do, and I know I still have things to learn. **ONE**

About the Writers: Although retired from denominational leadership and teaching English, Bill and Brenda Evans still dabble in the things they've always done: reading, writing, speaking, debating, and enjoying their children and grandchildren. They live in Catlettsburg, Kentucky.

A Good Work

By Ray Lewis

You may just be starting your walk with the Lord, or you may be nearing the end of the journey, it doesn't matter. There's still work to do. Age and physical condition may bring some limitations, but it doesn't matter what stage of life we're in, there is something for us to do.

Mark 14 records the story of a woman identified in Matthew and John as Mary. Her story has been told for generations—the story of her startling action that was both accepted and commended by Christ.

Only a few days before Christ went to the cross, Mary took a jar of precious ointment and poured it on His head. Her actions brought instant criticism, but in verse 6, Jesus stepped in quickly: "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me."

Why did He view this simple act as good? Why did He declare in verse 9, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her"?

The same principles that allowed Jesus to pronounce Mary's action good can help us determine whether our actions are good in His sight or not.

Jesus commended Mary's action because it was performed out of love.

Mary did not anoint the head of Christ because it was required, because she felt it was her duty to do something nice for Him, or because she felt sorry for Him.

Mary understood the announcements about His coming death and resurrection and used the ointment to prepare His body for burial. She knew the cross was at hand, and she wanted to show her love to Jesus while she could. She knew that very soon she would not be able to do anything else for Him.

Her actions became a lasting memorial to her because she served with the right motive—a heart filled with love. Jesus saw

her action and pronounced it good.

What we do for Christ is good also, when done out of love. The Lord understands why we do the things we do, and He judges the motivation behind why we do them. We should not serve Him out of duty but out of love.

Jesus commended Mary's action because sacrifice was involved.

Mary did not give out of her abundance but sacrificially. The ointment was precious and expensive. It was valued at approximately three hundred denarii, enough to pay a laborer to work for a full year.

Mary broke open the box of precious ointment and poured it on the head of Jesus. It is significant that the Bible says she broke it. She determined to serve Christ with 100%. She kept back nothing for herself. In breaking it, she had to use it all.

What does it mean for us to sacrifice for Christ? It means we are willing to give up everything that belongs to us for the sake of Christ. It is being willing to sacrifice time, money, or anything else required to make the name of Christ known.

Too many Christians today do not sacrifice. They might give of their excess, but they do not give of their essentials or treasures. Mary gave her best to Jesus. She knew God wanted her best and her all, and that is what she gave. This is what God wants from each of us as well—our very best, our all.

Our actions are good in the eyes of God when we sacrifice to get the job done.

Jesus commended Mary's action because she did not expect a reward.

Verse 3 says, "She broke the box and poured it on His head." Mary did not expect anything in return for what she did. Nowhere did she say, "I will anoint Jesus, and He will bless me

or do something for me in return.” No, with great humility she walked over to Christ, anointed his head, and expected nothing in return.

When a jar of liquid is broken, it’s virtually impossible to control the flow. You cannot save what is poured out. It is spent. You cannot get it back. Mary gave all she could give with no thought of getting anything in return. She broke the alabaster box, to give all of it, not keeping any for herself.

Christians are exhorted to give their all to Christ “not for reward” but because it is the right thing to do. God will reward us for doing right but that should never be our motivation. We are to serve God because he is our God, and we love him.

What motivates you to action? Do you ask, “What’s in it for me?” Are you expecting something in return? When you sing a special, give a gift, or help somebody in need, do you expect to be rewarded? Do you expect the recipients to sing your praises



and if they don’t, do you draw back and say, “nobody appreciates me for what I do.”

Our actions are good in God’s sight when we do them without expecting to be rewarded. We realize Jesus has done enough by going to the cross for us.

Jesus commended Mary’s deed because she didn’t let criticism stop her from completing her task.

The disciples rebuked Mary harshly for what they saw as a waste. This did not stop her from doing what was good. Their words did not matter to her. Honoring Christ was her objective.

When we do anything worthwhile for the Lord, the devil is going to attack us. He sometimes uses people within our own church, family, or friends to find fault, criticize, reject us, turn others against us, or cause some other form of dissension within the family of God.

How should we react when we are attacked? Mary set a great example for us. She remained quiet and let Jesus defend her. I like that. Jesus rebuked her critics just as harshly as they criticized her. You see, He knew her heart, and He understood why she was doing this for Him. When our motives are pure and we are right, we should remember that God is still in control. He is our defender.

When we are in the will of God, performing deeds that are good and pleasing, criticism will come. We must remember that it is good in the sight of God for saints to continue in spite of criticism. Don’t let criticism stop you.

Finally, Jesus commends Mary’s action because, according to His own words, “She hath done what she could.”

I can think of no higher tribute. This woman didn’t have much, but she gave everything she had to Jesus.

God never asks us to do more than we can, but He does expect us to do all we can. After all, Christ did all He could for us. When God looks at our actions, can He say we have done a good thing for Him? He can...if we act out of love, if we are willing to sacrifice, if we do not expect a reward, if we continue in the face of criticism, and if we have done all we can. **ONE**

About the Writer: Ray Lewis joined the Board of Retirement in 1982. He became director in 2005 after serving for several years as assistant director.

Intersect >>

From Rebellion to REVERENCE

Appear before the Queen of England and you'll quickly discover a clear list of dos and don'ts.

For instance, you stand when she enters the room. You don't speak unless first spoken to. If spoken to, you address her in a manner worthy of Her Majesty. You don't initiate physical contact. If she deems your hand fit to shake, your handshake should be brief. You even dress in a particular fashion, depending upon the occasion. Appearing before the Queen is serious business, because she deserves reverence. How much more is this true of the King of Kings (Revelation 19:16)? This begs the question: how do we express to God the reverence due His name?

DEFINITION and PRINCIPLES

Ask three people to define reverence, and chances are you'll get three different answers. I did. One pointed to the natural wonders of the created order, another to the amazing miracle of birth, and yet another to corporate worship. When we look to Scripture, we find that reverence refers to a godly fear that acknowledges God as God in every aspect of life.

Reverence concerns our disposition before God. It pertains to the quality of our character, lived day-in and day-out. It functions as a filter through which we approach all of life. And it inspires a conscientious walk that results in a life-encompassing outlook of admiration, awe, honor, praise, respect, wonder, and worship for God.

How does this affect the way we approach God? Do we approach Him as we would our best friend, the Queen of England, or somewhere in between? Referring again to our definition, in answering these questions, we acknowledge God as God. And to do this, we must know something of His character.



God is holy. In the beginning, perfect reverence characterized sinless man's disposition before God. However, mankind exchanged reverence for rebellion (sin). Because God is holy, He judges sin. And as sin spread to all and hence judgment (Romans 2:12; 5:12), the prospect of appearing before God was no longer a happy one. In fact, it was quite terrible! It is no wonder that men like Moses, Job, Solomon, and Isaiah approached God in near-silent awe, fear, and wonder (Exodus 3; Job 38-42; Ecclesiastes 5; Isaiah 6). However, from God's holiness flows another characteristic.

God is love. Although God judges sin, He provides an escape from its punishment through Jesus Christ, in whom believers may appear before God's throne with boldness (Hebrews 4:16; 1 John 4:16-19). This is good news.

