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ONE magazine

HEART *of the STORM*

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Heart of the Storm

BY ERIC K. THOMSEN



“We have just confirmed a tornado touchdown in west Davidson County. I repeat, we have just confirmed a tornado on the ground near Nashville.”

These breathless words from an obviously rattled local meteorologist were the last I heard before the television screen and lights suddenly winked out. Power failure. I sat in darkness for a moment, listening to distant growls of thunder and watching the eerie silhouettes flickering on the curtains with each flash of lightning. Then, with a yawn, I left my storm-watching and carefully made my way to bed, content that, at least for the night, the storm had passed our home. As I drifted off to sleep, I breathed a prayer for those who might be affected.

I woke to a city in chaos.

The tornado that “touched” down in Nashville remained down for more than 50 miles, ripping a swath of utter destruction across the city and its eastern suburbs. And the tornado wasn’t alone. In all, 13 tornadoes converged in a historic outbreak, killing 26 people in four states, injuring more than 300, and leaving much of Middle Tennessee without power.

I watched the morning news in slack-jawed shock. Daylight revealed scenes from a war zone. As I made my way to work, I bumped over debris, dodged downed power lines (and poles), and guided my car

carefully around the skeleton of a storage shed planted firmly in the middle of I-65. The devastation was simply overwhelming.

During those grim hours and days, I couldn’t imagine a more difficult crisis confronting our deeply wounded state. Yet, a month later, as I ponder these words from my home office, a bigger crisis faces not only Tennessee but the entire nation and world. In a few short weeks, COVID-19 has blanketed the globe, wrapping the nations in death, fear, anger, and confusion. In Tennessee, as we wrap up a second week of “safer at home” restrictions, social distancing, isolation, online meetings, hand sanitizer, and rationed toilet paper have become the new norm.

These two “once-in-a-lifetime” crises in a few, short weeks have renewed my awareness of three important realities:

- 1. Sin is bad.** Look around; you can’t miss sin’s devastating effect on humanity and the natural world. The world is frightened, lost, and angry, with hopelessness apparent with each new social media post or political diatribe.
- 2. God is good.** He is working His will and way through this and every other crisis or blessing. We see Him reflected in the selflessness of heroes on the

frontlines of the battle against COVID-19. He is revealed in the majesty of nature, unfazed by human crisis. He continues to speak, His still small voice offering peace and comfort in the heart of the storm.

3. The church has a unique opportunity.

Pausing from clearing rubble and brush after the Tennessee storms, I couldn’t help but smile at the sea of red shirts marking the FWB Disaster Response Team. I smiled again the first Sunday after social distancing drove church services online. Nervous pastors spoke truth through webcams to their livestreaming congregations. Tentative at first, their confidence grew with each point—a beautiful reminder the Church may be quarantined, but she remains alive and well in homes around the world. Light shines brightest in the darkness, and I pray we look back at March 2020 as the watershed moment when a frightened world once again turned to the church as a beacon of hope pointing to the Savior. **ONE**

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

I want to commend you for the publication of Dr. Matthew Pinson's recent article ("What Do the Unchurched Want," April-May, page 20) on current methodology versus the biblical method in reaching the unchurched. The article is superb! It is my desire that many people in ministry will read and be helped by it. *ONE Magazine* is excellent. I hope you will continue to publish more articles like the one referenced.

—Glenn Hill, via email

I was thinking the *ONE Magazine* website was searchable, and if so, I am missing that option. Can you clarify if my memory is faulty, or if I am missing the search window?

—Ron, via email

Great question, Ron! Recently Google discontinued the custom search app

integrated into the website. Because of faulty search results appearing without those custom filters, we have removed the search bar for now. We are in the process of identifying and installing another search tool. In the absence of the search feature, you can download a full *ONE Magazine* index on the Archives page of the site. With this index, you can search by author, title, subject, theme, and department. Hopefully, this will help you find the article or topic you are seeking.

—Eric K. Thomsen, Managing Editor

From the editor: After publishing three new hymns from Doug Little in 2020, we have received a number of inquiries from those wishing to publish their own music. Doug Little, chairman of the Music Commission, offers the following advice: FWBWorship.com is a soon-to-be-launched (hopefully, early summer) website being devel-

oped by the Music Commission. The site will offer a downloadable library of otherwise unpublished songs from Free Will Baptist writers. We are developing criteria to evaluate the songs that will be made available as free downloads without copyright or ASCAP restrictions.

For more information, email the Music Commission at music@nafwb.org or visit their Facebook page: [facebook.com/fwbmusiccommission](https://www.facebook.com/fwbmusiccommission).



Have something to say? Say it!

Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are appreciated.

Email editor@nafwb.org or **send** correspondence to: **ONE Magazine**, Letters to the Editor, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002

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ONLY GOD!

THREE WOMEN SHARE THE AMAZING STORY
OF GOD AT WORK IN IVORY COAST

COMPILED BY ELIZABETH HODGES

MADAME SOLANGE, Director, Women of Good News

Since 2008, the Women of the Good News in Ivory Coast have joined their hearts and combined their strength and means to achieve a sustainable project. Each woman regularly put money aside in a “Jesus money box” for the project, agreeing to mobilize their five loaves and two fish. God multiplied and blessed their sacrifice, and they raised more than 15% of the budget. As we give an overview of the stages of this project, we apply 2 Corinthians 5:7: “We walk by faith and not by sight.” The Women of the Good News purchased two lots December 1, 2014, in Bondoukou, the central location of our churches.

Upon arriving in Bondoukou, my heart flowed out of my eyes. I had seen the lots and the rough beginning of the buildings during a previous trip. I followed the building process through Madame Solange’s pictures and knew of the difficulties encountered along the construction journey. Still, nothing could have prepared me for what I saw. I could only say to my Ivorian sisters, “God did this!” It was immediately obvious, even to my untrained eye, that women could not have accomplished this. *Only God!* A dream had become reality one brick at a time. I could only imagine how our Ivorian sisters would feel when they arrived on Friday morning.

MADAME SOLANGE

Special thanks belong to our glorious, powerful God. He is the One who deserves all glory and honor. We pay tribute to Him because He is the One who solved all the problems throughout the stages of this project. We were told it was impossible, very daring for us women to carry out such a project. But God owns the gold and the agent. If He places a desire in our hearts for any service to His glory, He certainly will open the path before us to accomplish that service. If it is really His work that occupies our minds, He will enable us to do it, by His own means and at the time of His choosing. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In 2017, while visiting the United States, Madame Solange visited Cumberland Camp in Middle Tennessee. Seeing the bunk beds “solved” her problem of maximizing space for the girls seeking safe shelter at the women’s center. Madame Solange took a picture and had the beds built in Côte d’Ivoire.

LYNETTE MORGAN, Veteran Missionary to Ivory Coast

Thank you for praying for the THP team who went to Côte d’Ivoire a week early to help finish painting the women’s center, and for praying for the nine of us who joined them for the dedication of the center. God gave us strength, stamina, and everything needed to help them get ready. Then he gave us strength for a day and a half of camp where Elizabeth and I were the speakers.

The ladies attending the 2020 Women’s Camp were housed at the church in Bondoukou. Dinner on Thursday, March 5, had been prepared for the ladies, followed by an evening service. What a special time to reunite with women I previously met in 2016 and 2017. How thankful to be together and celebrate this historic occasion.

When my turn to speak to the ladies came the next morning, I began by presenting Madame Solange with a book of congratulatory letters from retired Ivorian women missionaries. Each was written in French, with their picture from *Into the Darkness* at the bottom of the page. If a personal email was sent to me, I included it in Madame Solange’s personal copy. I told my listeners that these former missionaries were in America, but their spirits were in Côte d’Ivoire. Each member of the bureau (board) received a copy as well. (picture)

I am convinced the women’s center will be to the Ivorian women what the 12 stones of remembrance became for the Israelites (Joshua 4:6-7).





As questions are asked, the story of God’s hand of blessing will be shared again and again. May all who hear the story give praise to Him and Him alone.

MADAME SOLANGE

He was the one who led us day and night, even during times of oppression. Words and time are insufficient to share all that God has done. May all who use these buildings give glory to our God.

Madame Solange planned three service projects for Friday afternoon: visit the local prison, visit a maternity ward, and evangelize in the community. At the prison we shared gifts with the inmates: a meal and soap [above, left], two things that would directly impact them. The ladies purchased the food specially prepared that day and soap for the showers.

When we visited the maternity ward at the hospital, part of the team cleaned the public areas. A smaller number went to visit patients, share gifts, and evangelize. We shared a gift with a Muslim lady and prayed with several ladies who were sick or having difficulty delivering. In the last room, we visited a new mother, only 16 years old. As Madame Solange shared the gospel the young mother responded, “I want to have Jesus in my heart right now!” Our visit was a blessed experience!

Most of the ladies took part in the evangelization effort in the communities within walking distance of the center. Because of transportation and protocols, the national and regional leadership of Women of the Good News visited the prison and the maternity ward.

LYNETTE MORGAN

Saturday, March 7, was a packed day, with a parade (only an hour and a half late in starting according to true African time), followed by the dedication ceremony, with speeches, a sermon from Clint Morgan (director of IM), presentations, ribbon cutting, gifts for the Ivorians, an enormous meal for the thousand-plus attendees, and gifts for all the visitors. It was a packed, non-stop, tiring day in hot weather, but it was so good.

Many governmental, regional, and religious dignitaries were there to share in the historic dedication ceremony. The picture of the pastors seated on the right side of platform [above, right] is special to me. I am grateful for these men, who lead Free Will Baptist churches and are products of the Free Will Baptist Bible Institute in Bouana. This is a snapshot of the mission of IM: to prepare national believers to lead their churches and associations. WNAC is grateful to share a part by investing in their education and supporting our missionaries over the years.

LYNETTE MORGAN

The ceremony was broadcast on the Ivorian television five different times. The entire country saw and heard what God has done for the women of the Free Will Baptist churches in Côte d’Ivoire!

When Lynette and Clint Morgan, David Brown (director of Free Will Baptist Foundation), and I were interviewed, the questions were similar. The one I found most difficult to answer was how I felt about the building being named after Lynette and me. I answered simply that it was hum-

bling, since God uses ordinary people to accomplish His extraordinary work.

When asked what I wanted the community to remember about the day and historic event, I responded that *only* God could have accomplished such a project. As the girls live in the center and receive an education, as people come for retreats and camps, and as the Ivorian churches use the facility, may it be a constant reminder God blesses courageous, obedient faith.

Courageous and *obedient* describes the faith of our Ivorian sisters as they worked toward completing this project since 2008. They had no clue their American sisters would catch their dream and passion and respond by raising money to help. The Free Will Baptist Foundation grants did not even become available for application until 2016, and Madame Solange did not hear about them until 2017. The Women of the Good News had received two \$50,000 grants, one in 2018 and one in 2019. A video captured at the moment when Madame Solange learned the first grant was accepted by the FWB Foundation reveals her deep gratitude. She sank to her knees, as over and over she praises Jesus and expresses her thanks to God.

God blessed their efforts to minister to these girls and the Ivorian Association as a whole. It was not easy, but these Ivorian ladies remained faithful. Today, the center stands as a testament to God's faithfulness and blessing.

Madame Solange did a great job of organizing the dedication event, with close attention to detail. She secured a bus to help transport the American delegation, her bureau members, and the ladies in general. Thursday night's meal was provided for attendees as they arrived, and on Friday ladies sold food items for the attendees to purchase.

Police were secured for Saturday's event due to the large number of attendees. The booklet given to dignitaries on Saturday chronicled the day's activities and the history of the center. Madame Solange also arranged for all attendees on Saturday to eat lunch at the center. She hired five women to prepare the food under the supervision of one of her bureau members. They carried out an orderly plan of serving everyone present. The meal was not chaotic at all, nor was the gift distribution on Friday.

Madame Solange has been very intentional to give glory


to God throughout this process. From its inception, the vision for the center has been broad. Certainly, the center will benefit girls who need safe housing while pursuing an education. However, the vision for this facility is much larger and could benefit the entire Ivorian association. I am confident God will bring that to pass in the years to come.

My heart was blessed over and over as the Ivorian ladies lifted their hearts in praise. Though I could not understand the lyrics, I could praise alongside them. On Thursday night, they sang the theme chorus from the 2016 retreat, which I had attended. What a sweet gesture on their part and a wonderful memory for me. I love the way various groups led worship, giving them "ownership" in the event.

As I think back on this experience, I am challenged, convicted, and excited. *Challenged* by the Ivorian's ability to do so much with so little. Life is hard—just plain hard. *Convicted* by their loyalty and dedication. Sometimes, it seems we who have been blessed with so much, do so much less. *Excited* for what God has done with and for them, and for what the future holds for these precious sisters and the ministry of the center.

MADAME SOLANGE

We praise God that the ministry of the center is now ready to launch. Please pray with us that the Lord will raise up the right woman to live at the center and to minister to the ladies who wish to be housed there while away from their villages attending high school in the town of Bondoukou. Continue to pray for Madame Kamibré, as there are still important decisions to be made and the final touches put on the center.

To God be the glory, great things He has done, is doing, and will continue to do in Côte d'Ivoire. 

About the Writer: Elizabeth Hodges is director of WNAC, overseeing all ministries and office operations. Contact Elizabeth: elizabeth@nafwb.org.



