

ONE LORD ONE VOICE ONE VISION

# ONE

magazine

*Driving  
Discipleship*  
HOME

*Discipline Equals  
Discipleship*

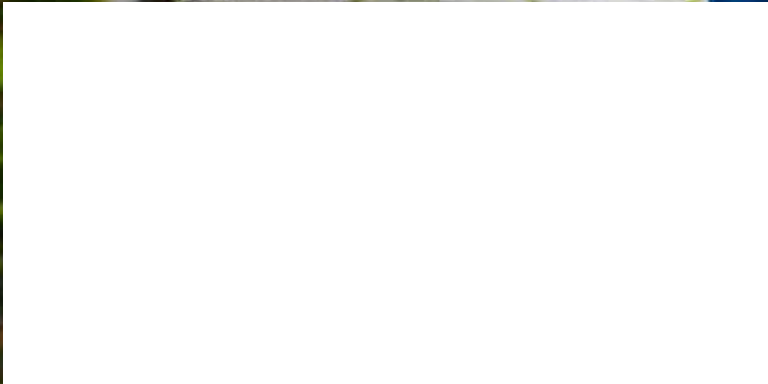
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*Serving in Harmony*

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*Jasper & Ivy*

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# Adulting

BY ERIC THOMSEN

“Uh, Dad, my car just started making a weird clicking noise. What do you think it is? And what should I do? Is it safe to drive?”

I could hear the concern in my daughter’s voice as she encountered yet another life challenge in her first summer away from home (mostly), working as a live-in nanny for a family on the other side of the city.

After a few questions pinpointed the likely problem, I explained the steps to get her car repaired, including what to say if an over-enthusiastic service tech tried to up-sell her on unnecessary services. Then, understanding the realities of her barebones budget, I offered quietly, “Or, you could just wait until tomorrow morning, and I will swing by and take care of it for you before work.”

Relief flooded her voice as she replied, “That would be really, really great, Dad.”

Problem solved. Life lesson taught. Dad stock rising! What a great five-minute conversation.

Many people live with the misconception that parenting stops at

age 18. American culture has identified this as the “magic” age when children become legal adults, go away to college, or find a “real job” and start saving for their own place. But when it comes to parenting, at 18, the job is just getting started.

In a recent study conducted jointly by the University of California and New America Media, college-age students identified the breakdown of the family as the greatest challenge facing their generation, followed closely by violence, the threat of poverty, personal finances, grades, and relationship struggles. In other words, life is rushing at them like a runaway train. While they put up a brave front, the truth is, they often have no idea what to do next.

These vulnerable moments when children poise on the brink of adulthood provide parents a powerful opportunity to speak truth into their lives in many areas—finances, family issues, fear, and most importantly, faith. Consider a few suggestions for these crucial conversations:

- **Make the most of moments.** Don’t force the conversation. Let life bring opportunities to you. From car problems to

overdrawn accounts and broken relationships, speak when the moment is right.

- **Pick your battles.** Warning! Young adults make bad choices. They likely will make you angry, sometimes on purpose. Be patient. Don’t “take the bait” of petty disagreements. Instead, wait for moments to maximize your influence. Understand they are learning from their mistakes... just like you did.
- **Listen before you speak.** This may be difficult. Often, fear and confusion find voice in frustration, even anger. Give young adults an opportunity to voice these frustrations, then speak gently into their need, identifying the real source of angst.
- **Keep faith first.** Passing your faith to your children should be at the root of every conversation. Yes, it is important to teach them life lessons—adulting; but eternal lessons should be our real motivation.

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

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My thanks to David Brown for pointing out the value of qualified women serving on the boards of our national departments. David highlights many benefits of an informed, experienced, and diverse group of counselors. In Proverbs 13, Solomon instructs readers to surround themselves with wise counselors. Seeking and selecting highly qualified, willing directors is a critical stewardship activity for our National Association. Let's continue to actively seek out highly-qualified, godly men and women who are willing to serve in these important and demanding roles.