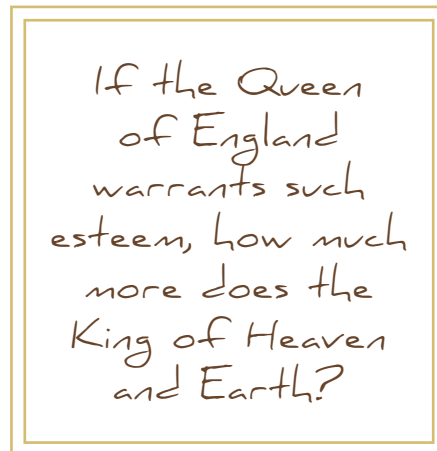
This narrative tells us much concerning God's character. As He sanctifies us in Christ through the Spirit, we'll increasingly reflect His character of holiness and love as we're transformed from youthful rebellion to mature reverence. Thus, we don't approach God with carelessness or flippancy, but with careful, joyous reverence worthy of our King. The apostle John's example is instructive: when faced with the risen Christ, he falls at His feet in holy reverence (Revelation 1:17).

APPLICATIONS

In the context of our personal lives, we learn reverence from God's Word (Deuteronomy 17:19-20) and through prayer (Psalms 86:11). The simplest things are often the most important. In Scripture, we see people express reverence most clearly by bowing prostrate (Genesis 18:2; 2 Samuel 9:6). Whether we do this literally or figuratively, we too

should exercise humble reverence as we read the Bible and pray, eagerly anticipating God's instruction.

In the context of church, reverence means honor. If the examples of Moses, Job, Solomon, Isaiah, and John are any indication, we should not enter our times of worship in a fantastic hubbub as we might a coffee shop, but with an attitude of solemn reverence befitting a King. In addition, we do so in an honest, transparent fashion, forsaking any pretense. From our heart and mind's condition and our physical appearance to the way we sing and preach, reverence should impact everything (Exodus 14:31; Deuteronomy 31:12-13; Psalm 2:11; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 19:5).



In the context of society, reverence means countercultural obedience. Rather than asking, "Is this sinful?" we ask, "Is this best?" Solomon's conclusion in Ecclesiastes is instructive. In a book about a man who tries everything under the sun to satisfy his soul, Solomon concludes by encouraging his readers to revere God and obey His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Admittedly, such obedience is difficult, but it is the way of Scripture.

Noah's story provides another example. When God instructs him to build an ark because a flood is coming, he does so. But with no apparent access to water, onlookers probably mocked him (2 Peter 2:5; 3:3-7). In the face of such ridicule, Noah counter-culturally obeyed God in reverence (Hebrews 11:7).

Such obedience should also characterize our lives. The world will ridicule us. Sadly, so will other Christians at times—calling us names, telling us to loosen up, and talking about us behind our backs. Such is the cost of reverent, countercultural obedience. To some extent, Jesus even warned us about these prospects (John 15:18; 1 John 3:13).

Are we serious about holy living? Is our life's trajectory moving from rebellion to reverence? How is this reflected in our choice of clothing, entertainment, language, and worship? We should be careful to avoid participating in irreverent behavior, or even shrugging it off, especially with fellow Christians. To do so reveres the gods of self or tolerance over the God of the universe. Instead, we should allow His perfect, pure Word to shape our every sensibility.

CONCLUSION

If the Queen of England warrants such esteem, how much more does the King of Heaven and Earth? In the context of our personal lives, the church, and society, the Bible invites us to take a serious look at its teachings on reverence. It challenges us to practice a godly fear that acknowledges God as God in all aspects of life. Indeed, it promises to take us to new horizons. **ONE**

*Adapted from an article that first appeared in **The Brink** magazine (Fall 2013).*

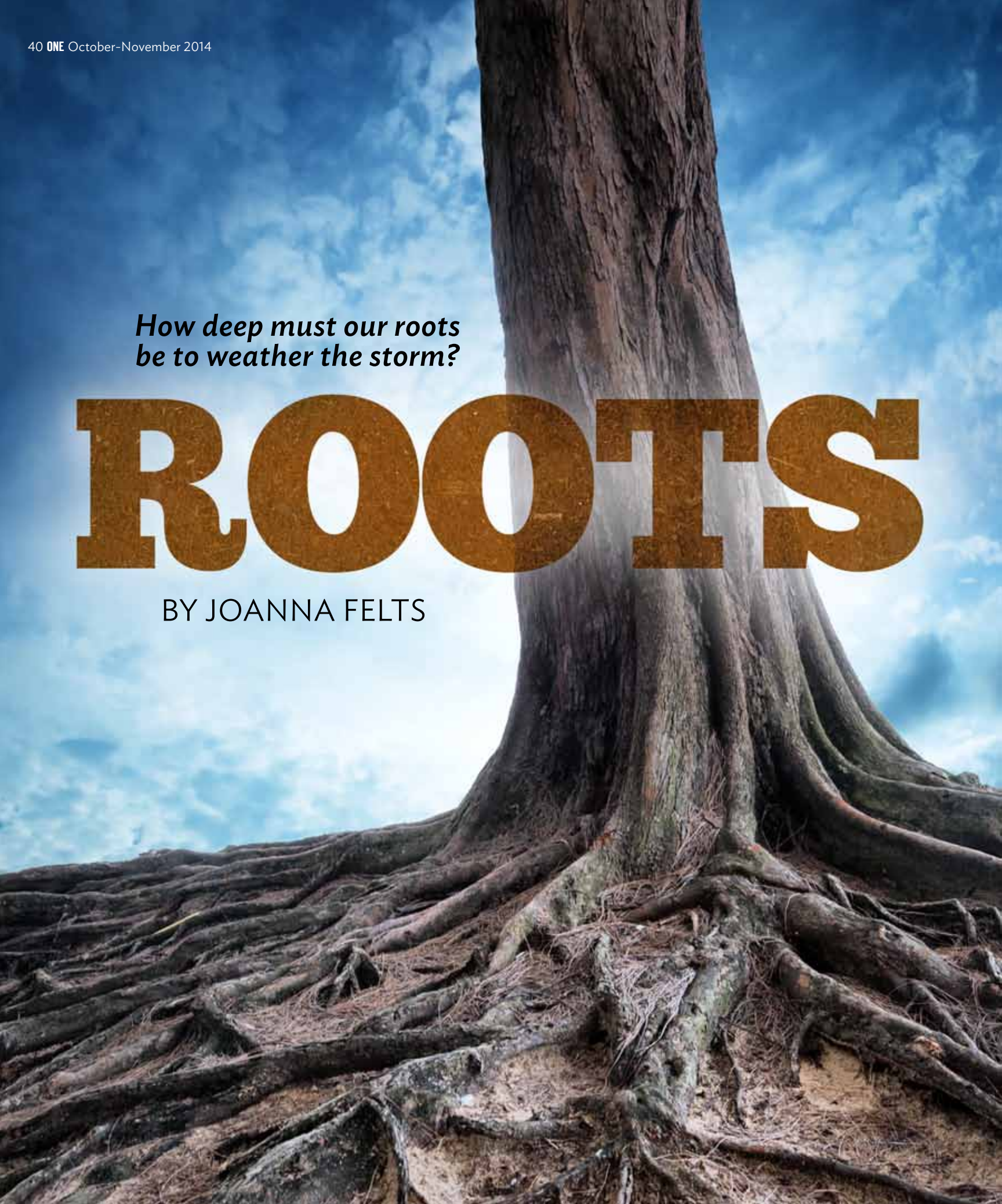
Intersect: where the Bible meets life is a regular column of *ONE Magazine*.

About the Writer: Matthew Bracey and his wife Sarah live in Mount Juliet, Tennessee. Matt works at Welch College, where he serves as Registrar and member of the faculty, teaching courses in history, law, and theology. He holds degrees from Cumberland School of Law (J.D.), Beeson Divinity School (M.T.S.), and Welch College (B.A., History, Biblical Studies).

*How deep must our roots
be to weather the storm?*

ROOTS

BY JOANNA FELTS



What happens when we look into the storm and can't feel our roots or see the fruit that should be the product of roots grown deep and years of growth and ministry?