The *Heart* of the Storm

BY KATY FRY

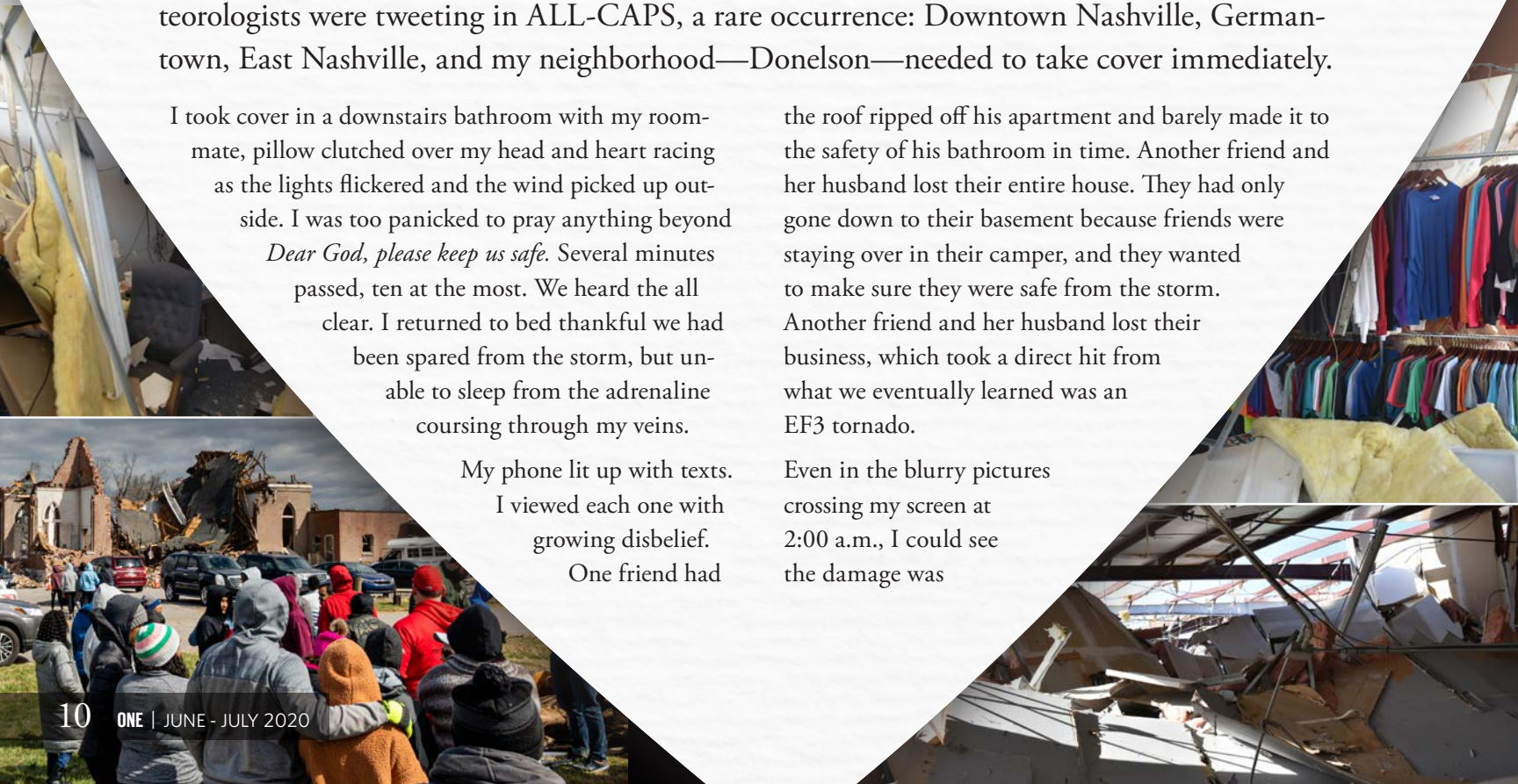
March 2, 2020, was a monotonous day. I went to work, went home, made supper, watched TV, and went to bed. An average day. I'd only been asleep for an hour when my phone started buzzing insistently, enough to wake me, even though I'm hard of hearing. I tried to make out the message in the blinding light of my screen: a tornado warning had been issued for Davidson County. I threw on my glasses and a pair of shoes and tried to assess the risk. Surely, the tornado wasn't anywhere near me. Surely, it was a mistake. But I quickly realized the local meteorologists were tweeting in ALL-CAPS, a rare occurrence: Downtown Nashville, Germantown, East Nashville, and my neighborhood—Donelson—needed to take cover immediately.

I took cover in a downstairs bathroom with my roommate, pillow clutched over my head and heart racing as the lights flickered and the wind picked up outside. I was too panicked to pray anything beyond *Dear God, please keep us safe.* Several minutes passed, ten at the most. We heard the all clear. I returned to bed thankful we had been spared from the storm, but unable to sleep from the adrenaline coursing through my veins.

My phone lit up with texts.
I viewed each one with
growing disbelief.
One friend had

the roof ripped off his apartment and barely made it to the safety of his bathroom in time. Another friend and her husband lost their entire house. They had only gone down to their basement because friends were staying over in their camper, and they wanted to make sure they were safe from the storm. Another friend and her husband lost their business, which took a direct hit from what we eventually learned was an EF3 tornado.

Even in the blurry pictures crossing my screen at 2:00 a.m., I could see the damage was



extensive, beyond anything I had witnessed in my life. I felt completely helpless, lying safely in my bed while my friends walked through the rubble of their lives. In that moment, all I could do was pray God would give my friends peace and help them sleep.

When morning dawned, I realized just how horrible the damage was. The storm's path was less than a mile from the townhouse where I live. It was even closer to my church, The Donelson Fellowship. The Lutheran church just down the street was a pile of rubble. The neighborhood behind our church, which I typically drive through multiple times each day, was a tangle of downed trees, powerlines, and the shattered skeletons of houses. The destruction was overwhelming, almost paralyzing. But our church jumped into action: chainsaw teams deployed, AirBnbs secured for those suddenly rendered homeless, bottles of water pouring in. Less than 12 hours after the storm ripped through, we had boots on the ground.

Because The Donelson Fellowship was so close to the storm's path, Samaritan's Purse reached out to partner with us. They made many of our volunteer efforts possible. They provided showers for those who lost power (or their entire home), chainsaws and crews to remove the fallen trees and clean-up debris, and a listening ear for those who needed to process the trauma they'd just survived. Free Will Baptist Master's Men also joined the efforts with teams, chainsaws, and monetary support. Because of these groups, we made a massive impact on the greater Nashville area, but especially our neighborhood of Donelson.

One beautiful thing about the Nashville community, and especially the Body of Christ, is the spirit of selfless generosity. In the days following the storm, donations flooded in. Water bottles, food, backpacks, flashlights, diapers, toiletries, tarps—anything a storm victim could need. Our worship center began to look less like a place of worship and more like a warehouse. Storm victims could come in and fill a plastic tote with as many supplies as they needed.

It was my job to answer the phone and field the emails and messages coming in over social media. Hunt Brothers Pizza brought a mobile pizza truck and stayed for days, passing out free pizzas to volunteers and victims

alike. One of Nashville's "hot chicken" institutions, Hattie B's, provided their famous hot chicken. Another restaurant donated many pounds of frozen steak. Corporations, groups, and individuals called, wanting to donate and ready to serve. *I have a truckload full of supplies. I have bottles of water, can I bring them? I live states away. Can I give money?* These questions became a common refrain.

The most unique question I received? *I have a ten-pound pork butt I'm about to smoke. Can I bring it by to help feed people? I don't have much money, but I can do this.*

I was reminded of the widow's mite. Even those who didn't have much to give were still giving. It didn't matter that they were struggling too. They simply wanted to give what they could: their time, their talents, and even their food. They gave because it was the right and holy thing to do.

When you think of disaster relief, you probably picture burly men with chainsaws, cutting down fallen trees, or linemen working tirelessly to restore power to affected areas. What you probably don't picture is the older lady serving food or walking an overwhelmed storm victim through the makeshift aisles of food and cleaning supplies, helping him pick out the best items to take home to his family. You probably don't picture young children making cards with crayons and scrap paper, to be included in the boxes of resources we distributed to storm victims. These might seem like small acts of service, but they made a huge difference. Chainsaws and crayons are both necessary items in the aftermath of a tornado.

One card in particular made an impact. Samaritan's Purse was out in a neighborhood, helping a gruff, older man with his roof. They handed him a box of supplies. He was hesitant to accept the resources but carried them

I WAS REMINDED OF THE WIDOW'S MITE. EVEN THOSE WHO DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO GIVE WERE STILL GIVING. IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT THEY WERE STRUGGLING TOO.



inside his scarred home anyway. A few minutes later, he walked out of his house with tears in his eyes, holding the card a child had drawn for him. “Tell her thank you,” he said. Her small act of service helped soften an old man’s heart.

I could share story after story of the lives changed for what seemed the worst, but ultimately for the better. When all was said and done, we served 18,000 meals, distributed 24,000 bottles of water, worked on 356 homes, provide \$75,000 worth of supplies and resources, and equipped 3,000 volunteers to go into the community and serve their neighbors. This was possible because of the generosity of those who shared their time, their resources, and their talents.

The most important stat I have to share is this: **nine people came to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior during the disaster relief efforts.**

I don’t think anyone would have chosen to live through this devastating tornado and its aftermath. But even when the physical world around us seems to be breaking down, God is still working. Even in the destruction, God is there. And now, nine more precious souls get to know and walk with Him. This is the *heart* of the storm.

The Sunday following the storm, in a worship center filled with supplies and bottles of water, we sang this new but familiar refrain: *I will build my life upon Your love. It is a firm foundation. I will put my trust in You alone, and I will not be shaken.* Our physical foundations may fail, but our spiritual foundation in Christ never will. **ONE**

About the Writer: Katy Fry is communications director and receptionist at The Donelson Fellowship near Nashville, Tennessee.



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Disaster Response Team,
visit **www.fwbmastersmen.org**

DRT Update From Master's Men

Tornadoes hit home during the early hours of Tuesday, March 3, when a storm bearing as many as four tornadoes, struck Nashville and the Middle Tennessee area. The tornadoes started just west of Nashville and continued on the ground for over 50 miles before losing their power.

Master's Men Disaster Response Teams (DRT) quickly joined local churches and groups to offer relief. The Donelson Fellowship in Nashville was located within blocks of some of the hardest hit areas. While the church sustained no damage other than loss of power, many of the church members and their neighbors were affected. Within 48 hours, Master's Men DRT began working jointly with the church to offer relief efforts. The response was tremendous. Thousands of volunteers joined the effort during the following days.

In addition to local volunteers, Master's Men partners

from several states offered their assistance. Master's Men offers thanks to Kevin Woolbright and the Illinois Master's Men Disaster Response Team for coming and bringing some heavy equipment.

A little farther east, the Cookeville FWB Church served their community during this time with the help of the South Carolina, Florida, and Kentucky DRTs. Thanks to coordinators Chris Todd (SC), Allen Austin (FL), and Kevin Flannigan (KY). Master's Men also thanks DRT coordinators from Alabama and Mississippi for offering to bring their equipment to help.

In the last 15 years, I have served all across our country during times of natural disasters, but I have never seen the turnout like we experienced in Middle Tennessee.

Maybe that's why it's called the Volunteer State.

—Ken Akers, Director, Master's Men



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Finding Light in a Dark Place

BY J. RANDALL CORN

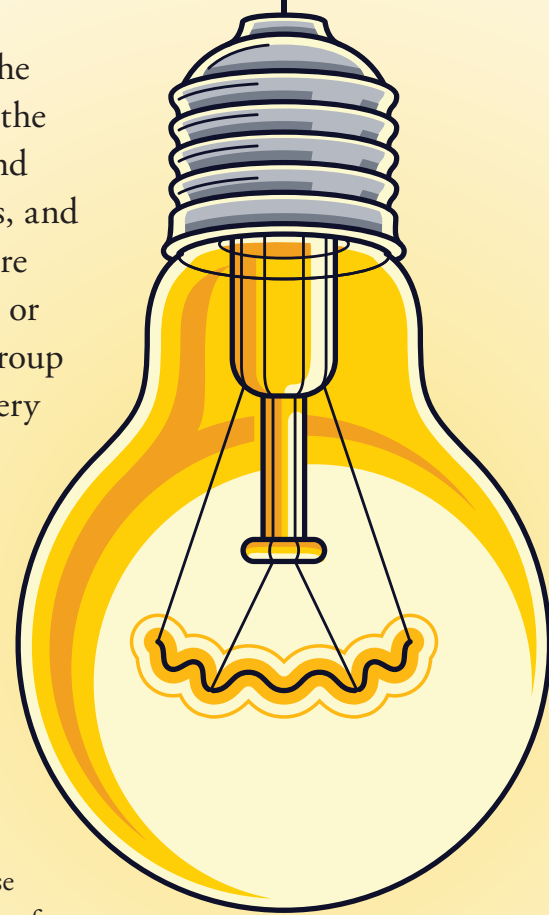
Anyone familiar with the book of Psalms knows you often hear the heart cry of suffering saints within it. It is not unusual to read of the psalmist questioning God and asking that simple and yet profound question: “Why? Why am I suffering?” I was a pastor for 33 years, and during that time, I saw many different types of suffering. I am sure many reading this article today are dealing with hurt of one kind or another. As the wise, old preacher Joseph Parker once advised a group of ministry students: “Preach to broken hearts; there is one on every pew. You will never want for a congregation.”

Psalm 43 gives us a way to find the light when we are in a dark place. To me, the metaphor of darkness captures the mood of what it is like when we suffer. I think this is underlying the wording of verse 3 where the psalmist pleads with God, “send out thy light and thy truth.” Just what do you do when everything in your life is overshadowed by some problem, a problem that seemingly will not go away?

Before I launch into the psalm, let me assure you I have dealt with—and am currently dealing with—my share of suffering. In November 2014, I began to fall down. I fell about once a month, until I sought consultation with my doctor. He sent me to a neurologist who did a whole battery of tests. Eventually, I was diagnosed with a rare neurological condition called corticobasal degeneration (CBD). You have probably never heard of it, because it is about three times rarer than Lou Gehrig’s disease (ALS). The simplest way to put it is that small areas of my brain

are dying, and I will probably lose the ability to walk, talk, and perhaps to reason. No treatment exists. It is a degenerative disease that will steadily get worse over time. The course of the disease ranges six to eight years from onset to death.

This news put me in a very dark place. I began to search for some flicker of light. But, how do you find light in a dark place? In Psalm 43, I find three principles that have helped me, and I am confident can help anyone in the shadowland of suffering.



First, you must talk to God, even when it seems He is not listening.