—Ben Evans, St. Louis, Missouri

I must admit I was a bit apprehensive when I saw David Brown's article titled "Women Minister" (June-July, Brown on Green, page 17). As a woman who was single 29 years before getting married, I definitely felt my future leadership opportunities within the denomination were limited due to my single marital status. It was encouraging to see David Brown endorse the need for more balanced female leadership on boards and committees within national departments. This is long overdue. I remember being excited when Janice Banks was elected to the International Missions board back in 2012, and thinking, "Why has it taken us so long as a denomination to get to this point?" We need to encourage all women to seek excellence in

their individual calling, whether it is business, education, or a non-profit organization, and allow them opportunities for leadership. Thank you, David, for voicing your support for more balanced female leadership within Free Will Baptists. It was a breath of fresh air.

—Jessica Davis, via Email



**Have something to say? Say it!**

Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are appreciated.

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Keith Burden    MANAGING EDITOR: Eric Thomsen

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Ken Akers, David Brown, Kathy Brown, Chris Compton, Danny Conn, Elizabeth Hodges, Josh Owens, Deborah St. Lawrence  
LAYOUT & DESIGN: Randall House Publications    DESIGN MANAGER: Andrea Young    DESIGN: Marianne Stewart    PRINTING: Randall House Publications

While *ONE Magazine* is provided to the reader free of charge, tax-deductible donations are both accepted and appreciated.

To make a donation, simply send check or money order to *ONE Magazine*, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002.

PHOTO CREDIT: Sean Warren, Mark Cowart, Eric Thomsen, Shutterstock.com, Istockphoto.com, Stockxpert.com, Designpics.com, Rodney Yerby.



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# Discipline = Discipleship

ADAPTED FROM *VISIONARY PARENTING*  
BY ROB REINOW



The world tells us *discipline* is correcting bad behavior. Stop that. Start that. But for the Christian, discipline means far more than changing outward behavior. The root of the word *discipline* is *disciple*. Discipline is something God commands parents to do for the purpose of forming their children into disciples. The word *disciple* means “devoted follower.” Therefore, the purpose of biblical discipline is to help children become devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

“For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life” (Proverbs 6:23).

The corrections of discipline are “the way to life” for your child. If discipline means “fixing bad behavior,” this Scripture would make no sense. Being good is *not* the “way to life.” Discipline is helping children become disciples, helping them become followers of Jesus, and that is the way to life.

Proverbs 19:18 puts it this way: “Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.” What an intense verse! Again, if discipline simply means behavior modification, this passage would be an extreme exaggeration, because no one would suggest that failing to modify a child’s behavior is analogous to putting him or her to death. It is true, however, if we fail to disciple our children, if we fail to help them follow Jesus, we are a willing party to their spiritual death.

God’s plan for your children is to learn obedience and

submission to loving parents they can see, so they are ready to learn obedience and submission to a loving God they cannot see. Ultimately, we seek to transfer obedience in our children from us to God. Our goal is that when they leave our homes, they will hold themselves under God’s authority and under His Word. We want them to do this eagerly and willingly. Our call to our children is, “Follow me, as I follow Jesus, so that you will follow Jesus.” This echoes the words of the Apostle Paul who said to the Corinthians, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11: 1). If this vision does not humble you, I do not know what will. This is not a requirement to be perfect parents, but to be humble parents seeking to follow and obey God with all our hearts.

## Change Your Vocabulary

The dictionary defines *discipline* as follows: 1) control obtained by enforcing compliance or order, or 2) a systematic method to obtain obedience. Once again, we see the

world's understanding of *discipline*. Get those kids in line! Stop the bad. Start the good. If only it were that simple.

The biblical call to discipline is far more important and much more difficult. Every single discipline situation you face is an opportunity to lead your child toward being a more devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps we can change our vocabulary. Instead of *discipline situations* we have *discipleship opportunities*. A discipline situation demands we fix it and fix it fast. A discipleship opportunity demands our heart, our parenting, and presses us to think beyond immediate behavior to our child's relationship with Jesus.