In Psalm 27, David wrote, “The LORD is my light and my salvation...of whom shall I be afraid?” And why should we be afraid? God has promised to be with us, to be our rock, our fortress, our comfort in times of trouble. Yet, when the storm is raging and we can't feel the roots or see the limbs, we still face the age-old question.

Going Below the Surface

I've asked myself many times over the past few years where I would be spiritually if my roots had not been cultivated and nourished in years prior. If I had never seen any fruit from my growth and ministry, I would have become discouraged and questioned my faith even more deeply than I have already done. The depression that caused me to sit and stare at walls and cry for months on end would have completely overwhelmed me. The complete and total lack of ability to carry on my ministry for several months would have turned into years.

A deeply rooted tree nourished by years of rain and care and sunlight grows well and strong. But when drought comes, growth slows and anything extra drops away; branches that were weak may die or be stunted while the tree puts itself in a protective mode. The tree may not do its best growing during that time; but because of its well-watered and well-lit heritage, it holds on until the rain comes again.

Deeper Still

Deep roots are a product of not just one discipline in our lives but of many. Do we spend time in the Word? Do we spend time praying? Do we spend time with God's people around His Word? These are the questions each of us asks when we talk about growing deep and growing strong. The problem is, these are only the surface questions.

What do the answers reveal about us? “Yes, I spent time in the Word this morning, but I didn't reflect on it at all during my day.”

“No, I didn't remember to pray without ceasing.”

“No, I avoided an encounter with my Christian friend because I didn't want her to ask me any hard questions.”

It's not just about what we do on the surface. We are bombarded every day with all kinds of media. If I remembered everything I saw, read, or heard during each day, my headaches would be more frequent and nauseating. So I've learned to filter. But am I filtering the right things? Do I let God's Word permeate, or do I treat it as one of those media messages I can ignore? Spending time in God's Word means when we get up from the time

spent there, we take what we heard, learned, and read with us. We meditate on it, memorize it, and plant it within our hearts.


Praying about a situation means that we continue in prayer and intercession about the circumstance that led us to pray in the beginning. We pray without ceasing. We persist boldly at the throne of grace, humbly pleading with God to intercede on our behalf and in the lives of those around us. This doesn't indicate a lack of faith but an authentic faith. This is the kind of faith that knows the God to whom we are praying can and will answer prayer. Yes, we give the burden over, but we keep praying.

The Fellowship Factor

Study and fellowship with other Christians shows we understand that God has put people in our lives for a reason. They speak into our lives in a way that is meaningful, and yes, sometimes even a little annoying. But these people draw our eyes to God who is our fortress, our tower, and our strength.

Are my roots deep enough? No, they definitely are not. I am still learning this from experience. Roots are never deep enough to stop doing nurturing them. Satan doesn't intend to stop throwing things at us until we stop trying to resist, and he wins. In these times of our lives, the question is not, “Are my roots growing as fast and as strong as they have in the past?” but “Are my roots still growing at all?”

And so we read further in Psalm 27: “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, lord, will I seek.” We continue to study—more deeply than before because we are still in the storm, meditating, fighting the temptation to walk away from God's Word. We continue in prayer—interceding and coming boldly before God with “groanings” that cannot be expressed in words, in addition to the needs and desires we do know how to put into words. And we continue in fellowship around God's Word—letting others speak into our lives because He is with them also.

God is pleading with us, “Come, talk with me; spend time with me; hear my Word; listen to my voice; seek my face.” Can we say, “Yes Lord, I am coming; I will seek Your face?” 

At Welch College >>

120 Students Make President's/Provost's Lists

The Spring 2014 semester at Welch College ended with 120 students earning academic recognition, according to Provost Greg Ketteman. Twenty-eight students made all A's and were placed on the President's List: six seniors, eleven juniors, eight sophomores, and three freshmen. Ninety-two students earned a B average or higher and were placed on the Provost's List: 16 seniors, 23 juniors, 30 sophomores, and 23 freshmen.

President's List: "A" Honor Roll

Barthelemy, Kaleigh (So.) GA
Brown, Charity (Sr.) TN
Brown, Reese (Jr.) TN
Cominskie, Derek (Jr.) VA
Congleton, Jacy (Jr.) NC
Conley, Jason (Fr.) TN
Dell, David (Jr.) VA
Douglas, Bethany (Sr.) TN

Grimsely, Anna (So.) GA
Henley, Lindsey (So.) TN
Hill, Elizabeth (Jr.) VA
Hollis, Michael (So.) NC
Lewis, Casey (Jr.) NC
Nelson, Melissa (Sr.) NC
Outlaw, Carson (Fr.) TN
Parrish, Emily (Jr.) NC

Riggs, Laura (Jr.) MI
Sample, Kayla (Sr.) IL
Scott, Benjamin (Fr.) TN
Sexton, Leah (So.) GA
Smith, Candice (Jr.) NB, Canada
Thomas, Larissa (So.) AR
Trotter, Audrey (Sr.) TN
Tucker, Gregory (Jr.) TN

Tuttobene, Cherish (So.) TN
Tuttobene, Jeannine (So.) TN
Wilkerson, Reid (Jr.) TN
Williams, Samantha (Sr.) AR

Provost's List: "B" Honor Roll

SENIORS

Bell, Victoria (NC)
Cloninger, John (TN)
Coker, Daniel (TN)
Coker, Taylor (TN)
Colvin, Nathan (TN)
Cyrus, Andrew (TN)
Deel, Austin (TN)
Easley, Phillip (MO)
Forlines, Joel (TN)
Fry, Katherine (TN)
Hutchinson, Tim (MI)
Manning, Jake (NC)
Montero, Julie (FL)
Mouser, Matthew (TN)
Pugh, Daniel (TN)
Truett, Cody (FL)

JUNIORS

Alexander, Loren (AR)
Bozeman, Stephen (GA)
Brimer, Nathaniel (VA)
Dunbar, Joshua (AR)
Fondren, Brooke (MS)
Greer, Taylor (VA)
Jackson, Matthew (TN)
Jenkins, Lesley (TN)
Lindsay, Deandra (TN)
Lute, Derreck (OH)
Mouser, Amanda (TN)
Nelson, Kelsey (NC)
Newland, John (TN)
Petty, Maria (IL)
Reeves, David (KY)
Snow, Elizabeth (TN)
Stox, Kevin (NC)
Taylor, Sean (VA)
Trimble, Alyssa (CA)
Trussel, Kristin (FL)
Walker, Brittany (FL)
Walters, Dustin (MS)
Zuniga, Zuri (AR)

SOPHOMORES

Campbell, Anna (TN)
Clarke, Staci (TN)
Driggers, Camille (SC)
Driggers, Hannah (SC)
Droll, Morgan (IL)
Dunham, Hanna (OH)
Ford, Celeste (TN)
Forlines, Jared (TN)
Foust, Corey (TN)
Freeman, Shelby (VA)
Hampton, Rachel (TN)
Holdon, Trevor (AR)
Marable, Albert (TN)
Martin, Joshua (NC)
McDonald, Amy (TN)
Melvin, Jessica (TN)
Merkh, Caroline (TN)
Milling, Caleb (TN)
Morgan, Rebekah (TN)
Nichols, Leslie (TN)
Norris, Tyler (AL)
Owen, Melissa (GA)
Pate, Chris (TN)
Pope, Eric (NC)
Sample, Hunter (IL)
Skaggs, Hannah (KY)
Stonerock, Paula (OH)
Thorton, William (TN)
Thrasher, Emily (MI)
Vickery, Zachary (AL)

FRESHMEN

Blades, Autumn (TN)
Blake, Allison (TN)
Carey, Christian (OK)
Chandler, Jordan (TN)
Coleman, Nicholas (AR)
Crawford, Alexander (AR)
Dell, Daniel (VA)
Ferguson, Joslin (TN)
Forlines, Anna (TN)
Gedeon, Matthew (TN)
Guzman, Damaris (WV)
James, Megan (TN)
Johnson, Ashton (OK)
Kim, Daeun (TN)
Kimbrel, Kayla (SC)
Madden, Dakota (AL)
Montgomery, Caleb (AL)
Parrish, Ellen (NC)
Persinger, Travis (IN)
Romain, Akelam (USVI)
Saunders, Matthew (TN)
Strickland, Lauren (NC)
Walker, Hope (IL) ■

Lockert to Head Flames Volleyball Program



Ashley Lockert has been named Welch College head volleyball coach, according to Athletic Director Gary Turner. Lockert is a 2007 Welch College graduate and one of only a few volleyball players to compete all four years as a member of the Flames.