This comes from verses 1 and 2: “Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man! For You are the God of my strength; Why do You cast me off? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”

Note two things here: when you talk to God, get right to the point and be honest about how you feel. The psalmist puts his appeal in the emphatic position by saying first and forcefully, “Vindicate me!” The psalmist wants God to act as his advocate. Eugene Peterson paraphrases this, “Clear my name!” Why? What was the psalmist’s particular problem? Deceitful and unjust men were causing him grief.

Let’s face it, people problems have been with us since Cain and Abel. As Matthew Henry put it, “As long as there are such bad men out of Hell, and nations of them, it is not strange that good men, who are yet out of Heaven, meet with hard and base treatment.”

The psalmist, though, is honest enough to admit it seems God is not listening. This is what verse 2 is all about. He called God his “strength.” The Hebrew could be translated “stronghold,” a reference to the most secure place within a fortified city. Yet, he is “mourning because of the oppression of the enemy.” Again, the Hebrew rendered *oppression* in this verse is elsewhere “meager rations.” What is meant by this contrast? The psalmist expected more from God.

I am not proposing the “prosperity gospel,” the idea God guarantees His children health, wealth, and happiness. Still, most of us wonder why the Lord doesn’t immediately put an end to our suffering when we ask Him. I’ll be honest enough to say I have wondered that myself. I certainly have prayed for healing, and a friend told me I am probably on more church prayer lists than anyone in my county!

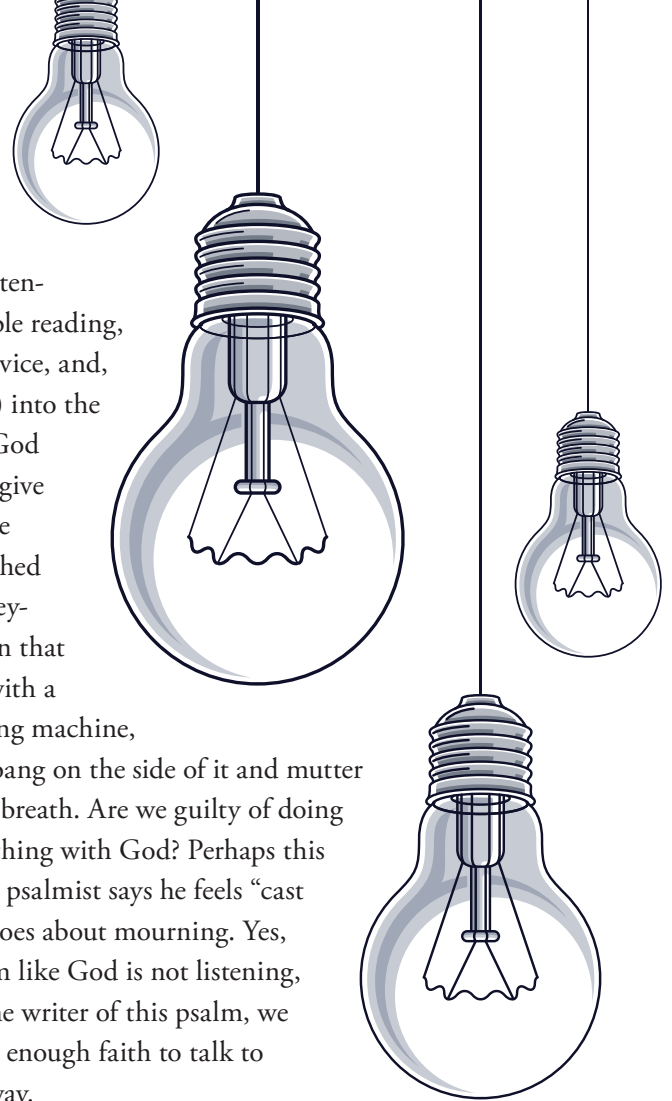
I fear too many of us have what might be called a “vending machine” concept of God. We have put our “money”

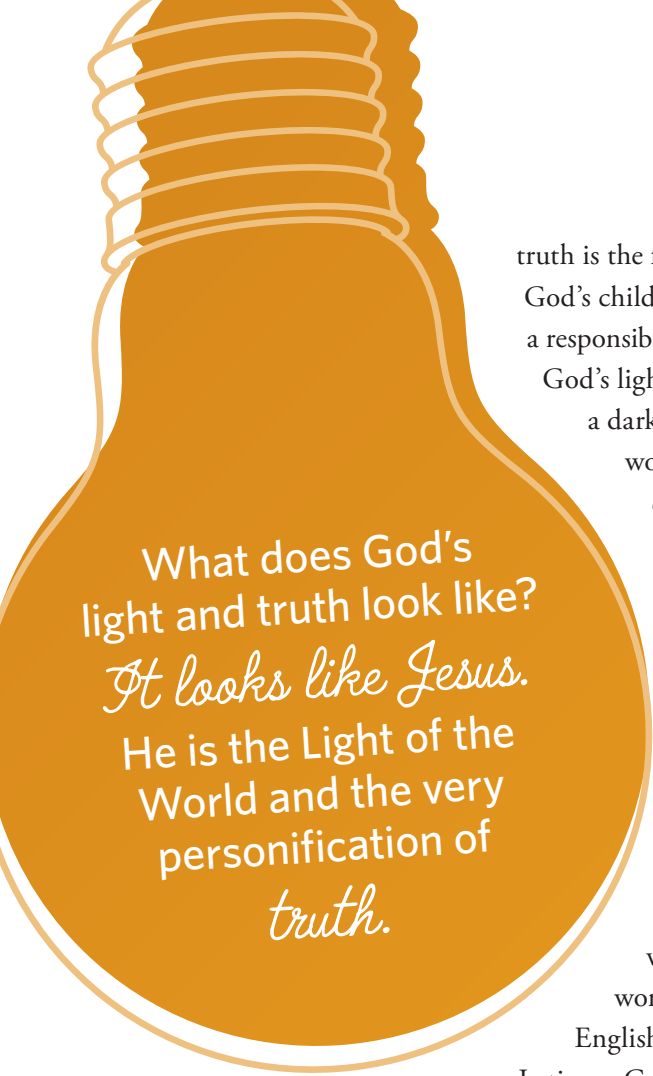
(church attendance, Bible reading, prayer, service, and, yes, tithes) into the slot, and God refuses to give us what we have punched into the keypad. When that happens with a real vending machine, I tend to bang on the side of it and mutter under my breath. Are we guilty of doing the same thing with God? Perhaps this is why the psalmist says he feels “cast off” and goes about mourning. Yes, it can seem like God is not listening, but like the writer of this psalm, we must have enough faith to talk to God anyway.

Second, you must follow God, even though you don’t know where He will take you.

This is based on verse 3: “O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.” This is a prayer for divine guidance. To quote Peterson’s paraphrase, “Give me your lantern and compass; give me a map so I can find my way to the sacred mountain, to the place of your presence.” We need the Lord to point the way, or better yet, to lead us by the hand. This will eliminate the sense of alienation from God we feel when we suffer. As one of the ancient commentators wrote, “Send your light and overcome my shadows. Send your truth and conquer the lies that surround me!”

What does God’s light and truth look like? It looks like Jesus. He is the Light of the World and the very personification of truth. When we follow His example, study His Word, and allow the Holy Spirit to apply it to our hearts, we will indeed have divine guidance. Beyond this





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truth.

truth is the fact that, as God's children, we have a responsibility to take God's light and truth to a dark and confused world. I am confident this is why the founders of Welch College made "O, Send Out Your Light and Your Truth" the school motto. You will find those words inscribed in English, Hebrew, and Latin on Coffman Hall.

Let's make these words more than just an inscription. Let's make it our mission!

Even though we don't know where God will take us, the text seems to answer He will take us to His holy hill and to His tabernacle. This is the ultimate destination, but the route God uses to take us there is not stated. The Lord may lead us over some rough terrain to get to where He wants us to be. It takes courage to make the trip.

Finally, you must worship God, even though you don't feel like it. These truths are found in verses 4 and 5: "Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And on the harp I will praise You, O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God." The psalmist rejoices in God, declaring Him to be his "exceeding joy." Note he refers to the Lord as "my God," not simply "God" or "a god," but rather *the* God with whom he had a personal relationship—my God.

Still, we must worship, even though we don't feel like it. The psalmist was quite frank, admitting his soul is "cast down" and "disquieted." That would be enough to keep most people from worship. I am not sure I know all the reasons for this resistance to worship when suffering. Perhaps it is because we associate only positive, uplifting emotions with worship. Whatever the reason, like the psalmist, we must discipline ourselves and come to the altar.

Talk to God, follow God, worship God—that is the way to find the light in the midst of your darkness. All of us will be broken from time to time, but through this psalm, God reminds us He can and will send light and truth into our lives. With most of us, that means the clouds will part, and light will come back into our lives in the here and now; but for some it won't. Oh, those will still see the light and glory in the truth, just not in this life.

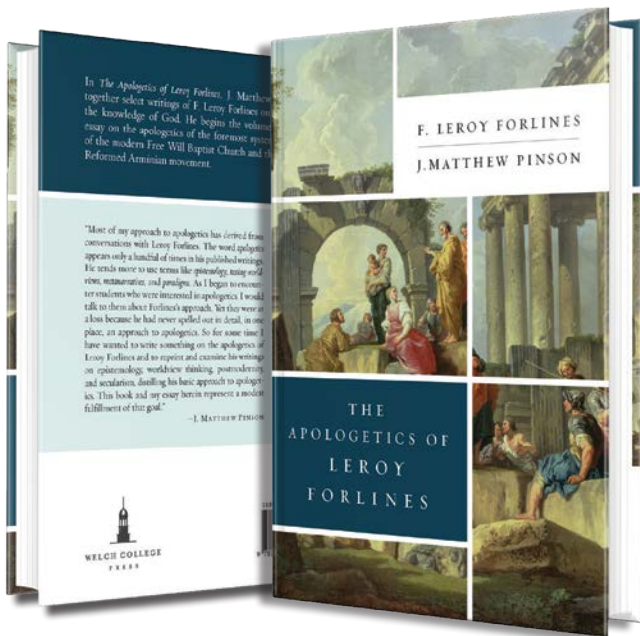
One of the lies the devil sells and the world buys is that death is always defeat. Don't you believe it! Death, for the child of God, is the doorway to the moment he or she will be able to speak to God face to face, follow God down the streets of Heaven, and worship Him for all eternity. This is part of what Paul meant when he wrote, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Now, I would prefer some sort of divine intervention, a medical miracle that would extend my life. I am confident God could do that if it were His will. But what if it isn't? To use a biblical phrase, I have set my house in order. All of us are going to die. I may just have more of a hint about the particulars of my departure more than you, and I am ready to go. Not because of any merit on my part but because of the amazing grace of God. Can you say the same? **ONE**

About the Writer: J. Randall (Randy) Corn pastored churches in Alabama, Illinois, Georgia, and Tennessee over three decades. Before declining health forced his resignation, he also served as a long-time member of the Commission for Theological Integrity.



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VOLUNTEERING!

BY TOM DOOLEY



An old story is told about a pastor who ministered in a small town with one main street. Right across from the church stood the local barber shop where the great sages of the community spent a great deal of idle time. The barber shop crowd began noticing that each morning precisely at 11 o'clock, the pastor exited the church, got in his car, and drove out of sight down the main street in the opposite direction of where he lived.

This happened every day with the exception of Sunday. Finally, the curiosity of the town's statesmen got the best of them, and so a couple of fellows were dispatched to follow the pastor and discover what he was up to. To their bewilderment, the spies unearthed the great mystery. The pastor drove to the outskirts of town and parked his car near a railroad crossing. He sat in his car until a train passed by, then started his car, made a U-turn, and proceeded back to the church.

The snoops' report to the inquisitive onlookers at the barber shop ignited a spirited discussion about what the preacher was doing. So, after 45 minutes of speculation and debate, the committee decided the right thing to do was to question the pastor about his behavior. The men who had followed him earlier were called to duty once again. Across the street they went and into the entry way of the church. They found the pastor in his study and asked if he would mind answering a question. The pastor assured them he would be glad to do so if he could.

They told him they had observed him leaving town every day at 11 o'clock and had followed him to the railroad crossing and were wondering what he was doing. The pastor explained. "I go out there and watch the train pass by on its daily run because it does my heart good to see *something* moving that I don't have to push!"

Unfortunately, most pastors relate to our fictitious counterpart. Getting things done in the church isn't always the easiest thing to do. Classes need teachers. Leaves need to be raked. There are babies to hold, floors to wax, and toilets to clean. The list goes on and on. Many tasks requiring time, energy, and giftedness must be done week after week for the church to function in a way that will truly bring honor and glory to our Savior. Yet, many essential assignments either fall to the paid help (the pastor) or get left undone, diminishing the effectiveness and impact of the church's ministry. This problem is exacerbated by a growing trend toward spectator-driven church rather than participant-focused church.

Church Is Not a Spectator Sport!

What is the answer to this dilemma? Far too many church attendees take their place in the pews as if they were attending a school play. They watch, listen, and may even shed a tear, all the while seeing their role in the “production” as a member of the audience. Christianity, may I remind you, was never intended to be a spectator lifestyle.

With that being said, I believe the primary reason it is often a struggle to get Christians involved in the work of the church is an unwise practice that has been around longer than I have been alive: the practice of recruiting *volunteers* to fill ministry needs in the church. Why is asking for volunteers a problem? It is a problem because it perpetuates a mindset that falls short of what the Lord Jesus both expects of His followers and exemplified for them.

Jesus said in Matthew 23:11, the “greatest among you shall be your servant.” First Peter 4:10 teaches Christians to serve “one another.” Paul instructed his readers in Galatians 5:13 to “by love serve one another.”

On the eve of our Lord’s crucifixion, Jesus and His disciples gathered to celebrate the Passover. All the preparations had been made except for one significant detail. No one had arranged for the washing of their feet as they arrived. After they had concluded their meal, Jesus stood, laid aside His outer garments, wrapped a towel about His waist, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples. In doing so, Jesus provided an example He expected His disciples to follow. He told them, “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (John 13:14-15). What had Jesus done for the disciples? He served them as He cleansed their feet. And what is it Jesus intends for us to do for one another? Jesus intends for us to serve one another, and Jesus expects His followers to adopt a servant mindset.