### The Goal of the Heart

The ultimate goal of discipline is to impress the heart of the child. Everything a child does is made up of two components. These two things can be expressed in different ways:

- Behavior and attitude
- Actions and heart
- Fruit and root
- What? and Why?


Worldly discipline only cares about the outward component. As long as the child cleans her room and does a reasonable job, she can grumble and complain all she wants. But as Christian parents, we need to consider the key Scripture in Deuteronomy 6, which calls us back to the priority of the heart: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart."

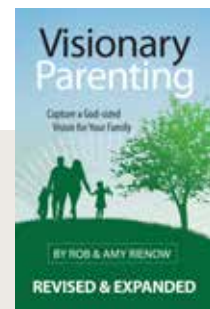
The ultimate goal of godly discipline is to shape your child's heart. The correction of outward behavior may be the starting point of discipline, but it must not be the ending point. If your child punches his brother in the mouth, something in his heart caused him to do it. If your child is cheating at school, heart reasons drive the behavior. If your child is using drugs and alcohol, he has a reason in his heart for doing it.

If our discipline (*discipleship*) does not reach into the heart of the child, we are all but guaranteeing long-term

behavioral problems. Consider this purely hypothetical scenario. Let us imagine for a moment that due to your rigorous, consistent, and effective system of consequences and punishments, your children always behave properly. (We told you it was hypothetical.)

We know this sounds great. But consider this question. *Why* are your kids so well behaved? They are totally obedient because they want nothing to do with the punishments that will come their way if they are not. What will happen to these angelic teenagers when they head off to work or college, where the threat of consequences can no longer reach them? There are two possibilities. First, with their newfound freedom they will break every rule they can find. The other option is they will live like Pharisees. They will continue to follow the rules and be proud of it. They will be content to be clean on the outside, even though their hearts are far from God.

If we do not reject the world's version of discipline and embrace a biblical view of discipleship ultimately focused on reaching the hearts of our children, we are preparing them for rebellion or legalism. Biblical discipline addresses both the negative behavior and the reason for the negative behavior—the *what* and the *why*. Biblical discipline considers both the negative choice and the feelings, thoughts, and motives that came together to create that choice. 



**Visionary Parenting**  
is available at  
[randallhouse.com](http://randallhouse.com)

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**About the Writer:** Rob Rienow is director of Visionary Family Ministries, offering Bible-driven resources for families and marriage and parenting conferences for churches. Purchase this book and others by Rob at [www.RandallHouse.com](http://www.RandallHouse.com).

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# Home Is....

BY KATIE SPEER

**"Home is where the heart is."** —Pinterest quotes and embroidered pillowcases everywhere

**"Home is where your rump rests."**  
—Pumba, *The Lion King*

**"Home is where you park it."**  
—RV and motorcycle enthusiasts

**"Home is wherever I'm with you."**  
—Song by Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros

**"Home is where the Wi-Fi is."** —Social media addicts

**"Home is where your cat/dog is."**  
—Parents of fur babies

**"Home is where your Amazon order is delivered."**  
—Me. Kidding...kind of

These sentiments may tempt buyers of knick-knacks at Hallmark stores, but they fail to satisfy my lifelong quest to define the nebulous concept of "home." Let's try a definition that, well, hits home.

"Home is where family is." Could be. But what if you have no family? Does that mean you also have no home?

"Our *real* home is in Heaven." Yes, absolutely! I started believing this in high school and still believe it with all my heart. Scripture describes us as mere sojourners, unable to fully put down permanent roots until we reach eternity. But what does that mean for us while we're here? Is it impossible to ever feel grounded in this life?

I still had the desire to explore the idea of our *earthly* home.

"Home is where God has you." Closer, but it doesn't quite satisfy me yet.