As a student at Welch, in addition to volleyball, Lockert was involved in several areas of campus life. She was a student council representative, Charlotte Bronte society events coordinator, assistant director of Musicals, and Concert Choir president.

Lockert has two things critical for success—a love of volleyball and a love for Welch College. She is determined to come in and advance the program.

“I love volleyball,” Lockert stated. “Being able to return to my alma mater in this new position is very exciting. I am truly honored and humbled by the opportunity.”

“I am looking forward to working with Coach Lockert,” said Gary Turner. “Her enthusiasm and knowledge of the sport will definitely continue moving our program in the right direction.”

Lockert is currently a legal assistant/paralegal at Feeney & Murray, P.C. She enjoys spending time with her family as well as musical theatre with the Cheatham County Community Theatre.

Ashley is married to Will Lockert, and they have two sons—Liam and Loghan. They attend Bethlehem FWB Church in Ashland City, Tennessee, where they are youth leaders and Ashley teaches preschool children’s church. ■

Noel Levitz Survey Gives Welch College High Marks

The nationwide Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory conducted among national, four-year colleges ranked Welch College above the national averages in all but 6 of 45 measures of student satisfaction, according to President Matt Pinson. Some 88% of Welch students report that the college met their expectations for a college experience, with 67% reporting that the college exceeded their expectations (compared to 84% and 53% respectively at national, four-year colleges).

Dr. Pinson said, “The areas where we received the highest marks in comparison to other private colleges are the areas we emphasize that distinguish Welch from other colleges and universities. These traits make our campus attractive to students and parents who desire excellent academics combined with a deep, personalized investment in the spiritual and academic life of each individual student.”

Asked if they were likely to enroll again if they had it to do over, 87% of Welch students surveyed responded *yes* (compared to 73% of students at other national, four-year colleges).

The 10 areas where Welch received the highest marks when compared to other colleges and universities that participated in the survey were as follows:

1. *Caring and helpful campus staff*
2. *Students made to feel welcome*
3. *Excellent personal academic advising*
4. *Excellent instruction in classes*
5. *Convenient registration*
6. *Administrators available to hear students’ concerns*
7. *Adequate library services*
8. *Fair and unbiased faculty in their treatment of individual students*
9. *Availability of sufficient courses in major*
10. *Residence hall staff concerned about me as an individual*

Noel-Levitz[®]

Provost Greg Kettelman said, “We are always eager to participate in nationwide surveys like the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, because it gives us a chance to see how Welch College compares with other four-year private colleges. This survey confirms just what we thought about Welch—the vast majority of our students believe they are getting what they came here to find, and our denominational constituency can be assured that Welch College is a name they can trust with tomorrow and with their children.”

“We are very pleased with the outcome of the survey,” President Pinson said. “There is a renewed sense of excitement on the campus of Welch College, and we believe the high marks on this survey, as well as the increase in dorm student enrollment, are a testament to this.” ■

Serving God Is...

MORE FUN THAN BARNEY FIFE WITH TWO BULLETS

BY WAYNE SPRUILL

Commencement exercises at Welch College took place this year on May 9. By 1:00 p.m., both graduation and President Matt Pinson's annual End-of-Year meeting with the Welch College faculty and staff were over. As we left the cafeteria where the meeting was held, we greeted a student's mother as she closed the hatch of a very full SUV. My wife Brenda asked if everything was packed, and, with one of those motherly "grins," the visitor explained that this was the third vehicle they had loaded with her daughter's belongings.

A few hours passed, and I watched as car after packed car left campus with only enough room for the driver. I recalled a similar trip in the spring of 1970 when Larry Swain and I packed my MG 1100 (four-seater) with barely enough room for Larry in the passenger seat. The Virginia State Trooper who pulled us over as we passed through a school zone made me prove I could see out of the back window. He simply said, "It's obvious what you're doing. Just be safe and get home." You could say I felt for these students as I watched them make creative use of every bit of open space in their vehicles.

After visiting around campus saying goodbyes and wishing students well, I returned to my office and was informed that Tim Jordan from Alabama was looking for me. I went to search the campus. If you know Tim, standing 6 feet, 6

inches, you know that he was not hard to find.

Tim, the ever-busy Master's Man, and sidekick Eric Thomas had been sent by the Master's Men of First FWB Church in Dothan, Alabama, to pull the Disaster Relief trailer to Nashville. In Tim's own words, the purpose of the trip was prompted by the desire to "Make it a joy to send a student to Welch College." To their great delight, students from southern Alabama and Georgia were able to load their belongings in the trailer and avoid the dreaded crowded-car syndrome. One of those very thankful students had this to say:

"I am beyond grateful that Mr. Jordan came all the way to Nashville with his giant trailer to help us pack up our dorm room and carry it home. There is no way I could have fit all my stuff in my car, so it was very helpful. He was also the best



traveling companion we could have asked for. His witty humor made the long trip very enjoyable. His kind service was a pleasure to us all!" —Anna Grimsley, Colquitt, Georgia

According to Billy who has just completed his freshman year, this mission was a blessing in more ways than one:

"I am very thankful for Brother Tim Jordan and his willingness to serve and sacrifice in order to help a few college kids out in a great way. Never once, through the process of his coming and us



going back home, did I get the impression that he was doing what he did out of obligation. And never once did he even present me with the option of paying for myself on the trek home. There is no doubt in my mind that he pulled that big red Master's Men trailer from Southeast Alabama to Nashville and back because he wanted to, and, whether he realized it or not, it was a tremendous help and relief to me and my family.

Since I did not have a car at school, my parents were originally my only means of bringing my belongings home. This would have worked, but not without difficulty. My dad is self-employed and does all the work himself, which would have meant him losing a

day of work in order to get me and my possessions back to Alabama. When I think of Brother Tim, I think of someone who understands what it means to be a friend and neighbor." —Billy Champion, Newton, Alabama

Having just observed other students and parents with those nearly bursting cars and SUVs, I thought this was a great idea. In a conversation with the students, I discovered that the caravan stopped for breakfast and lunch, and, of course, Brother Tim would not allow the students to pay for their meals, because the men from First FWB Church, Dothan had it covered.

And it wasn't just the students who were blessed. According to Tim, he and

Eric "had more fun than Barney Fife with two bullets." On behalf of the college and the students who were helped: A big *thank you* goes out to the Master's Men of Dothan, Alabama, and all the other chapters who do a great work for our Lord and denomination.

Perhaps you have an idea to assist students at Welch College both during the year and as they travel to and from college. Many students are away from home and family for the first time. Encouragement and support from caring Free Will Baptists goes a long way. If you have an "out of the box" idea, please share it and be the blessing that our Lord would have you to be. **ONE**

About the writer: Wayne Spruill, AKA, "The Rolling Deacon" is director of institutional research at Welch College, where he and his wife Brenda have served for the past ten years. As a member of the Master's Men Board from 1975-1987, Wayne has had many years of friendship with Tim Jordan and other men who offer a helping hand when needed.