Servant Versus Volunteer

A volunteer and a servant have vastly different attitudes. Volunteers *choose* what they will involve themselves in and the extent of their commitment. Servants, on the

other hand, understand it is not their prerogative to pick and choose where, whom, or how they will participate in the Lord’s work. A servant readily responds to a need whenever it arises. A servant’s motivation isn’t pleasing himself but pleasing the master.

In January 2014, I preached a message from 1 Peter chapter 4 titled, “At Your Service.” During that message I told the congregation I would never ask for anyone to volunteer for anything again. I told them—from that day forward—we would no longer use volunteers, only servants. I made it clear: if they could not participate in the Lord’s work with a servant’s heart and mindset, they would not be needed. So, when preparing for Vacation Bible School, it is made clear that VBS is an opportunity to serve the Lord Jesus. In the spring, we communicate *servants* are needed to staff our grounds crew.

We don’t have nursery workers.

We have nursery *servants*.

Whatever the task, we never recruit volunteers anymore. We simply ask *servants* to do their duty.

Scripture provides us with great examples of servanthood, like Epaphroditus (Philippians 2; check him out). His exceptional service to the cause of Christ was characterized by his willingness to go anywhere and do anything. Imagine what could be accomplished if the tasks needing to be done in our churches were approached with that attitude.

It’s time to stop volunteering and start serving! **ONE**



About the Writer: Tom Dooley pastors New Road FWB Church in Austintown, Ohio. Adapted by permission from the Ohio *Ambassador*, January-February 2020.



Bulgaria's Impact

BY DARREN WALKER

In 2008, I took my first trip to Bulgaria. An educational and encouragement trip, five other men from my church and I met with new missionaries Tim and Lydia Awtrey. We spent a great deal of time with the Awtreys and the people in their church. Drinking coffee at the café, eating dinner in various homes, sitting in local high school classes, and walking through the city opened my eyes to a world about which I had previously known little. I had no idea the impact Bulgaria eventually would have on my life.

During that first trip, I witnessed a sadness and hopelessness in the eyes of the Bulgarian people that changed my view of missions. I didn't just want to return home and move on to the next mission trip. I wanted to bring joy and hope to this people who seemed to need it desperately.

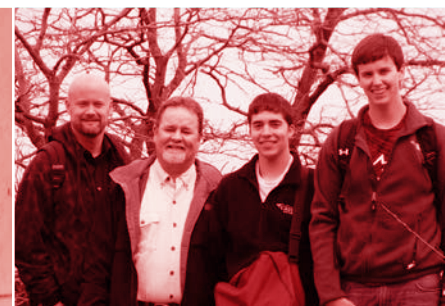
In 2010 and 2011, I traveled with men from my church to complete various projects for the New Life Church in Svishtov. On each visit we met new people, saw new smiles, and took advantage of new opportunities to offer joy and hope. In 2012, I was thrilled to lead a team of adults to Bulgaria on behalf of The Hanna Project. I introduced a new team of volunteers from other churches and states to the people I was growing to love.

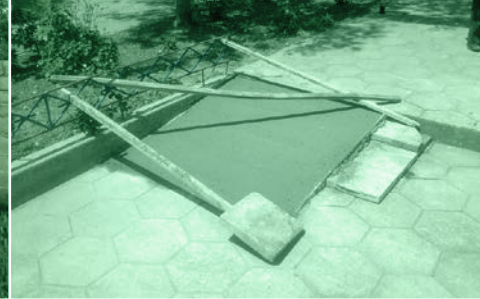
Since 2012, I have returned to Bulgaria every year with THP, leading teams from several states and completing different projects around the city of Svishtov. Along the way, I developed a three-part personal goal in leading these wonderful teams of volunteers for The Hanna Project:

- Each team should learn how to better pray for missionaries after seeing them in action.
- Team members should provide better support when missionaries visit their churches after seeing missionaries' needs firsthand.
- Pray someone on our team might surrender to full-time missionary service.

Serving with THP in Bulgaria, our teams have:

- Conducted **English clubs** for school-aged students and adults;
- Held **sports camps** for students;
- **Refurbished a park** in front of a school for people with disabilities;
- **Provided and installed a playground** for disabled students at the Children's Center for Children with Disabilities;





- **Painted the fence and installed a greenhouse and covered picnic table** at the Center for Social Rehabilitation and Integration;
- **Painted and installed new beds** at the Svishtov hospital in the children’s ward and internal medicine ward;
- **Taught American food cooking classes;**
- Completed **painting and construction work** at the New Life Church.

When our teams first began working in the city, many people watched us, but few acknowledged our presence. After eight years of working around the city, people now smile and wave. Our teams have brought credibility to New Life Church, which greatly excites us! We have met with two mayors, professors from the local university, teachers at the high school, directors and staff at the adult and children’s disability centers, hospital directors and various medical staff, and many store and restaurant employees. I have been encouraged to see the Bulgaria mission team grow from a single missionary family to seven missionary families.

I have laughed, cried, and even mourned with the many Bulgarian families whose lives I have shared. I have witnessed new babies added to the church, baptisms in the river, communion services, new church buildings, and the illnesses and deaths of friends to whom I have grown close.

In 2017, our team met and worked with Radostin Tsvetkov, or “Radi,” as we called him. Radi was one of the most humble persons I have known. That October week, Radi worked alongside the THP team painting a fence and building a greenhouse and picnic area. We watched

him play with the kids each night, caring for them while our team taught a cooking class. He loved working with the youth of the church.

Radi planned to move to Shumen and work with the Provows as they started a new work. Our team was so impressed with Radi that we gave him a large gift to help him purchase a car for his new adventure. Sadly, Radi died suddenly in April 2018, while playing basketball with the youth. I am blessed to have known him, if only for a short time. I wouldn’t have had that chance without my first trip to Bulgaria.

In 2008, our team held a prayer time and feetwashing service with a young man in the church as he prepared to travel for work. In 2019, I ate dinner with him, his wife, and daughter who attend the New Life Church. Today, I call him a good friend.

As a pastor, these trips allowed God to open my eyes to the reality of missions and why it is so desperately needed. Missions is not about missionaries who give up comfort, security, and family to go to another country, although that is a big deal. Missions is about families and communities who know absolutely nothing about Jesus and the gift He offers to each person. It is about people who live without knowing the hope and joy only Jesus can give. How will these people ever know, unless someone goes and shares this Good News with them?

HOW WILL THESE PEOPLE EVER KNOW, UNLESS SOMEONE GOES AND SHARES THIS GOOD NEWS WITH THEM?



Not everyone is called to go overseas. But *everyone* is called to help share the gospel through praying, giving, and going. How will you know how to do this, unless you are involved in it? I have experienced firsthand how a short visit can encourage and excite a mission church that often feels alone and isolated from outside involvement.


Because of our involvement in trips to Bulgaria, our church has been impacted. Several people now share in the joys and sorrows that go on in Bulgaria. Our church gives more towards missions—and specifically towards Bulgarian missions—than before.

Many church members have partnered with New Life Church in Svishtov:

- A ladies' group raised money to supply **kitchen appliances** for the church.
- One family helped pay for **airline tickets** for missionaries.
- Our church has sent **flower arrangements** for funerals.

- Our church provided **housing** for missionaries home on stateside assignment.
- Our church has **gathered on our knees** in specific prayers for Bulgarian church families and for missionary families.

Our missionaries and mission churches need to know they are not alone. They need established churches to encourage and love them. Churches are impacted in positive ways when they actively participate in the Great Commission.

Later this year, I will make my twelfth trip to Svishtov, Bulgaria, my ninth as a team leader for The Hanna Project. Bulgaria has impacted my life and the life of my church. Come join us and see what it is all about. 

About the Writer: Darren Walker is senior pastor at First FWB Church in Washington, North Carolina, and a member of the board of IM, Inc. Learn more about short-term missions opportunities (iminc.org/go) or join a THP team (hannaproject.com).

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Snapshots Around the World



Japan: Miriam Bishop completed Japanese language school in February.

Spain: In the midst of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic, missionaries must find creative ways to minister. Tim and Kristi Johnson placed a sign on their balcony with an encouraging Scripture verse for those passing by to read.

Brazil: On March 8, Clóvis and Cristina Leandro held a service celebrating International Women’s Day in the yard of their home in Boa Esperança in Alagoas, Brazil. Approximately 85 people from the community attended and three people made salvation decisions.

Bulgaria: Josh and Lydia Provow adopted a Bulgarian four-year-old boy March 11. Pavel (Paul) had been abandoned at birth.



Japan: Hope Alive, a bilingual church plant in the greater Tokyo area of Japan, commemorated its first anniversary in January. Outreach activities—music meet ups, English Bible studies, community events, and children’s ministry—are meeting needs in the Tokorozawa area. Almost weekly, someone new was introduced to the gospel and accepted a Bible. In addition, the congregation celebrated six baptisms during the year.

Brazil: Nine young people were baptized in three churches in Brazil the first week of March. Pastor Elizeu Cantelmo at the First FWB Church in Araras baptized three students. Pastor Walter de Almeida at the Jardim Palmeiras FWB Church in Uberlândia baptized one youth. Pastor André Castro at the Nova Cidade FWB Church in Barbacena baptized five young people.



Japan: Miho Higashi shared her testimony on February 3 before Donnie McDonald baptized her at the Good News Chapel in Tokyo. Mr. Oshima, attending services for the first time after Rusty Carney’s invitation, heard the testimony. Rusty led him to the Lord and Mr. Oshima made a public declaration of faith February 11.

Ivorian Women’s Center Dedicated

Bondoukou, Côte d’Ivoire—On Saturday, March 7, Women of the Good News in Ivory Coast dedicated a new women’s center. The multiuse facility is designed to provide safe housing for schoolgirls from villages in the Bondoukou area as well as serve as an area for meetings, conferences, and retreats.

Nearly a thousand women converged from across the country to attend the momentous ceremony.

All women in the Ivorian Free Will Baptist churches contributed to building the center. Free Will Baptist Foundation supplemented their donations with two grants totaling \$100,000.

Representatives from the Foundation, WNAC, and IM (Clint and Lynette Morgan and Danny and Jackie Gasperson) traveled from the U.S. to join local dignitaries and the Ivorian national association leaders. **ONE**

ETEAM 2020 Canceled

Antioch, TN—In early April, Director of Mobilization Danny Gasperson announced, “After much fervent prayer, wise counsel, and careful research and deliberation, we made the difficult decision to cancel ETEAM for 2020 due to the high risk of exposure to COVID-19.”

Gasperson went on to say, “This decision was not easy to make. We value the opportunity ETEAM provides for us to interact with our wonderful high school students, but we love you too much to put your health and welfare at risk. We have delayed making this call as long as possible in hopes this crisis would pass quickly but unfortunately, that has not been the case.”

Students have three options:

1. Choose to participate in ETEAM

2021. Students selected for ETEAM 2020 will be given first priority for next year’s teams. Support raised this year will be applied to next year’s trip. Although students will need to submit a new application and references so records will be current, the application will receive first consideration. Destinations may change, but placement is secure as long as eligibility remains intact.

2. Choose to withdraw from the program and request a refund for the support raised.

Students will only receive money they personally gave for their trip. Money donated by others will be returned to donors. By with-

drawing, students forfeit their automatic selection for 2021’s ETEAM, though they may still apply for ETEAM 2021.

3. Seniors, graduating in 2020, have two options.

A. *Remain with ETEAM 2021 and follow the guidelines of Option 1 above.* Seniors choosing this option will be designated as student leaders of their assigned teams and assist adult team leaders.

B. *Participate in either a CMP or THP trip.* Seniors need to complete the appropriate applications for the program selected but will be given

special consideration in the selection process. The student’s ETEAM account will be transferred to the CMP or THP account.

“We will be happy to work with students to help them make the best selection for their circumstances,” Danny asserted. “If a student fails to notify us of his or her decision by the application deadline for 2021, we will default to option 1. Anyone with questions, concerns, or needing help should not hesitate to contact me or ETEAM Coordinator Hanna Mott.” They may be reached via email: danny@iminc.org or hanna@iminc.org. **ONE**

IM Emphasizes Digital Media

Antioch, TN—The IM Leadership Team (IMLT) determined it strategically important to increase the Mission’s communications focus on digital media and decrease the emphasis on the printed page.

“Restructuring is nothing new to the world of organizations, businesses, and, yes, even mission agencies. In the realm of missions, the demand for change is constant,” stated General Director Clint Morgan.

The role of communications manager was dissolved and all communications consolidated under the department of church development. As a result, Deborah St. Lawrence,

who served IM for almost 22 years, is no longer full-time at IM. “This was a tough decision for the IMLT,” Morgan stressed. “Not because it didn’t make sense, but because we knew what it meant for one of our team members.”

Morgan stated, “For over two decades, Deborah has waved her ‘magic wand’ over IM publications and made them better. We extend our thanks to Deborah for her work at IM and in the Free Will Baptist denomination.” Deborah continues to serve IM as a freelance contractor for IM’s content in *ONE Magazine*. **ONE**



Short-term Teams Yield Long-term Impact

BY HEATH HUBBARD

Have you heard horror stories of short-term mission trips? Several short-term teams painting the same fence on consecutive trips? Photo opportunities for Instagram but no real ministry? Stories about how the trip didn't help a missionary or the field? While those cases certainly exist, I want to tell you about the impact short-term teams have had in Tokyo, Japan. For a short-term missions trip to be successful, the team must effectively impact three areas: the area of ministry, the long-term missionaries on the ground, and the people taking the trip. When all those areas are positively affected, we see exciting things occur.

Impact on the Field

In Japan, we look for ways short-term teams can introduce people to Christianity or influence them to take the next step in their relationship with God. We want to impact people with the gospel. Typically, team members can't speak the language, but they can use their gifts to reach out to people and create new opportunities in our community. Things like English conversation events, speaking English at the train station, music, and drama attract people who may otherwise never hear the gospel. Frequently, the impact is experienced for many weeks, and often months, after the team departs.