I've been mulling over this question since I was four years old. As I had more birthdays and more international moves, the question followed me to all of my new houses. I have a

friend who has lived in Nashville her entire life. She grew up in one house with the same bedroom. She, of course, always knew where her home was. I still (enviously) remember her cozy bedroom with a soft red comforter, a closet door covered with photos of her friends, and a silver vanity set on her dresser. Surely *that* was home. Comfortable. Secure. Dependable.

But some of us, like me, didn't grow up with a bedroom to call our own. Or maybe we did, but life looks much different now. Maybe our "home" is overflowing with toys and Lego™ bricks; our bed filled with kids who just won't stay in their own. Or maybe our home used to be a place like that—filled with noise and energy, but now it's quiet and empty. Maybe our loved ones took away our sense of "home" when they flew the nest or flew to Jesus. Home can't just revolve around family members or the building we live in, right?

Baby Number Two changed our family dynamic drastically. Previously, two parents corralled and entertained our firstborn Audrey. After Analeigh's birth, we found ourselves playing man-to-man defense. If my husband had to be away, I had only one set of arms for two needy girls. It was overwhelming, to say the least.

This is where a genius piece of baby gear came into play—the baby wrap. Essentially, it's an extremely long piece of strong fabric you can tie in multiple ways to hold your baby snug against your chest. The baby—newborns especially—feels he or she is being held and enjoys hearing mom's heartbeat. Before Analeigh was born I considered this a little too "crunchy granola" mom for me. But you know what they say about desperate times. Surprisingly, the baby wrap turned out to be a lifesaver! I could wrap her up and have both hands free to do crazy selfish things like brush my teeth, play outside with Audrey, or "nuke" a not-so-fancy



dinner in the microwave. Almost as soon as I put the baby in the wrap, she'd snuggle in, close her eyes, and fall asleep. It was like magic.

While living in Japan, the wrap allowed Daniel and me to make a two-hour train trip downtown to the American embassy to get Analeigh's U.S. passport. It also allowed me to fly with Analeigh halfway around the world to Nashville, then back to Tokyo, then to Nashville again, all before she was six months old. Baby wraps are perfect for international trips. I honestly don't know how to survive a 12-hour flight with a baby without one.

I did worry, though, when we moved to the States in August 2017, how Analeigh would fare. Everything was different for her. The time zones were different, her crib was different, and her sound machine was different. People even looked a lot different! Funny enough, when I put her in the same wrap, she didn't seem to mind anything else. She was close to me, and the soft fabric felt familiar. She quickly fell asleep like always. Only then did it finally dawn on me:

*Wherever I took Analeigh in the baby wrap was her home.*

And then another revelation: *wherever we are wrapped in God's presence is our home.* He is our Maker, after all. He knows us and delights in us more than anyone else could, much like a mother knows and delights in her child. And what mother doesn't love to hold and protect her sleeping, peaceful baby? I wonder how much more God loves to embrace us, knowing we are trusting Him, leaning in close to Him, and listening to His heartbeat.

It's not a perfect analogy—no analogy is—but I think it's a pretty good one. We can cultivate a sense of home anywhere He leads us, if we are reveling in His presence and listening to His voice. After all, what do you get from a home? A sense of peace and security. Comfort. The ability to face new challenges unafraid. Leaning into God's presence is no different; He gives us peace and security. We will experience this fully in Heaven, but we can also experience that sensation now. We don't have to wait. We can grow in our intimacy and faith in God now, even before we see Him face to face. Much like a newborn without developed senses, our vision of Him is fuzzy. But does a baby still know her maker (in this case, her mother) and depend on her? Absolutely.

Psalm 5 speaks to this intimacy. David, the author, knew a little something about clinging tightly to God. Even though his life was punctuated by mistakes, he was called a man after God's own heart because he *depended* on his

closeness with Him. I think the first four verses of this psalm are an excellent example of how to soak in God's presence. These are things we must actively *do* to practice living in His presence. This is a relationship with God. We cannot approach it passively.