A CASE AGAINST TOBACCO

By Paul V. Harrison

FOR DECADES, THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY HAS BEEN LARGELY SILENT REGARDING THE SIN OF GROWING AND USING TOBACCO. Supporting this industry is sinful, because Scripture teaches that our bodies are the temple of God's Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), the apex of His creation (Genesis 1:28), and tobacco defaces and destroys that temple. In earlier days, Christians could claim ignorance, but for a long time now we have known the deadly effects of smoking. Silence has largely been our response.

Though we don't hear it on the nightly news, over 1,300 Americans die from tobacco use every day—nearly a half million each year. Numbered among these are approximately 50,000 who die as a result of secondhand smoke. Stanford professor Robert Proctor calculates around 100 million tobacco-related deaths worldwide in the 20th century. This century, we are on track to reach a billion.¹ Globally, tobacco kills far more people than bullets.

In earlier times, such conclusions were disputed. Now, however, even the industry admits the devastating facts. One major cigarette manufacturer website states: "Philip Morris USA agrees with the overwhelming medical and scientific consensus that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other serious diseases in smokers."

In the face of such facts, why do about 25% of American adults continue to smoke? Horace Greeley, founding editor of the *New York Tribune*, said it's because cigarettes have "a fire at one end and a fool at the other." The answer, however, is more complicated.

WHO KNEW WHAT AND WHEN?

Health concerns about tobacco have existed for centuries. As early as 1799, South Carolina medical doctor Edward Brailsford referred to tobacco's "noxious powers," and when Ulysses S. Grant died of throat cancer in 1885, many blamed it on his love for cigars.² Scientific evidence linking tobacco and disease, however, didn't come until around the 20th century. Argentinian doctor Angel Roffo reported in 1936: "Tobacco causes cancer; of that there can be no doubt."

Research indicated a smoker could inhale 4 kilograms (about 1 gallon) of tar in ten years of smoking.³ Studies revealed light smokers were eight times more likely and heavy smokers 40 times more likely than nonsmokers to contract lung cancer. By the 1950s, evidence that smoking posed serious health risks became insurmountable, prompting the infamous *Reader's Digest* article, "Cancer by the Carton."

Tobacco industry leaders, well aware of this information, had been doing their own experiments for decades. Philip Morris research director Helmut Wakeham wrote in a 1961 internal report: "Carcinogens are found in practically every class of compound of smoke."⁴ Tobacco leaders discovered that smoking delivers a one-two punch: smoke carries multiple cancer-causing agents into the lungs, and the tar gums up the small hair-like cilia in lungs, keeping them from sweeping out foreign contaminants. Tobacco manufacturers were peddling death, and by the 1950s they knew it.

DEFENDING DEATH

For years, the industry fought suspicions about health concerns by producing TV commercials like the one stating: "In a repeated national survey, doctors . . . were asked, 'What cigarette do you smoke, Doctor?' Once again, the brand named most was Camel. . . . More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette."

The situation had changed, however. Cigarette manufacturers now knew their product, when used according to design, killed people. What they did is shocking.

Systematically, they hired their own experts—usually university professors and doctors—to present their own spin on tobacco. When scared customers wrote tobacco companies about health concerns, officials suggested they contact doctors at the Medical College of Virginia. Little did customers know that those doctors were on the tobacco payroll.⁵

In 1964, the first Surgeon General's report on smoking turned up the heat. Shortly thereafter, George Weissman, director of marketing for Philip Morris, wrote to his boss: "We must in the near future provide some answers which will give smokers a psychological crutch and a self-rationale to continue smoking."⁶

Filters were one such crutch. In 1950, filtered cigarettes made up less than 1% of the market. By the end of the decade, their share was over 50%, and now, nearly all cigarettes have filters. Unfortunately, filters don't work, and the industry has known this since the 1940s. The Liggett Company's research chief Frederick Darkis noted in 1952 that "the filters in use at present do not really take anything out of the cigarette."⁷ Filters persist today for three main reasons: the filter costs less to produce than tobacco; it keeps bits of tobacco from getting into the smoker's mouth; and it provides the illusion of lowering health risks.⁸

Other crutches were "light" and "low tar" cigarettes. These "misleading product descriptors" make smoking sound safer, but such products are no less deadly than regular cigarettes.⁹ Such tobacco industry deceptions led the Surgeon General to report in 2014 that manufacturers "deliberately misled the public about the risks of smoking cigarettes."

MANIPULATING CUSTOMERS

Nicotine, a stimulant, elicits an

almost instantaneous response, firing up the brain's pleasure center and resulting in an increased heart rate of about 10 to 25 beats per minute and a rise in blood pressure.¹⁰ Tobacco's addictive power has long been recognized. Christopher Columbus wrote of his pipe-smoking sailors: "It was not within their power to refrain from indulging in the habit," and King James (of Bible fame) wrote: "He that taketh tobacco cannot leave it, it doth bewitch." One wit stated: "Quitting is easy—so easy I've done it a thousand times."¹¹

Though nicotine is inherently addictive, the cigarette industry has taken strategic steps to increase the likelihood of addiction. First, they manipulate nicotine content in tobacco, adjusting it to the right level to keep smokers coming back. Testing the market, they once produced virtually nicotine-free cigarettes (e.g., Vanguard and Bravo), but these brands failed because people didn't become addicted.¹²

They also tweaked the curing process, making smoke easier to inhale. Smoke from cigarettes, like that of cigars, used to be too harsh to inhale with pleasure. Smokers would draw smoke into their mouth, and the nicotine would be absorbed by the mouth's lining. Since lungs absorb nicotine more efficiently, manufacturers altered their product to encourage inhalation, increasing both their profits and the fatalities from smoking.

OUR VULNERABLE YOUTH

Advertising has played a major role in the popularity of smoking, with the industry investing about \$250 billion between 1940 and 2005.¹³ In the 1950s, Philip Morris sponsored TV's number one show, *I Love Lucy*. In the '60s, cigarette manufacturers sponsored 45% of all U.S. TV shows. When banned from TV advertising in 1971, they adjusted their strategy by paying Hollywood stars to smoke in the actual movies themselves. Sylvester Stallone pulled in \$500,000 in

the 1980s for featuring cigarettes in his movies. Rocky not only boxed, he also smoked. In *Superman*, Lois Lane puffed away on Marlboros.¹⁴

This advertising especially impacts young people. Google most celebrities, and you'll find pictures of them smoking. Even children's movies haven't been immune to tobacco advertising, with smoking featured in the *Bad News Bears* and the *Muppet Movie*. Some scholars say half of all new smokers start from seeing Hollywood icons smoke on screen.¹⁵ Ninety percent of six-year-olds were able to link cartoon-like Joe Camel to cigarettes.¹⁶

The industry views adolescents as their harvest field. Almost 30% of smokers tried their first cigarette by age 13,

42% by 14, 58% by 15, and 96% of smokers take up the habit before age 22.¹⁷ Even when legally forced to discourage youth from smoking, marketers strategically depicted smoking as an adult decision, like sex and drinking.

Dollars drive the industry. Producers make a penny per cigarette, which doesn't sound like much until you realize they produce 6 trillion a year. Tobacco stock has done well, and \$10,000 invested in Philip Morris in 1958 is now worth about \$50 million.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

With these grim statistics in mind, Christians must have only one response. They should separate themselves com-

pletely from the tobacco industry. Smokers should quit. Growers should change crops. One Free Will Baptist farmer I interviewed grew and sold tobacco nearly his entire life, justifying it on the basis that "the positives always outweighed the negatives." He was clearly counting dollars, not lives. A stinging conscience got the better of him, and he quit.¹⁸

A North Carolina farmer said: "Tobacco pays my bills, but it kills people. It is bad for smokers, but it is good for me and mine. . . . I know, it's a legal product and an individual choice. . . . That's what all of us farmers say. If you smoke, sip liquor, it's up to you. But it still nags at me."¹⁹

Ricky Flint is another farmer who repented: "I think I always had this deep



(Endnotes)

1 Robert N. Proctor, *Golden Holocaust: Origins of the Cigarette Catastrophe and the Case for Abolition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 549.