A man walked into our church. He'd received a flyer in 2018. He wanted to visit but lost the flyer. This year (2019), he accepted a flyer from someone else at the train station and was excited to connect with the church. He now serves in our kids' and worship ministries—the result of a flyer he received from a short-term worker. Two years of meeting people at the train station led to this man attending church and becoming involved in ministry.

Two years ago, we launched a small group that eventually developed into our church. While speaking English at the train station, our short-term summer interns met a man who agreed to visit our Bible study. When our church launched, he came and now attends weekly.



He has indicated he believes in Jesus, but isn't sure if he wants to follow Him quite yet. Without short-term workers at the train station, looking for people with whom to speak English and inviting them to our bilingual Bible studies and church, this man would not have been exposed to the gospel.

This past summer, long after our summer interns left, a man showed up with a flyer he'd received at the train station. He asked if they were at the service. Though the interns had returned to America, their impact had not ended.

The ETEAM ministry that served Hope Alive church last summer did homestays with families of people who were not Christians. On the third day of their homestay, the families brought their students to a church service. The students shared the gospel with the crowd. One woman, who had been studying the Bible, raised her hand when they asked who believed in Jesus. Though she has not fully decided to follow God, we see the impact those students had because they shared the true reason for why they came to Japan—to tell people about Jesus.

A young man who became a Christian and was baptized last year gave his testimony. He credited the impact the short-termers had on his life for helping him realize he wanted to follow God.



Short-term missions can, in fact, have a lasting impact on people to visit church, grow in their faith, and even follow God.

Impact on the Missionaries

Living on the other side of the world is exciting at times. At other times, it can

feel really lonely. The summer is full of short-term teams and summer interns. Our family especially appreciates how these students interact with missionary kids. For our children, short-terminer arrivals feel like Christmas. The



teams typically bring snacks or gummies from America; but more than that, they bring love for our kids and spend time with them.

As missionaries, we get to share our ministry with teams and college students. We give them opportunities to dream, plan, and pray with us. We challenge the students to pray big, specific prayers for God to do big things while they are here. That also challenges us as missionaries to continue to pray big prayers.

The boost of energy teams and interns give to the Hope Alive team is irreplaceable. They provide excitement and new ways of thinking, but most of all, they are more laborers to serve alongside. Our whole family is sad to see the teams go, because of the fun we had and the ministry we shared. All the families ministering at Hope Alive are encouraged by the short-term teams and individuals who come to Japan. It's definitely a win for us—personally and for our ministry. We continue to talk with many of our interns for years after they leave. Career missionaries on the ground help further the impact of short-term missions.

Impact on the Students

In the summer of 2001, I stood on a hill in Brazil as missionary Curt Holland—now director of field ministry personnel at IM—shared the need for all people all over the world to hear the gospel. I was blown away by the need I saw. I am a missionary today for many reasons, but largely for that specific moment when I gained a glimpse of a larger world in need of Jesus.


I don't know of anything more moving than when we take students to a lookout here in Japan. Buildings and apartments and skyscrapers stretch as far as eyes can see. We remind the students 99.7% of the people in those buildings will never hear of Jesus and will die without

Him. It moves me to share that. It's impactful for the students who gain a picture of the reality of people who have never heard. They take that picture of lostness, along with people they met and faces they remember, as a huge impression of the need. The impact on them as possible career missionaries is huge.

We worked with people like Annabelle, who came first as an ETEAM student and then a summer intern last year and is returning this year as a missionary to Japan. Tristen served with us for two summers and is pursuing a degree to return to Japan as a church planter. Some of those impacted become missionaries. Some are the best prayer partners and financial partners we have. They feel called to different areas of ministry or different careers, but they are moved to pray and partner like never before.

The short-term trip really does make for long-term impact on all involved—the field, the missionary, and the students. We praise God for how He has used short-term trips in Japan and how He will continue to use high school and college students to make His name known among the nations. We praise the Lord for the boost of

encouragement they give us missionaries and the lifechanging impact God, in turn, makes in the students' lives.

So, please, pray about how your church can move people to be involved in short-term missions for long-term impact. If you are interested in serving in Japan for a summer or a short time, please let us know! 



About the Writer: Heath Hubbard and his wife Joni have been career missionaries to Japan since 2010. They serve at Hope Alive church in Tokyo. Hear more about the work in Japan: iminc.org/im-tv/japan/

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Uncertainty

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

Recently, uncertainty and volatility have become the norm for the stock market. Investors fear uncertainty more than anything. The stock market makes wild swings up and down, and investors do not have a handle on what is coming next. Generally, investors are looking ahead and listening closely when companies give their quarterly reports. These reports not only tell what happened in the previous quarter, but also give the investor guidance into what to expect in the next quarter and even projections for the coming year. Stocks often go up or down following these reports, based on whether the company met, exceeded, or fell short of previous guidance.

The COVID-19 crisis has caused unprecedented volatility, because no company can accurately predict what impact the crisis will have on their financial future going forward. Therefore, almost every company's stock has been hit hard during the crisis. Another factor driving the stock market down so quickly is computerized trading. Many years ago, everyone evaluated stocks on their long-term potential to produce a good dividend and to grow the company's stock price over time. Today, using computers and algorithms, many stock traders use

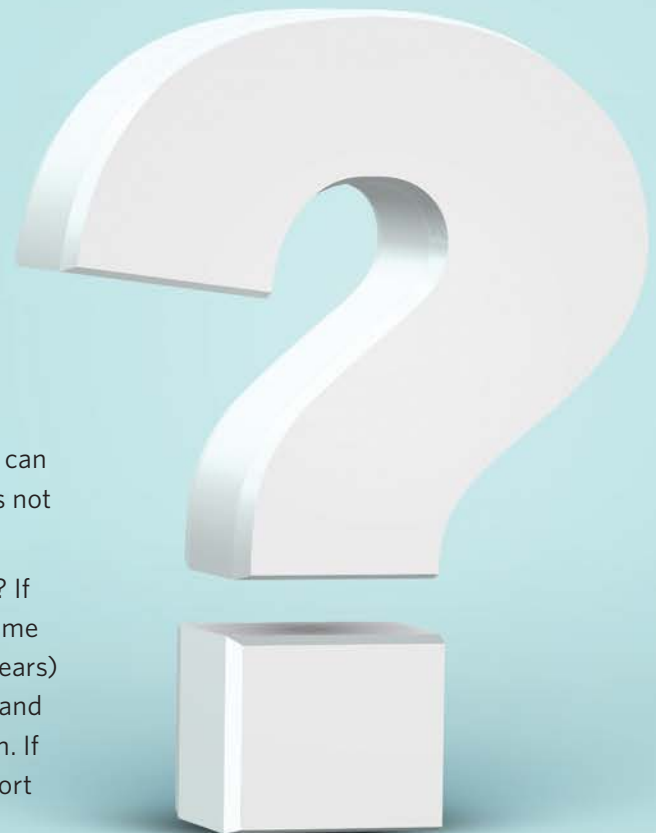
options to make a lot of money as the market moves up and down. This type of trading can make a good day in the market great and a bad day even worse.

Most economists believe the coming two quarters will probably be negative, which is the technical definition of a recession. However, this recession is being triggered by a shutdown of our economy to get the COVID-19 pandemic under control, not for any economic reason. If the country follows the President's suggested rules, there is a good chance the pandemic will be contained. If we succeed in containing the health crisis, the economy and the stock market should make a dramatic turnaround. Having said this, we all know the stock market can be unpredictable and is not always rational.

So, what should we do? If you have a long-term time horizon (five or more years) you should do nothing and "ride out" the downturn. If your time horizon is short

(less than two years), you probably shouldn't have been heavily invested in stocks anyway. Yet, it is best to ride it out and sell when you have recovered and move your assets into a conservative investment. **ONE**

About the Columnist: David Brown is director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. To learn more about the grants program, visit www.fwbgifts.org.



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Stewardship has always been a primary emphasis of WNAC. Much of this can be attributed Agnes Frazier, who grew up in the Bethlehem Church in Ashland City, Tennessee. At the urging of John and Mary Ann Welch, in the mid-1920s, Frazier, a schoolteacher, began writing material for use in monthly ladies' meetings. Her first pamphlet was entitled *Stewardship and Missions*.

Frazier was convinced Christ has dominion over more than 10% of a person's income. As a result of her work, most Cumberland District ladies' societies started giving regularly above their tithe. They also raised significant amounts of money, much of it going to missions. Agnes called upon the women of the Cumberland District to pray people would understand stewardship was essential for supporting missions. This early emphasis on stewardship paved the way for the ministry of WNAC in the decades to come.

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GRADUATES AT WELCH COLLEGE SHARE EXCERPTS FROM THEIR SENIOR TESTIMONIES



I truly can't believe I am writing these words. I am absolutely heartbroken that my time as a student on the Welch campus is over. It's really difficult to put the last four years into words, but I will try. What follows is my senior testimony. Since I won't get to share it with my college family, I will share it with you:

The past four years at Welch have all been different—different friends, different classes,

and different circumstances. However, when I began to think of constants, God's provision was the first thing that came to mind. So, I am going to share some of the times when He provided for me.

I decided to go to Welch when I was 16. This decision came with a great deal of uncertainty, but one thing was certain: I couldn't afford it. During the two years before graduating high school, my parents and I went back and forth trying to figure out if we could make it work, or if it was even worth it. I had an overwhelming peace Welch was where the Lord wanted me, and I remember begging God to give my parents the same peace. Many long, teary-eyed conversations left me questioning why God called me somewhere I couldn't go. Eventually, things started to turn around. My parents realized I was serious about my decision and got on board. Finances began to fall into place. *God provided.*

As the first in my family to go to Welch, I didn't know many people. I remember being terrified on move-in day my freshman year when I arrived early because of volleyball. I knew no one on the first day. Again, I questioned my decision. I don't know if I've ever cried as hard as the day my parents left me in Nashville (until today). But again, I was silly to doubt God. I immediately made friends with the entire volleyball team, all of whom I still call friends to this day. *God provided.*

After two roommates my freshman year, I found myself looking for a new roommate my sophomore year. I was stressed, because I really wanted to have the same roommate for the remainder of my time at Welch. I had no clue what I was going to do until Jacklyn Grizzle and I became friends. I still remember the day we decided to be roommates. I didn't know what an impact that would have on me. Jacklyn has become my best friend, my rock, and has been there for me through all of the craziness of the last three years. *God provided.*

My junior year brought more hardships than I expected. I found myself confused and sad. I felt as though nothing was going right. My sister got sick, and I wanted to be home with her and my family, but I needed to be at Welch. The faculty, staff, and students were there for me through the entire process and prayed constantly for my family. You don't find that at other schools. My sister is now healthy and doing great! *God provided.*



I've spent the last three summers working at many church camps as a Welch rep. When I applied for the job my freshman year, I remember thinking there was no way they would hire me because I was so young. Thankfully, they took a chance, and I got the job. If you know me, you know this was my greatest joy as a student. I loved that job! Not only did it supply steady income for tuition, it changed my life in ways I never could have imagined. *God provided.*

I was able to play volleyball for Welch all four years. Before I decided to go to Welch, I planned on staying local and playing volleyball for a school in Illinois. Until God intervened, volleyball was really my only priority when looking for a college. I am so glad He intervened. Each season came with its own battles, but each season made me a stronger player and person. So many favorite memories at Welch are from playing volleyball. I am thankful I didn't have to give up the sport of volleyball, because it means so much to me. *God provided.*

It has been wonderful getting to know the faculty and staff. I don't think they realize how much they mean to me and the other students. They have been kind and willing to mentor students. I was so excited to be in a place with so many people to look up to. I certainly found that at Welch. I wish I could thank each one of them individually, but I especially want to thank those who took extra time to pour themselves into my life. You know who you are! *God provided.*

Last, but certainly not least, I could not be more grateful for the friendships I made at Welch. I can't even begin to express how much I love my friends. I went to Welch because I wanted to be surrounded by likeminded people who would love and encourage me in day-to-day life. I didn't realize how many people would have an impact

on me. You were the best "student section" a volleyball player could ask for, the most fun teammates at sand volleyball, and the most encouraging friends I've ever known. Again, I wish I could thank everyone individually, but that would take months! I love you all and will



miss you guys so much, but I am grateful for the time we've shared together. *God provided.*

I know every student is sad that we will not return to campus this semester, but I ask that you specifically keep the seniors in your prayers. This has been a very difficult time for all of us. We didn't even know we were experiencing our "lasts" until they were already gone. Even though this news hurts deeply, I have complete faith that a year from now we will look back and say, "God provided." Thank you, Welch College, for everything.

—EMMA GUTHRIE

The last four years of my life have been absolutely God-sent. God called me to Welch College in 2016, and I have loved every minute. I had planned out every step of the way leading up to graduation. I intended to spend my last semester and summer on Rejoice Ministry Team surrounded by all the people God has placed in my life, and it was going to be great. Little did I know, God had other plans.

When it was announced Welch College students would finish the Spring semester at home, it came less as a shock and more as a blow to our hopes of returning. This is not ideal, but it was necessary. Please pray for your college students, especially the seniors, whose plans absolutely were wrecked. We need support. But I also understand we are here for such a time as this:

For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (Esther 4:14)

—MATTHEW STONE ONE



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Welch Names Whitney Lute Women's Resident Director

Welch College has named Whitney Lute women's resident director, according to Dr. Jon Forlines, vice president for Student Services. "We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Lute will serve in this role," Forlines said. "We believe she will continue the excellent job done by Rebekah Talbot, who served as women's resident director for the past two years."

Lute, a 2018 Welch psychology graduate, finished top in her class. While at Welch, she served as a student resident assistant for two years. She has served as a child services case worker and probate court clerk in Ohio since graduation. She is currently pursuing an M.A. in Counseling from Marshall University. Her husband Jacob was president of the Welch student body his last two years before graduating

with a degree in music performance. He is currently studying in Welch College's Master of Arts program in Theology and Ministry.

"Our young ladies in the dorm have been blessed with extraordinary dorm moms who have led them to a closer walk with the Lord," said Susan Forlines, dean of women. "As a student leader, Whitney was a team player who displayed a servant's heart and a love for others. We ex-



Whitney Lute

pect her godly influence to continue the work of her predecessors—mentoring and serving the dorm women

of Welch. We welcome her back to the Student Services team."