**Verse 1: "Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my groaning." — Come to Him at your worst...** in your ugliest crying, in your scariest doubts, in your angriest yelling. You don't have to dress up, wipe your tears, or fix your smeared mascara to come to Him. Babies, even in their reddest-faced-screaming moments, are still loved and accepted by their mothers. Cry out to God and don't hold anything back. God can handle it. Be honest with yourself about your feelings. Do not edit yourself before you come to Him in prayer. David certainly didn't, as we read in so many of his psalms.

**Verse 2: "Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you do I pray." — Don't depend on anyone else for your peace and security.** Your husband, ultimately, can't give you that. Your childhood best friend can't. Your belongings can't. Even your house and the feelings of stability it brings can't. If you have nothing but God's promise to be with you, that's all you need. And that's enough. Don't stake your hope or happiness on anything else.

**Verse 3: "O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch." — Be consistent and persistent in your pursuit to gain intimacy with Him.** If a baby desperately wants mommy to pick her up, will she stop crying and quiet down? No. It's truly amazing (and agonizing) how loud and stubborn babies can be when they really want something. Similarly, our desire to be held and known by our Maker should scream louder than any other desires. So don't approach Him only sporadically, or only when you set aside a special time to pray—only when you want a specific outcome. Only before you eat or sleep. In contrast, pray stubbornly and consistently. Then expect Him to show Himself to you and give you direction.

**Verse 4: "For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you." — Fully trust your journey with Him.** If He made you, loves you, thinks you're beautiful, listens to you, longs to embrace

*(continued on page 35)*



# How One Church Is Revitalizing Discipleship

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

The following is an interview with leaders from a strong, healthy church, which has impeccable leadership from the pastor to teachers and volunteers. Pastor Jeff Manning and his staff are in the middle of leading a change toward more focused family ministry. Change is hard enough for ministry leaders and typically does not occur until it is too late, or until one has few resources to support it. This is not the case with Unity Free Will Baptist Church. Jeff and his staff are working to include a generational discipleship approach to make Unity even healthier. Listen in on the following honest conversation about why, what, and how to learn from this church, including their mistakes.



**JEFF MANNING**  
SENIOR PASTOR

**How does family ministry and generational discipleship align with Scripture and your ideology of ministry?**

As a staff, we jointly concluded generational discipleship is *exactly* what the Scriptures prescribe (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 1:8, 6:20; Ephesians 6:1-2; Malachi 2:15), including the importance of the teaching and instruction from both father and mother. The church's ministry, then, must be complementary, not primary. Family ministry must empower, encourage, and equip

families to disciple in the home, 24/7/365, not just a few hours a week at church. We provide reinforcement, offer resources, and make recommendations, but we also remind families discipleship starts at home, not the church.

**Why are you making a change to place an emphasis on family ministry or generational discipleship?**

We must not let moms and dads and grandparents think "the buck stops" at the church or the youth group. No, it stops with them. If parents truly love Jesus and take their discipleship responsibility seriously, no children's worker, teen sponsor, or student pastor can match a parent's influence. Nor should they try.

**How have the older people (empty nesters) responded to a renewed family emphasis? Do they feel marginalized or guilty they may have missed the mark in discipleship when their kids were young?**

I don't think they feel marginalized necessarily, but I do think some of them deal with guilt and regret. When I have an opportunity, I remind them of what Leroy Forlines used to tell us at Welch College: "Not even God can change history." Although history can't be altered, I urge and encourage them to plead with Christ to help them make a difference in the lives of their grandkids and great-grandchildren, and, where necessary, ask their children for forgiveness for previous parental failures.

**What could this shift toward family ministry mean to your church a generation from now?**

The church will have better equipped and deeply disciples a band of brothers and sisters who take their responsibility to love Christ seriously and keep training the next generation of Christ-followers. If that happens, I believe we'll also see decreased divorces and prodigal children while at the same time having increased Kingdom workers.