2 Edward Brailsford, *An Experimental Dissertation on the Chemical and Medical Properties of the Nicotiana Tabacum of Linnaeus, Commonly Known by the Name of Tobacco* (Philadelphia, PA: Printed by John Ormrod, 1799), 33; and Proctor, 225.

3 Proctor, 155–56.

4 From the Legacy Tobacco Documents Library, found online at <http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu>. The result of recent litigation, this site houses more than 80 million pages of tobacco industry documents, many of which are marked Confidential.

5 Proctor, 187ff.

6 From the Legacy Tobacco Documents Library.

7 Proctor, 355–56.

8 Proctor, 355.

9 Peter Benson, *Tobacco Capitalism: Growers, Migrant Workers, and the Changing Face of a Global Industry*, Foreword by Allan M. Brandt (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 45.

10 Richard Kluger, *Ashes to Ashes: America's Hundred-Year Cigarette War, the Public Health, and the Unabashed Triumph of Philip Morris* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 7.

11 Proctor, 391.

12 Proctor, 348–49.

13 NCI Tobacco Control Monograph Series #19: The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use, 3.

14 Proctor, 62–66.

15 Proctor, 66.

16 Abstract of "Brand Logo Recognition by Children Aged 3 to 6 Years: Mickey Mouse and Old Joe Camel," *Journal of the American Medical Association* (December 1991).

17 From the 2014 Surgeon General Report, p. 708, and Michael Rabinoff, *Ending the Tobacco Holocaust* (Santa Rosa, CA: Elite Books, 2006), 83.

18 May 6, 2014, interview. I appreciate this gentleman's opening his heart to me and granting permission to use his comments. His name is withheld at his request.

19 Benson, 140–41.

20 Benson, 141.

21 Benson, 7. I have no way of quantifying the amount given to churches and Christian causes from tobacco money, but it is surely significant. Tithing on ill-gotten gain, of course, does not justify the earnings.

22 Minutes Fifteenth Annual Session of Southwestern Convention of Free Will Baptists Held with Free Will Baptist Church Stratford, Oklahoma, November 22 to 26, 1915 (n.p., n.d.), 7. I offer thanks to Robert Picirilli who helped me find this information.

nagging that it was sinful.” He exchanged tobacco for peanuts, fruits, and vegetables.²⁰

The “it’s an individual choice” excuse simply doesn’t hold up. Getting drunk is also an individual choice, but that doesn’t make it right. The rationalization, “If I don’t grow it, someone else will,” also fails. An abortion doctor could use the same logic. Others say, “Smoking is no worse than overeating or having too many soft drinks or potato chips.” Even if this were true—and it’s not; smoking kills far more people than bad eating habits—one evil behavior is not justified by pointing to other evil behaviors.

Preachers should preach against tobacco: growing it, smoking it, selling

it. Many speak against alcohol but never focus on tobacco. The church needs more John the Baptists who put their necks on the line for the cause of truth. I’m afraid governments allow the manufacture of tobacco because of taxes in much the same way some churches say little against it because of tithes.²¹

Christian denominations should take unequivocal stands against tobacco. Free Will Baptists don’t invest denominational money in tobacco, but we should do more. In 1915, a Temperance Committee report stated: “Realizing that tobacco is a filthy and dangerous narcotic and in any and all forms is injurious to mankind, physically, mentally, morally and perhaps spiritually, we pledge ourselves to discourage its use

in every form.”²² Such a resolution at the national level would be a good step.

Since Free Will Baptist national temperance committees were dissolved in 1965, little has been written on the subject. Searching for articles on tobacco in our national denominational literature returns almost nothing. This hugely important issue deserves to be addressed forthrightly by every Christian denomination. Doing so may be hard, but it’s right. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dr. Paul Harrison served as pastor of Cross Timbers FWB Church in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1991 to 2013. He also served as adjunct professor at Welch College for 17 years, teaching church history and Greek. Paul and his wife Diane have two sons and two granddaughters.

Master’s Men >>

National Golf Tournament Shoots Low



Course in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, and teams finished in record time and enjoyed a Tennessee barbeque lunch, followed by the awards ceremony.

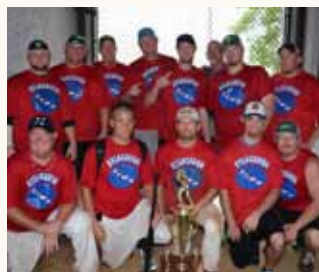
Forty-eight golfers were blessed with good weather and great scores during the 2014 Master’s Men National Golf Tournament August 7. The day began early at Windtree Golf

Thanks to Jerry Atwell, many golfers walked away with golf clubs in addition to a variety of other prizes.

This year’s winners were no strangers to the top spot. Ronnie Dunn and Paul Ballard finished second last year and won in 2012. This year, they led with field with a 12-under par 60. Following close behind were Tom Scott and Les Bowling with a 10-under 62. Tim Baumgarten and Riley Young also scored a 62, but the team dropped to third after a score-card playoff. Other teams with notable scores included Jerry Atwell and Danny Dwyer and Tommy and Cage Ellis, both scoring 9-under 63.

Of the 24 teams, eight finished under par for the day. ■

When It Rains, It Pours



on time, and everything went well.

On Saturday morning, the tournament moved to fields north of Nashville, and players enjoyed cool temperatures as a result of heavy cloud cover. The rain held off until the championship game, but in the sixth inning, the skies opened, and the rain came in sheets. After a

The Master’s Men National Softball Tournament, August 8-9, was anything but normal this year. The event was held a week later due to the timing of the national convention. As a result, fewer teams participated. A scheduling mix up left the tournament on a different field each day. Still, things started

30-minute delay, and with no break in sight, officials called the game.

First FWB Church, Sylacauga, Alabama, finished the weekend with an unblemished record defeating Northridge FWB Church, Dayton, Ohio, for the championship trophy. Calvary Fellowship, Fenton, Missouri, finished third, and Cookeville FWB Church, Cookeville, Tennessee, finished fourth.

“In spite of all the challenges this year,” said Master’s Men Director Ken Akers, “this was one of the best tournaments I’ve been part of. I want to thank everyone for being good sports. Next year, hopefully, we will return to the first week in August, play at one field, have no rain and have a larger number of teams back...but you never know what might happen.” ■



The Interim Pastor

BY ROY W. HARRIS

After serving as pastor of four full-time churches and also as interim pastor on four different occasions, I would like to offer a few simple suggestions to help local churches, district associations, and state promotional directors develop a plan, profile, and financial package for the position of interim pastor.

Planning for Interim Pastors

Free Will Baptist state promotional directors often receive calls from local churches that need help with the pastoral search. These men sometimes fill pulpits while churches travel down the road to a new pastor. This becomes especially difficult when multiple churches are without pastors at the same time.

I encourage state promotional directors to work in cooperation with their executive committees to locate and approve an appropriate number of ministers willing to serve the churches in their states as interim pastors. Start with one man and add more as needed. This should not involve expense to the state since local churches are responsible for the financial compensation of interim pastors.

District associations can also take the initiative by formally designating ministers within their associations who are willing to serve as interim pastors. Having go-to men who are eager to serve as interim pastors, will make it easier for leaders to connect these ministers to churches in need.

Profiling the Interim Pastors

What type of minister makes a good

interim pastor? Wisdom dictates that these ministers have a minimum of five years pastoral experience and a proven track record. They should be well known and well respected.