Lute will begin her duties in July. **ONE**

Welch Responds to COVID-19

Like other educational institutions around the world, Welch college was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For complete coverage of the college's response to the virus, including information about the fall semester, visit <https://welch.edu/coronavirus/>. **ONE**

Guthrie Named Interim Head Volleyball Coach

Emma Guthrie has been named interim head volleyball coach for the 2020 volleyball season, according to Athletic Director Greg Fawbush. Guthrie graduated from Welch in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. A four-year starter for the *Lady Flames*, Emma was recognized as an all-regional player the past three years.

"Emma is a logical choice to lead the *Lady Flames* next season," Fawbush said. "As a student athlete, she demonstrated her desire to experience both spiritual and emotional growth. As the Welch community navigates the unprecedented

circumstances of completing the spring semester remotely and the ensuing limitations created for our Christian community of faith and learning, Emma's understanding of the Welch College athletic culture will be an invaluable asset."

Coach Fawbush managed volleyball duties until Guthrie transitioned into the role June 1. For information about volleyball or other athletics at Welch, email Coach Fawbush: gawbush@welch.edu.

To learn more about Emma, read her senior testimony in "God Provided!" on page 30 of this issue. **ONE**

What Is Worship?

BY BARRY RAPER AND MATTHEW MCAFFEE

What is worship? On the surface this seems like a fairly simple question. The way we answer it, however, betrays a number of our assumptions about a host of other issues. For example, what does our answer reveal about the nature of Scripture and its role in worship? Or, how does our understanding of worship reveal our beliefs about the church and the nature of corporate worship? How might we distinguish between corporate versus individual worship, and how do they relate?

Over the centuries, the topic of worship has generated much controversy within the church, partly because one's view of worship is an outgrowth of broader theological commitments. Furthermore, these commitments are not always self-evident to those who hold them.

We are devoting a series of four *Intersect* articles to the topic of worship. We would like to deal with the following four questions: **1) What is worship? 2) What governs our worship? 3) What is the role of worship? and 4) What is the relationship between worship and music?** In this first installment, we want to briefly define worship.

Biblical Terminology

The most common expression for worship in the Old Testament utilizes the verb *hishtahwāh*, which essentially means “to prostrate oneself.” The expression is related to the word for ground and simply indicates the posture of being face to the ground. The

physical posture of prostration symbolizes an inner posture of obeisance before God. It routinely describes the posture of individuals approaching a king, as in 2 Samuel 14:33: “He came and bowed down with his face on the ground before the king.” This royal setting is similar to the worship of God. Moses hurriedly bowed down to the ground and worshiped the Lord when he passed before Moses (Exodus 34:6, 8). After everything had been taken from Job, he fell on the ground and worshiped the Lord (Job 1:20). The psalmist invites God’s people to worship, bow down, and kneel before the Lord their Maker (Psalm 95:6).

The New Testament uses similar language. The Greek word *proskuneō*, often translated “worship,” also signifies prostration. The ancient Greek translations used it to translate the Hebrew expression just described. The Greek word adds the nuance of kissing the feet or hem of the garment of the honoree.¹ Matthew used it to describe what the disciples did when the resurrected Christ first appeared to them: “Seeing him, they worshiped” (Matthew 28:17). Earlier in verse 9, Matthew records that His followers “grabbed his feet and worshiped him.” This context applies the same Old Testament language of prostration and obeisance to Jesus.

¹ Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, Wilbur Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 882.

In both the Old and New Testaments, a coherent picture of worship emerges. The awesome presence of God with Moses, and the glorious sight of the resurrected Lord garner the same response: falling face down to the ground in fear and reverence. When God reveals Himself to His people, it instills reverential awe, which results in people lowering their faces to the ground in deference to His glory. The biblical language of worship tells us it involves humble deference coupled with reverential fear.

Appropriate Versus Inappropriate

The Bible also teaches there is right worship and wrong worship. To put it another way, there are appropriate ways to approach God and inappropriate ways to approach God.

One instructive example comes from Cain and Abel. God accepted the offering of one but not the other. Why? Some commentators observe God accepted Abel’s offering because Abel offered an animal sacrifice. This is a valid point, and one that becomes much clearer after Moses receives the law from God. In this context, however, the emphasis is on Abel’s disposition. Even though the term *hishtahwāh* is not used here, we sense Abel had a disposition of reverential humility—internal prostration. He came to God in fear and reverence, offering the best of what he had. Cain, on the other hand, brought leftovers to God. The evidence of his





improper attitude manifests itself even further when the Lord lovingly corrects him. In rage, Cain killed his brother.

We learn more about worship in the law. Certain offerings are appropriate in certain circumstances; others are not. Priestly officials had to give close attention to the manner of their worship. The people of Israel were expected to give close attention to the kinds of offerings they brought to the temple, as well as their manner of presentation. Even the tabernacle itself followed a plan in its construction. The Old Testament underscores that God cares about *how* we worship. And the *how* of our worship likewise corresponds to the *who*, the character of the God we worship, as revealed in Scripture.

One further example is worth mentioning here. Uzzah stretched out his hand to steady the Ark of the Covenant when David tried to transport it to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:6-7). God was angry with Uzzah. Why? He disregarded the holiness of God. Did he mean to disrespect God? Probably not. Nonetheless, the Levites were responsible for handling the Ark, but this instruction had been ignored, even by David. Uzzah was not a Levite, and the consequences were severe.

Lest we think this situation is exclusive to the Old Testament, we need only look to Ananias and Sapphira. Amidst the church's rapid growth, this couple seized an opportunity to promote themselves. They blasphemed God's worship by using it for personal gain. God struck them down, and fear spread throughout the churches (Acts 5:1-11). This inci-

dent parallels the actions of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, who offered unauthorized or unholy fire before the Lord. They were struck dead as well (Leviticus 10:1-2). It would seem the manner of our worship matters greatly to the Lord.

Whole-Person Worship

The language and manner of worship in the Bible is comprehensive. It is external (manner) and internal (disposition). Worship involves the *whole* person—mind, heart, and will. When God created Adam and Eve, both were made in His image or likeness. The biblical record states, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created him; male and female he created them."² But what does the *image of God* actually mean? According to Forlines the *imago Dei* is summed up in the term *personal*. He contends, "The basic thrust of the idea of being created in the image of God is that man is a *personal* being. A person who thinks, feels, and acts."³ Furthermore, the image of God in man is divided into two aspects. Forlines states, "What has been said about man as personal, rational, moral creature is frequently referred to as the formal likeness of God in man. I prefer to speak of it as the *constitutional* likeness of God in man. The image of God in man at creation also...included *functional* likeness. The functional likeness means that man, as created, thought, felt, and acted in a way that was pleasing to God."⁴ Therefore, humanity possess-

2 Genesis 1:27.

3 F. Leroy Forlines, *The Quest for Truth: Answering Life's Inescapable Questions* (Nashville: Randall House Publications, 2001), 138.

4 *Ibid.*, 139.

es a constitutional likeness to God, and this finds expression in the functions of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Through the redemption of Jesus Christ and the indwelling presence of the Spirit, Christians are enabled to worship in Spirit and in truth (John 4). This theological perspective correlates with the language of worship throughout the Bible. As God works within the individual believer and in the church, He aims to bring about transformation in our thoughts, affections, and actions—even in our worship. **True biblical worship engages the total personality.** We worship God with our minds, desires, and actions.

Admittedly, we have barely scratched the surface of this important topic. Nonetheless, worship in the Bible is humble deference and reverential awe before Christ our King. This governs the way we approach our King. Scripture instructs us on appropriate ways of worship. Christian worship "in Spirit and in truth" likewise informs our total personality. This kind of worship demonstrates the renewal of God's image in man, as the Creator restores our total personality in right relationship to Himself. **ONE**

About the Columnists: Dr. Matthew McAfee serves as provost and professor at Welch College. He has ministered in Free Will Baptist churches in Virginia, Tennessee, Illinois, and Canada.

Dr. Barry Raper serves as program coordinator for Ministry Studies at Welch College. He pastors Bethel FWB in Ashland City, Tennessee.



DEAR SIR & SON

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS

William Lee Evans wrote first-rate letters. We have a hundred of them, written between 1980 and his death in 2008. We kept them because he was Dad, and in his letters, we see his face, hear his voice, and hold onto the man we lost.

Jan. 11/06

Spgfld, MO

Dear Sir & Son

I found a Nother Nickle so I thought I would Send it on While the Intrest is above 10%. You know Us po folks Need all We can get. I hope Your Florida trip went Well. As you can see I Cant rite. My arm is Stiff and I need an excuse so I guess thats as good as any.

Well We finally got a little rain. I think about .8" & three Flakes of snow.

Weather Man thinks We might get a bit more rain. First of next week I hope.

I'll go for now don't want to tell All I know in one letter.

I love you,

Dad





The “Sir” in Dad’s salutation was his humorous acknowledgement that I (Bill) was then-director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. Of course, his “nickle” was more than five cents. I don’t remember how much, but enough to create a new gift annuity. He already had several gift annuities with Free Will Baptist Foundation and knew interest would be high because he was almost 88. Dad liked good interest on his “nickle,” and he was a giver. His two goals were getting good interest payments as long as he lived and giving to our denominational work when he died. A gift annuity would do both.

Dad was born in 1918, in Hazen, Arkansas. His mother, 22-year-old Claudie Lee Barnes Evans, died a week after he was born. She was the second wife of 47-year-old William Thomas Evans, whose first wife died after birthing seven children. Eventually, William Thomas Evans married a third wife and had nine more children, a total of 17. Dad was the eighth and only child by Claudie Lee.

Dad was raised by his maternal grandparents, Pa Barnes and his wife Margaret, who moved from Arkansas to Vernon, Alabama. He remembered seeing his birth father only once. After eighth grade, Dad quit school and hired out raising turkeys and doing general farm work for a neighbor. He loved ham and other hog meat but had no respect for turkeys. “Dumbest animal in the world,” he said. “You had to kick them to make them move, or they’d smother each other.”

At 18, he married 17-year-old Braxine McDaniel. A year later, Margaret was born, and two years after that, I came along in a two-room sharecropper’s house on the Hunter Young farm near Vernon. Soon after, Dad went into sawmill work at Lumber City, Georgia, and Gatman, Mississippi.

I remember Gatman. We rented a two-room shotgun house a few feet from a railroad track. It was rough-sawn board-and-batten on a two by four frame. It shivered and shook but didn’t fall down from the rumble and clatter

of trains. One-inch boards were both the inside and outside walls—unpainted, of course. Somebody said modern board-and-batten houses “exude a comfortable informality.” In Gatman, we didn’t talk much about comfort or informality. We were committed to being neighborly, loving, laughing, and getting by.

When Dad got a job with the Frisco Railroad as a welder’s helper, we moved back to Alabama—Sulligent this time, on the Buttahatchee River—and rented four rooms off a central hall from Aunt Marthie-Ann (no relation) who had four rooms on the other side of the hall. A well was close out back and an outhouse over a steep hill.

Dad’s job with Frisco was with a maintenance-of-way gang. He worked ten-hour days, seven days a week for four or five weeks in a row. He lived with the gang in a box car converted into a bunk car, and then came home for seven or eight days. On the gang, he earned a little extra money as “crumb boss”—sweeping the camp car where the crew cooked and ate. His favorite job was operating D4 and D7 Caterpillars. But when Dad came home, we worked the garden, split stove wood, made house repairs, and walked a mile to church. About dark every day, he was all ours in the front porch swing. Margaret on one side, me on the other: pumping the swing, laughing, telling stories, and fighting Buttahatchee mosquitoes.

In 1948, Dad was promoted to maintenance-of-way mechanic, and Frisco made us move to Springfield, Missouri. He stayed on the road for another 30 years, in and out of cheap motels and greasy-spoon restaurants, home only on weekends and holidays until he retired early to care for Mom whose health was really bad.



Soon after retirement, Dad began to write us letters. Phone calls were paid by the minute back then, and Dad was never one to spend when he didn't have to. I was traveling a lot with my job, so I called, but Dad wrote. We are so glad he did.

In June of 1989, Dad sent me (Brenda) a letter. He had always called me Jane, my middle name—the only person who ever did—and I loved it. But in this letter, he didn't. I don't know why. We lived in California then. I was teaching and had just completed my M.A. in English. In late June, we would head to Kentucky for our son Lee's wedding on July 1. On our way east, we planned to stop in Springfield to see Dad.

Springfield, MO.

June 3, 89

Dearest Brenda

I guess You Are Well rested With Nothing to do With All thats going on. As the Monkey said when he got his tail in the Lon More (It Won't be Long Now). School is Nearly over and No 2 Son is Almost Married. Makes a feller Wonder how Much all this good Stuff a feller Can take. Your Graduation in amongst all that I'm sure Was not light. You've had a Pretty full Spring thus far. I kindly hope things Will slow up just a bit for you all After July 1. When you get as old and no good as I am things Won't bother you Much Unless you have a Straw Patch [strawberry patch]. Then You'll loose your Mind for a few weeks. I've had at least 50 gal. I've given 25 gal Away and Put Berries Away until the World looks level & I still have a few but I'm Not fixing anymore I don't think.

I'll be looking for you Western People About June 25th before you go on to KY. Congratulations on You Schooling. I'm Proud of You, and Still glad you are ours & think We'll just keep you. I Love you Verry Much.

Dad E.

Dad's letters were a one-sided conversation and often funny. They are models for the art of personal letter-writing, although he would have laughed at the idea that they were a model of anything, much less writing. Anyway, here's a bit of advice he'd never give you.

Go ahead and write and do it like

Dad—in your voice, like you speak. Be ordinary. Worry little about spelling and punctuation. Add dates and places. Cause us to mull, smile, remember. Be serious, too,



but also random. Joke; be self-deprecating. Of course, be yourself and say what's going on. Dad knew I was worn out, and he was worn out, too, from his strawberries. So, when he says, "I'm Not fixing anymore I don't think," we know he will. We knew Dad. He would not let plump berries rot on the vine. And he knew that we knew.