**BEN CRABTREE**  
PASTOR OF OUTREACH + DISCIPLESHIP

**With so many branches or emphases in ministry, you purposefully focused on family ministry. Why have you spent recent years moving in this direction?**

My research on outreach and discipleship reinforced what Dr. Richard Ross said, "Strong churches do not make strong families; strong families make strong churches." If our families share and make disciples at home then it is a huge win for the equipping of the church.

**What are the merits of a church focusing age-specific ministries on family ministry?**

Research shows if a child is not a Christ-follower by age eight, it is highly unlikely he or she will ever follow Christ. If the church focuses on children at church and

in the home, in ten years, these new teens and young adults will be more than church attenders, they will be world changers. What if each year our denomination sent out two or three thousand disciple-making graduates into the workplace or universities who were willing to give it all for Christ? What kind of impact could we make on the Kingdom? How many missionaries, pastors, evangelists, Christian teachers, Christian doctors, Christian lawyers, etc. could we send out into the world? The results would speak for themselves, but it starts early in our homes.

**What would you say to someone who suggests discipleship is just "about learning Scripture" and less about outreach, or what happens beyond the church?**

Matthew 28:18 says *all authority has been given...* Notice the Scripture says, *all the authority in heaven and earth*. Out of every priority in our churches, Christ says, we have been given all authority and therefore...**make disciples**. All the authority in heaven and earth is given by the Father, to the Son, and to us **to go and make disciples!** Because the disciples followed this command, used Christ's authority given by Christ to make disciples, there was unity among the believers, prayer among the believers, and growth (more disciples added).

**How does a church get started in family ministry? What are your recommended steps?**

- **Pray.** If your team is not praying, or if you are not praying, then it will not happen.
- **Take a group to the D6 Conference.**
- **Prepare.** I would read *Disciple Shift* by Putman and Harrington and *The DNA of D6* by Ron Hunter. Take a military planning approach by examining the goal and asking what steps will help you get there. Don't just look at the current situation. Read up on tomorrow's generation, or you will be behind the times and fighting an uphill battle. Books like *The Millennials* by Thom S. Rainer, *Future Cast* and *Generation Z* by George Barna are three examples.

- **Be patient (our mistake).** I think we assume everyone “gets it” like we have, but we have to be reminded they have not been to conferences, listened to sermons, or read the same material. What I did (and was paid to do) will take volunteers hours of research and study on their own time.
- **Persevere (where we are).** Push through and accomplish the objective. Part of leadership is looking at the shepherd’s staff. David Platt says, “It is not to comfort the sheep but to hook and guide them.” As leaders, we must keep pushing in the direction we believe the Spirit is leading and pray the Spirit leads them as well.
- **Proper placement.** Many churches have people in positions for which they are not ready, people who fit better in another area.
- **Professional speakers.** We have invited three guest speakers to explore family ministry and discipleship. Sometimes a different voice saying the same thing will be heard in a different way.
- **Praise.** Celebrate success. What you celebrate you will replicate.



**JAKE MANNING**  
PASTOR OF STUDENTS

**Imagine your church has been doing family ministry for ten-plus years, which means teenagers coming into your youth group have biblically involved parents as intentional about discipleship at home as church. What does your youth group look like, and how will that affect how you minister?**

Parents would no longer rely on the church (or the student pastor specifically) to teach and train their teenagers in one-to-three hours a week. The youth group would no longer serve as a parent-substitute center but as a thriving community-accountability center. The overall spiritual maturity level would rise, which would allow me to challenge students harder and dive deeper into teaching.

**As a student minister, not every teenager has involved parents. How do you help students from broken homes or students whose parents attend church but are spiritually absent?**

I have a few students who fall into this category. Two keys have helped these students: 1) **Small groups.** We divide small groups by gender and age. This is helpful for these students, giving them a community of believers to guide them and keep them accountable; 2) **Mentorships.** Youth leaders offer support by meeting regularly with students (many times in our home). They often ask for advice or simply need encouragement.