Life expectancy continues to rise. This offers a great opportunity for Free Will Baptist churches. Men who have given decades of service to our churches may be willing to give a little more. Retired ministers provide a great choice—maybe even the best choice—for an interim pastor. Most ministers would agree that a man may retire from pastoring, but he never retires from God's call to ministry.

While these godly men may not want or be physically able to assume the full gamut of a pastorate, they may prove to be great help to churches that need them. Sage older pastors have much to offer, and churches can benefit greatly from their wealth of knowledge and experience. Bi-vocational ministers living near the church provide another possibility for an interim pastor.

Whether retired or active in ministry, potential interims should understand up front their role is not to become pastor of the church, but to serve as interim for a specific period of time. This commitment should be made to church, district, or state association leaders and understood clearly by everyone involved.

If the church becomes interested in calling the minister while he serves as interim, and he has an interest in becoming the permanent pastor, he must follow God's direction in the matter. But the interim pastor should not approach the church to suggest being considered as pastor.

The pastor informs the church of his decision to move to another ministry. He will be gone in 30 days, and it is not the first time the church has begun the process of searching for a new pastor. Who will shepherd the flock until the search has been completed?

Pastor resignations often create a vacuum filled by someone or some group within the church. Each church decides its own approach to the process of securing a pastor, but most churches scramble to find someone to fill the pulpit in the meantime.

Churches often look to retired ministers within their membership to fill the pulpit and provide spiritual nourishment. Others look beyond their membership to local ministers willing to step in for a few weeks until the church can complete the pastoral search. Sometimes, a deacon or layman may be pressed into service because the church simply cannot find anyone else. Yet churches have at least one other option: they may select someone to serve as interim pastor until a new pastor can be secured.

A Blueprint for Successful Interim Ministry

State and district associations may provide a simple blueprint as a starting point for discussions between churches and potential interims. This will help both parties be on “the same page” regarding the role, responsibilities, and expectations of both churches and interim pastors.

A specific timeframe should be agreed upon at the outset by the church and potential interim regarding the length of service. Three to six months is a good starting point, with an option to continue beyond the timeframe if such an arrangement is acceptable to both parties. Churches that have recently endured difficult or traumatic situations may want to consider six months or longer with an interim pastor to provide time for healing.

Interim pastors generally are not compensated at the same level as regular or full-time pastors. Therefore, churches should not expect interim pastors to fulfill all the responsibilities of a full-time pastor. Wisdom dictates that churches and interim pastors have a clear understanding of what is expected. This understanding should be clearly stated in writing to avoid any unnecessary confusion.

What should this agreement contain? Consider the following brief outline—a starting point for the discussion between the church and prospective interim.

Interim Pastor Roles and Responsibilities

WORSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- The interim will preach at each Sunday service or ensure the pulpit is filled.
- Honorariums for substitute preachers will be the interim pastor's responsibility.
- The church worship leader will plan the order of service.

- The church will be responsible for selecting songs and arranging for special music.
- The church will be responsible for preparing and printing the church bulletin. (The interim pastor will communicate pertinent information).
- The church will receive the offerings and take care of the announcements.
- The interim pastor will oversee prayer meetings; select, prepare, and lead Bible studies; and use others to lead at his discretion.

MEMBER CARE (since interim pastors sometimes travel long distances)

- Much of personal member care will be done by phone.
- The interim pastor will visit hospitals during major surgeries and crisis times.
- The interim pastor will not be expected to be present for outpatient procedures, tests, non-admittance Emergency Room illnesses, in-office medical procedures, etc.
- Others will share responsibility in case of death or other emergencies when the interim pastor is out of town or has prior responsibilities that make it impossible for him to be present.

VISITATION

- The interim pastor will advise and provide counsel for the visitation program.
- Deacons and church leadership will be responsible for following up on first-time guests.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- The interim pastor will work with and provide direction to church Leadership.
- He will meet with deacons as needed.
- He will meet with trustees as needed.
- He will meet with other groups, committees, boards, etc. as needed.
- He will work with and provide direction to the building committee.*

*Note: It is wise for an interim pastor to communicate through the chairman rather than all committee members individually.

INTERIM PASTOR'S WIFE'S INVOLVEMENT

- Her primary role is supporting the interim pastor.

- Although she may be eager to serve, she should not commit to specific responsibilities until she determines which areas fit her schedule and gifting.
- Her job responsibilities, work hours, and distance to church may impact her ability to attend prayer meeting every week. The church must understand when she cannot be present.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

- The church and interim pastor should decide who is responsible for moderating church business meetings.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The interim pastor has responsibilities beyond the church. He must be allowed to fulfill these obligations in addition to the role of interim pastor.
- The interim pastor will receive a weekly salary in the amount agreed upon by pastor and church. The amount should take into account the distance between the pastor's home and the church.
- The church will supply Sunday lunch for the interim pastor and his family.
- The church will make arrangements for a place for the Interim Pastor and his family to rest and study on Sunday afternoons between Sunday services.
- The church parsonage could be made available for the interim pastor's use on weekends. Note: This can be a great benefit to the church. The Interim Pastor may be able to arrive on Saturdays and leave on Mondays rather than driving long distances on Sundays.

Interim pastors fill a vital role for many churches. He can step in, supply spiritual nourishment, and serve as a leader to help churches through the interim period. Who comes to your mind that would make a great interim pastor? Many great men have much to give. Let's make use of this untapped resource. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dr. Roy Harris is a veteran Free Will Baptist pastor, having pastored churches in North Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. He graduated from Welch College with a B.A. in Pastoral Training and a M.M. He also holds a Ph.D. in Pastoral Ministry from Trinity Theological Seminary.

A New Address for WNAC

By Elizabeth Hodges

On Saturday, June 28, 27 ladies from three home mission churches gathered in Erie, Pennsylvania, to form the WNAC David Marks Heritage Association of Pennsylvania and New York.

Five home mission churches comprise this association. Although schedule conflicts hindered the other two churches from attending, the ladies of Flagship FWB Church hosted the memorable event. Officers were elected and a constitution adopted.

The David Marks Association is comprised of two districts: the David Marks Pennsylvania District and the David Marks New York District. The association will host an annual meeting for the two districts to meet for fellowship. Plans are underway for a retreat meeting in the spring of 2015.

The following officers were elected:

President: Joy Alvis (Erie, PA)

Vice President: Jenna Altom (Greensburg, PA)

Secretary: Michelle Grimes (Erie, PA)

Treasurer: Sylvia Martin (Rochester, NY)

Prayer Chairman: Mandy Miller (Greensburg, PA)

Study Chairman: Marie Drakulic (Erie, PA)

Field Worker South: Pam Jones (Greensburg, PA)

Field Worker North: Jenny Nicholl (Erie, PA)

Unable to attend were Bonnie Freeman (Cranberry, Pennsylvania), Emily Williams and Amanda York (Buffalo, New York). These ladies were “proud moms” on this special day. Their spiritual children are ready to serve.

WNAC supports the home missionaries who diligently worked to plant these five churches in Pennsylvania and New York. Now, the ladies have joined the ranks of WNAC. This is a full circle story. Praise be to God! **ONE**

About the Writer: Elizabeth Hodges is director of Women Nationally Active for Christ. Learn more: www.WNAC.org.



Officers (left to right): Jenny, Pam, Marie, Mandy, Sylvia, Michelle, Jenna, and Joy.



Several home missionary wives were present for this organizational meeting (left to right): Pam Jones and Jenna Altom (Greensburg, PA); Sylvia Martin (Rochester, NY); Michelle Grimes, Marie Drakulic, and Joy Alvis (Erie, PA).