But you say, "I don't write personal letters anymore." You email or text or tweet, don't you—or post on Facebook? Learn from Dad. Do it in your own words, show your face, the gleam in your eye. Bare your grin and zigzagged wrinkles. Let readers hear your voice, feel your soul. Let them taste your strawberries. **ONE**

About the Writer: Bill and Brenda Evans enjoy being "young-old" and retired because they like books, Sudoku, jigsaw puzzles, food, more books, travel, and volunteering in Ashland, Kentucky.

Foundation Announces Grant Recipients

Antioch, TN—Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent severe financial impact, the Free Will Baptist Foundation board voted to suspend normal guidelines for grants in 2020. The board decided to allow grants for emergency operational needs and narrowed their focus to consider only national agencies for 2020 grants. The following ministries received grants:

- Welch College - \$400,000
- Randall House Publications - \$100,000
- WNAC - \$100,000

The Foundation hopes to resume normal grants in future years, and the 2020 applications received in March will be held and considered at that time.



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Serving God Now and in the Future

BY CHRIS COMPTON

Serving the Lord is the greatest privilege in the world. To think Creator God would allow me to be a part of His mission to love others, serve people, and reach the world with the gospel just amazes me. I love it and want to be a part of it. Through my local church and my vocation, I have a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord and fulfill His call. That's what Christians do. It is our response to God who loves us and has saved us from our sins.

What about when we get to retirement? Does the mission change? In her book of essays entitled *Unpopular Opinions*, Dorothy Sayers writes, "What is the Christian understanding of work?...It is that work is not, primarily, a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do. It is, or it should be, the full expression of the worker's faculties...the medium in which he offers himself to God." If our work and labor is as Sayers says (and I believe it is), what should be the way a believer views retirement?

In our Western culture, the prevalent notion of retirement is a life without labor or commitment. When the average person thinks about retirement, he or she thinks about vacations, beaches, traveling, rest, and relaxation. Nothing is wrong with those plans. We all may have aspirations for such things, but for believers, retirement is much more. Retirement is not a reward for all our labor. Retirement is about mission. It is about open hands rather than holding tightly, about others and not about ourselves. Our retirement future is not a time to retire

from serving God but rather a time of increased opportunities to serve Him.

It could be when we go on trips or join a golf club, we consider and look for ways we can serve God in that setting and share the love of Christ. Or, it could mean you have more time to volunteer at church during the week, teach a new Sunday School class, serve on a board or committee, or assist in meeting the needs of the elderly in your church or community. It may be leading a mission trip, a volunteer staff position, starting a new ministry, etc. Whatever the service or labor, if it's for the Lord, it is good and pleasing to Him.

OUR RETIREMENT
FUTURE IS NOT A
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TO SERVE HIM.

So, when you think about planning for retirement or what your retirement may look like, think about getting prepared so you are able to go wherever God calls you to go and do whatever God calls you to do during the last quarter of your life. Let us commit to be faithful to serve the Lord as long as we can and until our work on this earth is done and He calls us home.

My prayer is we all can say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). **ONE**

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

A Gift for Dad!

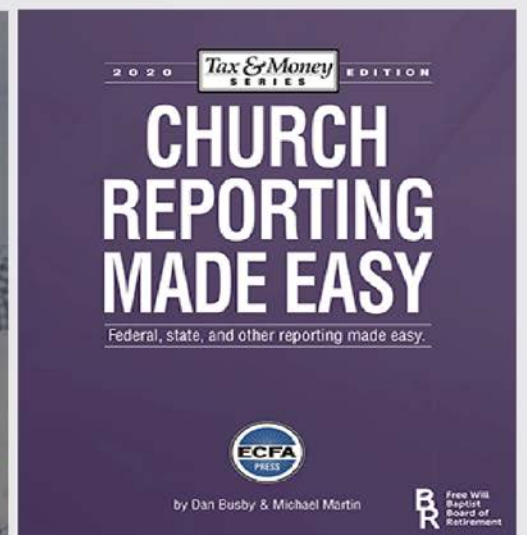
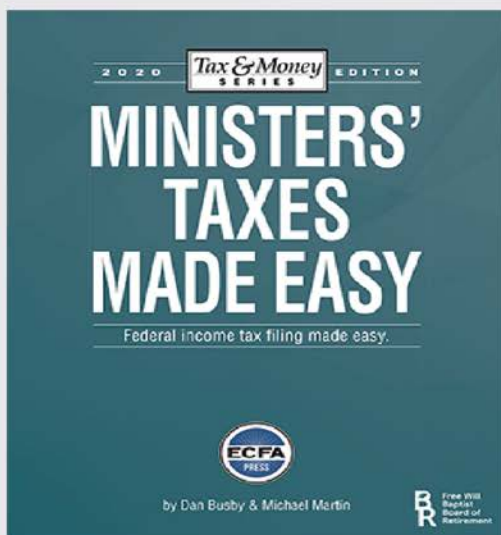
Master's Men would like to provide churches with a free bookmark to distribute on Father's Day. Contact us with the quantity you want, and we will ship them to you: masters@nafwb.org



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Help Your CELF

BY KENNETH AKERS

The recent months have made us aware that we live in uncertain times, but the reality is life is always uncertain. The recent downturn in the economy and subsequent decrease in the stock market has hit many investors hard. Some have even begun looking for other options for safer investing.

The Church Extension Loan Fund (CELF) from North America Ministries is a *great* option. CELF has guaranteed returns, because all the investments are in real property secured through loans to churches and ministries. Receive an interest rate of 2.5%, with an investment as little as \$500, with a maximum 4% return on investments of \$100,000 or more.

What is CELF?

CELF is a fund from which Free Will Baptist churches can borrow money for buildings or properties. The funds reflect money invested in the program by Free Will Baptist people and churches.

Here is how CELF works: you invest any amount over \$500 in the program. In return, you receive a good rate of interest on your money. The money is then loaned to churches and ministries, and the church repays the loan with a competitive rate of interest. Interest on your investment will be paid monthly or compounded, whichever you choose, with no penalty for early withdrawal. (Although a 30-day notice is requested.)

The CELF Investment Program affords you an opportunity to help churches get much-needed loans while at the

same time earning guaranteed interest on your investment. Through the CELF program, investors help North American Ministries establish new churches across North America.

Is CELF Secure?

Investors often ask about the security of CELF. Our bank is stable with a consistent five-star rating. CELF has a 38-year track record, with proven longevity through several difficult financial downturns.

When investing with CELF you are investing in ministry. Your money will be invested in a conservative program, with 85% to 90% of total assets loaned out to churches across America. CELF holds first mortgage on all properties for more than the amount of the loan. Ten to 15% of total assets are kept on hand in checking accounts, money market accounts, and certificates of deposit. No funds are ever invested in stocks or bonds.

CELF currently holds assets of over \$78 million.

If you have questions about the CELF program, please contact Ken Akers (ken@nafwb.org) or visit the CELF page at www.fwbnam.com for an application. The investment program is open and accepting investments. **ONE**

About the Writer: Ken Akers is CFO of North American Ministries and director of Master's Men.

Taking Christ to the End of the Earth

BY TERRY AUSTIN



I never ran from the call to preach the gospel, but I did run from the call to the chaplaincy. My understanding of answering the call to preach included pastoring or being an evangelist. I honestly had no idea how many opportunities existed to fulfill God's call to take Christ to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

I learned ministry involved *every* area of life. The Gospel of Christ is not defined or limited by borders, laws, or political agendas: the Gospel of Christ is worldwide and to whosoever. Wherever and whenever we have the opportunity to serve our fellow man, we have the opportunity to share the Gospel of Christ with them.

Allow me to share a few examples. Lieutenant Chaplain Rick Cason serves as the chaplain for the Tattall County Sheriff's Department in Georgia. He not only serves his community as pastor of Ebenezer Free Will Baptist Church, he serves his county's law enforcement officers


by supporting them and keeping the Gospel of Christ and the love of God in their thoughts. Brother Rick serves alongside his fellow officers, congregation, and community by going the extra mile as a chaplain for first responders.

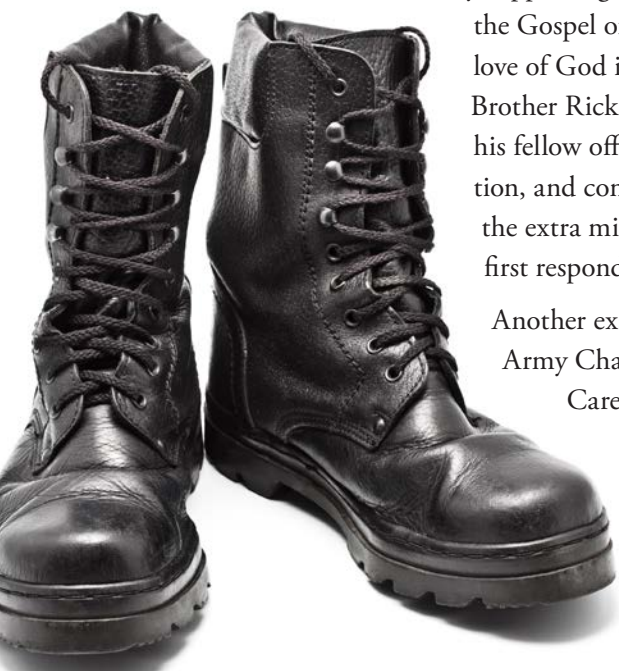
Another example is retired Army Chaplain (MAJ) John Carey. He does something similar by serving as staff chaplain for

Murray-Calloway County Hospital in Murray, Kentucky. Brother Carey has consolidated his gifts to serve both civilians *and* military veterans in a community-wide effort to heal the scars and challenges of life. He visits over 20 people a day, offering hope and healing in order to further the gospel and the patient's quality of life.

Taking Christ to the ends of the earth means we use every means of communication and service at our disposal to tell our world Jesus Christ has paid the price for sins, and anyone can have peace with God. Serving as a chaplain in any capacity, for any agency, is one way to proclaim the gospel and serve God and our denomination. North American Ministries is the endorsing agency for the National Association of Free Will Baptists. As such, the mission is to endorse chaplains for the military and other agencies.

If the Lord is calling you to serve in this unique role, I hope you consider serving as a chaplain. In whatever agency you hope to serve, or are serving, I pray you are fulfilled in your ministry and have a great sense of accomplishment. I trust you will continue serving Christ and introducing Him to your community or agency.

If you serve as a chaplain in any capacity, I would like to know where and how you are serving. Please email me at chaplainaustin@gmail.com. 



About the Writer: Terry W. Austin is chaplain support officer for North American Ministries. Learn more about Free Will Baptist chaplain ministry at www.fwbnam.com.



Building Bridges

WHY THE MISSION NORTH AMERICA OFFERING IS SO IMPORTANT

One of the things I love about North American Ministries is when you pledge an amount to a church planter through faith promise, every penny goes directly into their account to pay their salary, start-up expenses, travel, and other planting-related expenses. However, this model does leave a gap for support services.

Obviously, the church planter is essential on the field doing the heavy lifting, but an office with support staff “back home” is also essential. We know every dollar raised for a specific church plant is intended to go to that work, and we are proud to say it does. However, we also need to raise additional money for the support side, and this is where the annual Mission North America offering comes in.

We are equally proud of the fact that we depend less on gift income for support than we once did thanks to the Church Extension Loan and investment Fund (CELF). Income from CELF provides much of the revenue coming into our office to bolster our general fund. However, this fund, along with the Together Way plan, still falls short of fully funding the general fund, which provides for our office staff, conferences, recruitment, assessment, training, coaching, managing our field teams, and more.

This is why the Mission North America offering every November is so vital. Please make plans to give to this year’s offering.

Several states have funding plans providing money to specific church planters but again, none of this money goes into the NAM general fund. A strong general fund is essential to provide the support our field team needs, and one can’t exist without the other. We ask every individual, local church, district association, and state to participate in the offering. Plan ahead by praying for NAM, our office and field staff, and the success of the offering. Then, put faith into action by giving on **November 22, 2020**, and every November following. Our offering is always the Sunday before Thanksgiving, so mark it on your calendar!

Thanks for your continued prayers and support. Together we can build bridges to the lost and see lives eternally changed. **ONE**

Learn more:
www.fwbnam.com

Pastoral Leadership and the Church

BY BRAD RANSOM

Just about everyone has heard John Maxwell's phrase, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." Churches have multiple leaders, but no single leader is more important than the pastor. The pastor is often the only leader who has a direct call from God. He is also the one who receives vision from God and is responsible for equipping the saints for ministry. Certainly, this isn't to say other leaders aren't visionary or important, but it is important to realize the value and critical nature of leadership. Much is riding on this principle.

Many pastors feel inadequate. As I have traveled across our denomination throughout the past 13 years, I have heard many pastors express their desire to learn more practical pastoral skills. Most pastors realize the gravity of their leadership in their church. If a church is growing and discipleship is happening, the pastor is most likely at the forefront. If it's not happening, the pastor likely isn't leading it. I know this sounds harsh, but truth sometimes is hard.

Many of our pastors and leaders are Bible college and seminary trained, which is a great thing. However, many others are not. I think most pastors, whether formally trained



or not, would agree more training is always helpful. I hate to think any pastor would think he's had enough training! Practical pastoral training should be ongoing throughout every pastor's career. Some of this training could include reading books, listening to podcasts, attending seminars and workshops, boot camp trainings, coaching, and more! The possibilities are endless.

In coming issues of *ONE Magazine's* ReFresh page, we will discuss training options for pastoral leadership. Here is a brief glimpse of what's coming. We will discuss:

- Assessment for pastors and learning how personality affects leadership.
- Coaching: how inviting another pastor or leader into your "space" is useful and healthy.
- Training: what do we as FWB have to offer?

Stay tuned! 

About the Columnist: Dr. Brad Ransom is director of church planting and chief training officer for North American Ministries. Contact Brad: brad@nafwb.org.