**KEVIN JUSTICE**  
PASTOR OF WORSHIP + ADMINISTRATION

**Do you think ministry leaders have elevated expectations for parents to be intentional with faith talks (discussing life through the lens of Scripture), praying with their kids other than at meal time, and using the Bible to counsel ethical, relational, and moral decisions?**

In the past, I would say yes. It is easy to forget everyone hasn’t studied at a Bible college or immersed himself in reading material about the Bible and church leadership. Early on, I assumed parents could pass along spiritual matters to their kids with relative ease. Over time, I came to realize that many people struggle with confidence in their ability to talk with their kids about their faith.

**You are a parent; you minister to parents and grandparents. Does it concern you that other parents may not feel confident to tackle such conversations in the home? How is your church remedying this sentiment?**

Many parents have told me, “It’s easier for you; you’re a pastor,” when talking about family devotions or incorporating scriptural wisdom during teachable moments. First, I want them to realize I am human and have the same parenting struggles they face. Second, I think it underscores the need for the church to be intentional

in equipping parents to disciple their kids, no matter what they perceive regarding their own ability to talk about spiritual matters. I use personal illustrations about teachable moments in my own family. Our Sunday morning life group leaders are encouraged to explain how the spiritual truths they are teaching apply to our kids (crucial). Reminding them that family devotions don't have to be an hour-long discourse from a Bible commentary, but may simply include reading a verse and picking a truth that speaks to you—and then praying about family needs—makes a huge impact.

**I know you strive for excellence at church, but how does your team spend time helping the hours spent at church become the “starting point” for everyone to take worship and teachable moments home throughout the week?**

We are still attempting to implement this. For quite some time, we have been using the “attractional” model of ministry. Oversimplified, we put on a well-planned program that helps people have a fresh encounter with God, expect people to come, and then do it again the following week. We are exploring ways to encourage people to carry this experience with them *through* the week. Our pastor ends each service with an encouragement to “go and tell.” We also have small group meetings in homes on Sunday evenings and throughout the week, during which they discuss everyday life application questions from the pastor's morning sermon. We are also discussing with church leadership about taking our mission to the community.

**What have you observed as wins during this shift to a renewed biblical focus on family ministry or generational discipleship?**

**BEN**

We heard a five-year-old at daycare talking with children from another culture and religion. He asked, “Do you know who Jesus is?” Repeating what he heard from church and his parents, he continued, “Do you know He died and rose on the third day?” He is being taught Christ at church *and* at home and is already sharing it.

Three parents have told me specifically how much they enjoy being reminded and taught how to talk to their children about their faith.

**JAKE**

A big win for me has been assisting parents with discipling their children. I have been going about this in several ways:

- Sending weekly emails/texts with calendar updates, take-home notes, and questions from my teaching;
- Keeping them in the loop regarding the latest cultural trends, apps, etc;
- Providing opportunities for parents to serve alongside their teens; and
- Bringing in speakers who specialize in bringing the family together.

**KEVIN**

The biggest win I have observed are “family-focused” ministry activities where parents are immersed in activity alongside their kids. We had a family kickball night; families played together for a little over an hour, and I didn't observe a single person looking at his or her phone. Also, we are doing one Sunday per quarter where we don't offer children's worship, but families worship together instead. It is a blessing to observe kids standing next to mom and dad, singing together, and opening their Bibles together during the sermon.

**JEFF**

I am excited about the increased number of intentional gospel conversations taking place over Sunday lunch, in particular, and throughout the week in general.

Change is hard, but leaders see the long-term benefits—and in this case the scriptural mandate to tackle generational discipleship—in ways most churches do not think about. Today, members of the Unity Church staff do fewer ministries alone while helping more people do ministry together, both in church and at home. **ONE**

# Serving in Harmony

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS



Waymon and Gail Fields feel harmony in their bones. They can stack notes vertically on a music staff to make chords or sing them intuitively from their souls. Either way, their close harmony “says something,” as Waymon put it. Music may start with notes on a page, but it ends with words from the Lord. “Ours is a ministry. We have a message to give,” Waymon said.