About the Denomination >>

Board of Retirement Announces Director's Retirement, Calls for Resumes

Antioch, TN—The Board of Trustees of the Board of Retirement announces the retirement of Rev. Ray Lewis as President and CEO, effective January 1, 2016. Mr. Lewis has served the department efficiently and faithfully since 1983, as director since 2005. In that time, the program enrolled 2,929 participants, 651 under his direction. Assets have grown from \$2.6 million in 1982 to more than \$57 million today.

Lewis also led the program to develop four investment options based on risk-tolerance and investing needs: 1) the conservative fund for those within five years of retirement; 2) a moderate fund for those within 10 years of retirement; 3) the original default fund; and 4) a maximum fund for younger participants with more than 20 years until retirement.

"As I look back over my time here," Lewis reflected, "I am most proud of the increased level of trust our people have in what we are doing. In 1990, when our earnings rates dropped dramatically, we were swamped with calls from unhappy participants threatening to withdraw funds. But in 2008, when the market crashed and participants lost

30% of their accounts in one year, we only had one negative call. Instead, we received many, many calls and emails of encouragement from plan participants. They had begun to realize that saving for retirement is a long-term discipline. And, by the way, within 18 months, participants had regained everything they lost."

Lewis' quiet, steady leadership has been a valuable asset, according to Danny Baer, Retirement Board chairman, who said, "His work ethic, faithfulness, dedication, and love for our Lord and denomination will be sorely missed."

In light of Mr. Lewis' retirement, the board is accepting resumes. Qualifications include a mature, born-again Free Will Baptist with a minimum of a bachelor's degree—preferably in a business-related field. Additional requirements include extensive financial experience and insight, and the willingness to travel frequently. The director is responsible for oversight of the Board of Retirement office, including almost 2,000 accounts totaling nearly \$60 million.

The director is also charged with promoting and representing the Board of Retirement

at local, state, and national association meetings. Therefore, organizational and public relation skills are a must.



Resumes may be emailed to ray@nafwb.org, or mailed to the Board of Retirement office to the attention of Ray Lewis, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Deadline for resumes is February 28, 2015. ■

2015 Nominees Requested

ANTIOCH, TN—The 2014-2015 Nominating Committee, which will serve through the national convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is prepared to receive nominees for the 2015 convention election, according to Stan Bunch (MO), committee chairman.

The committee will meet Tuesday, December 9, 2014, at the annual Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, to consider nominations and compile

a slate of nominations for each position to be filled. The report will be presented to the delegates at the 2015 convention.

The following board and commission positions will be filled in 2015: Home Missions (3), Board of Retirement (3), Free Will Baptist Foundation (3), Commission for Theological Integrity (1) Historical Commission (1), Media Commission (1), Music Commission (1), General Board (11), Executive

Committee (3), and General Officers (4).

Nominations, accompanied by a brief resume, must be submitted in writing exclusively to the chairman on or before Friday, November 28. **Contact Chairman Stan Bunch:**

Nominating Committee/Stan Bunch
Missouri FWB State Office
PO Box 991
Lebanon, MO 65536
stan@mofwb.org ■

Photo: Mark Cowart



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

ONE to ONE >>

Good News

Statistics indicate that most Christians never attempt to share their faith with an unbeliever. That's not an indictment...its reality. Of course, the reasons for their silence are numerous—fear of rejection, lack of self-confidence, or just too busy, to name a few.

One factor that seems to affect believers who have been followers of Christ for a considerable period of time is lack of contact with unbelievers. Admittedly, in most cases, the longer a person walks with the Lord, the smaller their circle of non-Christian friends. Sad but true.


That's a challenge I face as a denominational worker. Most of my time is spent rubbing shoulders with fellow believers. My opportunity to build meaningful relationships with non-Christians is limited, to say the least.

Last year, my wife and I attended a dinner sponsored by Child Evangelism Fellowship. We listened to reports from their leaders, testimonies of volunteers, and an inspirational challenge from a guest speaker. As a result, we signed up to be supporters of the organization. But we decided to take it one step further...we signed up as volunteers in a Good News Club through our local church.

In partnership with other church members, we accepted leadership assignments, went through basic training, and embarked on a rewarding journey. On Tuesday afternoons for two semesters, our club met faithfully at a local elementary school and shared the good news of Christ with more than 15 children. Eight of them prayed to receive Him as their Savior.

Recently, during an open house at the school, our team members were able to reconnect with some of last year's participants and meet several new parents and their children. Preliminary results indicate the prospects for this year are excellent.

Obviously, many other evangelistic opportunities are available to those who desire to share their faith. I mention this one in particular to make a point: *anyone* can be a witness if he or she is simply willing to put forth the effort. Does it require a commitment of your time? Sure it does. Will it necessitate some sacrifice on your part? Of course it will. But the rewards far outweigh any sacrifice you make. Maybe you can't do everything, but you can do *something*. So, stop making excuses and start looking for the place to serve.

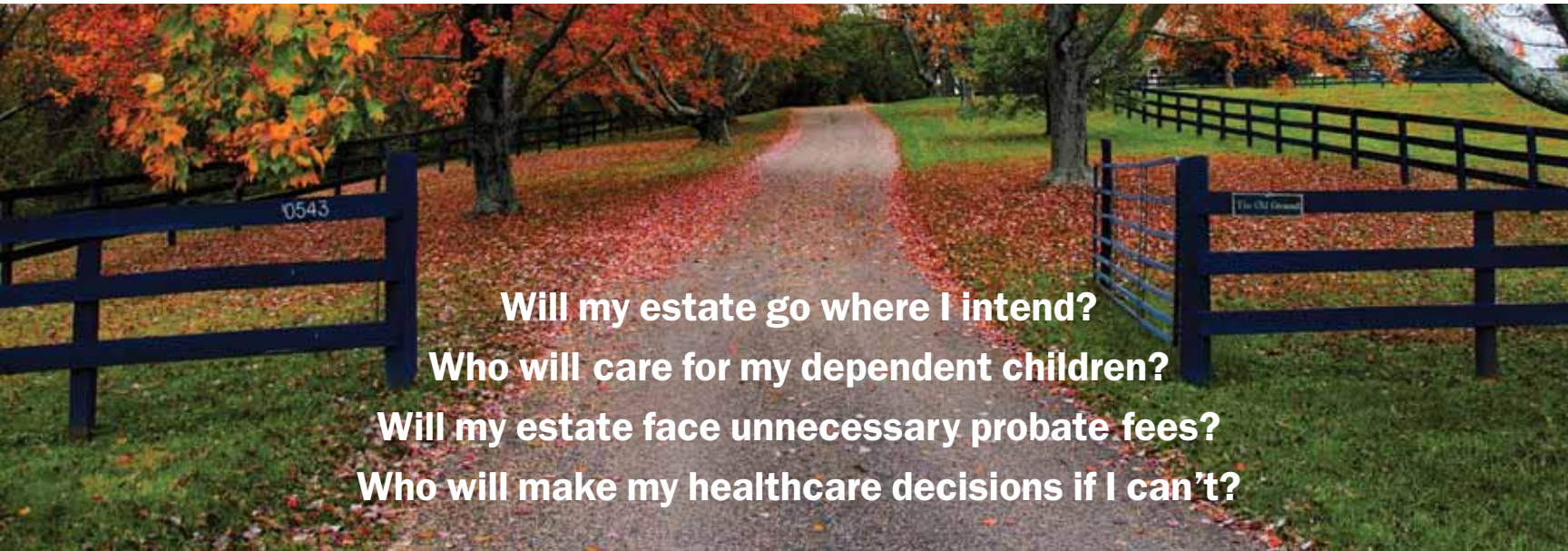
Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). Who knows? Perhaps someday, one of the children in our club will become a minister or missionary. Regardless, some will be in Heaven, and that, my friend, is really Good News! 



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MISSION:

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How can they know
except they **hear**?
How can they hear
unless we **go**?

Romans 10:13-15a



“From HEAR to Eternity”