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COMING FALL 2020

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Bless Us and Send Us Today

R. Douglas Little

Psalm 67

R. Douglas Little

1. With-out You we can do noth-ing, on - ly by grace can we
2. Not for our sakes are we ask - ing, but for those who have not
3. We have been blessed be-yond mea-sure, more than we need You pro-

stand; All we would share of the gos - pel we must re -
heard; Bless us, O Lord of the har - vest, send us to
vide; Yet there is no great-er trea - sure than the souls

ceive from Your hand; Lord, for the sake of Your glo - ry,
teach them Your Word; You promised You would be with us,
for whom You died; O - pen our eyes to the har - vest,

that all may wor - ship Your name, Strengthen us to tell the
Your love is what we must show, Filled with the pow'r of Your
o - pen our hearts to all men; As in the past You have

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Bless Us and Send Us Today, p. 2

sto - ry, the mes - sage of truth to pro - claim.
Spi - rit, we an - swer Your call - ing to go.
blessed us, Lord, do it a - gain and a - gain!

Pour out Your mer - cy, rain down Your bless - ings, Shine Your face

on us, we pray; We'll tell the na - tions of Your sal -

va - tion, Bless us and send us to - day.

Randall House Announces Personnel Adjustments

Nashville, TN—Randall House made some key personnel adjustments in late 2019 and early 2020, according to Director Ron Hunter. He noted, “As a leading voice within the Body of Christ on discipleship, through growth in other areas, we had divided our focus, efforts, and promotional dollars. We are shifting back to emphasizing our goal of providing the most engaging and easy-to-use discipleship curriculum for your classes, Sunday Schools, and small groups. You will hear more in the coming days about the details of *D6 Everyday Curriculum*.”

Randall House moved **Katie Greenwood** to the position of acting director of curriculum. She has been a senior editor and critical architect and developer on

previous curriculum initiatives. She will lead the team as they launch the next wave of D6 Curriculum to be released this fall. In addition to being part of the Randall House leadership team and directing the curriculum editorial team, Katie also will serve as one of three acquisition editors for the Randall House book division.

Dr. Danny Conn has shifted to the position of director of editorial and strategic projects, which means he will direct all intellectual property other than curriculum. He will split his time between supporting curriculum development and other editorial projects. In addition to providing insight as primary theologian and church history resource, Dr. Conn also serves as the academic editor, one of three book




Katie Greenwood



Dr. Danny Conn

acquisitions editors, international editorial liaison for all translated products (including curriculum), CTS Guidelines expert, breakout leader for Vertical Three and D6 Conference, and *ONE Magazine* representative.

Thank you for joining Randall House in prayer as we navigate this new season. We are excited about all God has in store for us as we serve our denomination. 

NEW!

Family Faith Talks

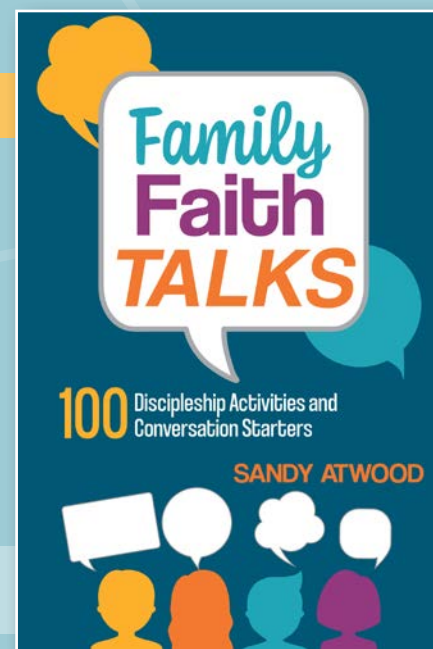
100 Discipleship Activities and Conversation Starters

by Sandy Atwood

Family Faith Talks provides over 100 practical, simple ways—including game ideas, questions to ask, Bible verses to read, and prayers to pray—to talk with children about God. Try one of the ideas with your family! Most don't require any setup (except for a few science or cooking experiments). You might be surprised at how eager your kids are to learn from you!

www.D6family.com

Price: \$13.99



Leaders = Readers

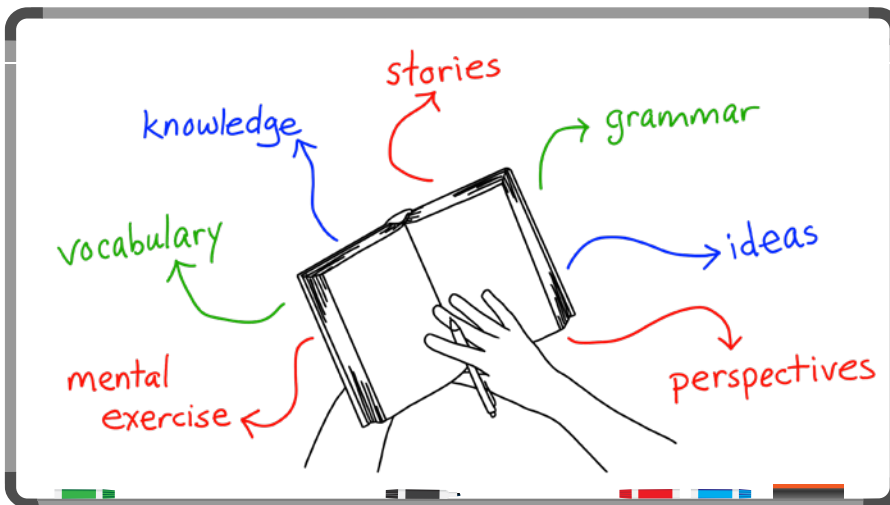
BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

President Harry Truman described the developmental effect of reading when he said, “Readers of good books, particularly books of biography and history, are preparing themselves for leadership. Not all readers become leaders, but all leaders must be readers.” In 2018, I wrote in this column how all leaders must be learners. One way to grow insight and innovation comes from diving deeper into books.

Recently, I heard about a Free Will Baptist ministry leader who started a reading group that will tackle five books a year and discuss them. This group selects books from the following categories to be well rounded: one theology, one biography/history, one ministry skill, one leadership, and one open ended.

Some leaders belong to Christian book clubs. The clubs automatically send a new book release every month or every other month at a 20% discount with return privileges if the book does not appeal to you. With enough interest, Randall House could offer such a program, and titles would not need to be limited to only Randall House releases. We could offer a balanced reading plan. Please let me know if this would interest you.

Books provide opportunities to be mentored by authors you might not normally meet. Imagine eight-14 hours with a leadership guru, theologian, historian, effective pastor, or another expert, all for about \$18.



Such mentoring provides lessons without student debt. Books offer different perspectives, share ideas, improve your vocabulary and grammar, exercise your mind, increase your overall knowledge, and provide great stories to illustrate points when you communicate. Whatever degree you attained, or if you have never stepped foot on a campus, reading will keep you fresh.

What should you read? First and foremost, people dislike reading because they rarely read what interests them. Start there. Read topics, eras, or people you find fascinating. I hated reading until I was about 28 and then discovered military fiction with covert operatives. From there, I started consuming legal fiction, followed by forensic science.

I hate what I missed in the earlier years of my life, but I have more than made up for it since. You, too, can fall in love with reading. Do you

like history? If so, what part? Civil War? Middle ages? Maybe significant world figures? Grab a book about Abraham Lincoln, William Wilberforce, Harriet Tubman, Laverne Miley, Laura Belle Barnard, Winston Churchill, or others to learn more about their lives. Or tackle light reads like fiction, hobby interests, or self-improvement. What is your reading plan? Leaders are readers! **ONE**

About the Columnist: Ron Hunter Jr. has a Ph.D. in leadership and is CEO of Randall House Publications. You may contact him at ron.hunter@randallhouse.com.

RECOMMENDED ARTICLE

For Those Who Want to Lead, Read

By John Coleman

bit.ly/HBR-read2lead



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Curriculum Discipleship Plan 2020 Scope and Sequence

July 2020

Special Topic: Tackling Tough Issues

Week 1 - Help the Hurting

Week 2 - Practice True Religion

Week 3 - Rely on God's Justice

Week 4 - Put God First

August 2020

Old Testament: Daniel

Week 1 - Choosing Right in an Ungodly Culture

Week 2 - Standing Against Idolatry

Week 3 - God Rules in the Kingdom of Men

Week 4 - Remaining Faithful During Opposition

Week 5 - God Reigns Forever



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NAFWB

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

JULY 20-21, 2020

As a result of COVID-19, the **84th National Convention** will look different this year. Held **July 20-21**, worship services, seminars, and business sessions (conducted by the General Board) will be streamed online, according to Executive Secretary Eddie Moody, who offers some perspective on the changes:

These days, I often find myself thankful for those who have gone before us. For the first time in the 85-year history of the National Association, we will be unable to meet in person as a body. Our forefathers anticipated the possibility of a situation like this when they crafted Section 13 of the Constitution of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc. "Should necessity arise from war, or pestilence or any cause which prevents a regular meeting of the National Association, whether such a condition is of a local or general condition, then the General Board shall be privileged to call and act with full authority in all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the National Association." They established a means by which we can conduct business this year.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, only those necessary to lead services and conduct business will gather in person. We respectfully request all others to join the conference online. Each General Board member will be responsible for fielding questions and nominations from his state or district. The Digest of Reports will be made available several weeks prior to the convention. **For a full list of General Board members and their contact information, visit nafwb.org.**

A full slate of convention seminars will be available to watch online, starting Monday morning, July 20. These sessions, sponsored by every denominational agency and commission, will be available for viewing throughout and after the convention. Full descriptions of each seminar and panel discussion are available at nafwb.org.

Use the schedule on the following page to guide you through the two-day meeting.

Find updates at nafwb.org and events from Vertical Three at verticalthree.com

Convention Schedule

Monday Morning - July 20

- 8:00 Executive Committee Meeting
- 8:00 Online seminars begin

Monday Afternoon - July 20

- 3:00 Scripture Reading
- Prayer
- Roll Call and Proxies
- 2019 Minutes
- Appoint Committees:
 - Nominating
 - Resolutions
 - Obituary
- Executive Committee
- Reports of National Agencies
 - Executive Office
 - Board of Retirement
- Elect General Board
- Elect Executive Committee

Monday Evening - July 20

- 6:00 Evening Service
- Welcome: Mike Wade
- Speaker: Tim York

Tuesday Morning - July 21

- 8:00 Scripture Reading
- Prayer
- FWB Foundation
- 9:00 Home Missions
- 10:00 WNAC
- 11:00 Lunch

Tuesday Afternoon - July 21

- 1:00 Randall House
- 2:00 IM, Inc.
- 3:00 Welch College

Tuesday Evening - July 21

- 6:00 Evening Service
- Missionary Offering
- Speaker: Eddie Moody

Note: the following will be inserted to save time:

- Historical Commission*
- Media Commission*
- Music Commission*
- Commission for Theological Integrity*
- Budget Committee*
- Resolutions Committee.*

Commission for Theological Integrity

Doctrine, Confessionalism, and Denominational Identity
 Panelists: Kevin Hester, Rodney Holloman, Thomas Marberry, Eddie Moody, Jesse Owens, Matt Pinson, Jackson Watts

Historical Commission

The Challenge of FWB History
 Speaker: Robert E. Picirilli

IM, Inc.

Quick Trip Around the World
 Host: Clint Morgan

Media Commission

The Church and Technology
 Speakers: Commission Panel

Music Commission

Worship Planning 101
 Speakers: Bryan Hughes, Joshua Riggs

North American Ministries

Improving Your Guest Experience
 Speakers: Marc and Casie Neppl, Kevin Bass

Randall House

Unpacking Your New D6 EveryDay Curriculum
 Speaker: Katie Greenwood

Welch College

COVID-19 and the Future of Welch and Theological Education Among Free Will Baptists
 Panelists: Matt Pinson, Matthew McAfee

WNAC

Cultivating Intergenerational Relationships
 Speakers: Ana Batts, Debe Taylor

Online Seminars

Executive Office

Denominational Research: What We Are Discovering About Ourselves
 Speaker: Danny Baer

Board of Retirement

Preparing for the Next Financial Crisis
 Speaker: John Brummitt



Light in the Darkness

BY EDDIE MOODY

During this time of seemingly endless crisis, it is critical for Christians to be light in the midst of darkness. Jesus called every believer to be *salt* (Matthew 5:13) and *light* (Matthew 5:14-16). Throughout the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, He pointed the believer to the manner in which this would be fulfilled.

Salt

The Christian is salt by embracing a life of purity (Matthew 5:27-28), making the hard choices needed to keep from being entangled in these kinds of sins (Matthew 5:29-30). They are salt by doing the hard things needed to build a family, doggedly pushing back against divorce or a flip-pant attitude about the

importance of marriage (Matthew 5:31-32). They are also salt by their commitment to truth (Matthew 5:33-37), being people who can be depended upon and trusted to keep their word. Are we committed to holiness? Do we strive to build good marriages and take the time needed for the development of our families? Are we committed to telling people the truth? This devotion to being salt results in a completely different lifestyle from the world.

Light

The Christian is also called to be light, to be respectful to people by avoiding hurling insults (Matthew 5:21-22), by going out of the way to live at peace with everyone (Matthew 5:23-26), refusing to retaliate (Matthew 5:38-42), and even loving one's enemies (Matthew 5:43-45). In short, we treat people differently than the world treats them (Matthew 5:46-48). How are we doing in these areas? Do we respect and engage those who differ from us on theological or political issues? How do we treat people who mock or attack us?

It is hard to be light. How can one live in such a way? By making investment in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-21) and not worrying

about selfish needs getting met (Matthew 6:25-32). We do not see much of this in our highly-charged political environment, where everyone is concerned about personal health and financial survival. We have examples from the past, though. Joseph was salt (when he refused to have an affair with Potiphar's wife), and light to Egypt (saving untold numbers of people during a famine). The same is true of Daniel, who would not eat forbidden foods (salt) and constantly worked as advisor to Nebuchadnezzar and the rulers who followed him (light).

Let's follow their example as we interact with co-workers and classmates, neighbors, and family members. What the world needs now is for Christians to be salt and light in the darkness. **ONE**



Eddie Moody

Executive Secretary,
National Association of
Free Will Baptists

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- +Board of Retirement
- +Foundation
- +Vertical Three
- +Commission for
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- +Historical Commission
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- +Music Commission



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SEPTEMBER 27