Music brought Waymon and Gail together more than 60 years ago. He has sung for as long as he can remember. She was brought up harmonizing with her family’s voices accompanied by fiddles, guitars, French harps, an accordion, and a piano. Her father led shaped-note singing schools, and after Waymon was saved at age 14 in Millport, Alabama, he went to every shaped-note singing school he heard about, including his future father-in-law’s. He and Gail married in 1957.

Simple harmony comes easy. Just sing notes a third above or a third below the melody notes. But *simple* and *easy* were not for Waymon. He was hungry to learn more. In high school, his Future Farmers of America quartet won the Alabama state competition, then the Tri-State Alabama, Georgia, and Florida competition. Later, he joined the McAdams Quartet and their 30-minute live television show in Columbus, Mississippi. He attended the Stamps-Baxter Singing School there as well, for voice lessons, chord building, and songwriting. In 1959, Waymon, Gail, and her sister formed a trio.

When their children, two girls and a boy, came along, as Waymon said, “They never knew anything but singing harmony with us. I did baritone or bass. Gail sang alto. We started our oldest daughter on harmony at age six, the other two at age three. Now they sing any part you want them to. The two girls are exceptional pianists, too.” Waymon arranges their songs and manages the

group. As for song-writing, he quips, “I wrote one song a long time ago, but it never came out of the closet.” Now in their early 80s, the Fields sing with family members in The Singing Bryants. Along the way, the Fields have formed county-wide choirs, musical groups of many kinds, and ministered to thousands with their music.

But what strikes you most about Waymon and Gail is not their close harmony in music. It’s their commitment to an all-of-life harmony that communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ. They practice how to please the Lord and serve others. “Ministry is the bottom line,” Waymon said.

He is a deacon at Macedonia FWB Church where he has taught and led music. Gail still teaches and prays for her young students, especially for a young man now in college who came to the Lord at age eight. “I always include the salvation plan. He lived near the church, and one day he got off his bicycle so Waymon could show him how to get saved. He accepted the Lord right then and there, got back on his bicycle, and rode on. He is such a fine young man.”

“I’ve had a lot of chances to make a difference,” Waymon said. “When I was young, I worked at a grocery store where the owner sold beer. I’d pack it up and take it to people’s cars. I got miserable about that and asked the Lord to get me out of there, and I’d never do that again. I went from there to a men’s clothing store then started at the bottom as a teller in a bank. The Lord blessed me for that early decision.”

Waymon began at the bank in 1959 and retired in 2003. He moved from teller to manager to president, chairman of the board, and owner over those 44 years. “I’ve always believed I had success because of the standard

I set as a package boy in that grocery store when I was young. God honored my commitment,” he said.

In the early days as a teller, Waymon posted the general ledger by hand—no computers. Later, he learned accounting on the job, and still later how to manage a bank when the owners opened a branch and put him in charge. In 1970, when the bank’s president died as the result of a brain tumor, the owners made him president in Millport, or as Waymon put it: “They let me step up.” That’s when he learned how to make investments on the job, as he had learned all the other skills.

Eventually, Waymon put together investors to buy out the owners. “If you think the Lord doesn’t work things out, well, he does,” he says. “When we made the deal, and I signed the contract, I was scared. My part was huge. I had committed myself to a bunch of six figures and had almost nothing to pay that debt with.”

Later, Waymon and the other investors formed a holding company but took no dividends for themselves. In a few years, those dividends paid off the debt. By 1976, Waymon was president and chairman of the board.

“I had a good board of directors,” he says. “I wanted to expand into Tuscaloosa, so I took the board down there to talk to two or three banks who’d done that. They came back ready to expand. So we did.”

During the Carter administration in the early 1980s, Waymon learned more about cash flow management and keeping a spread. “Prime rate was 21%, but we had mortgages on the books at 8% and were paying 14.5% on CDs. I told the board we needed to drop CDs to 12%, and within two weeks all the banks around here had done the same. Later, I was the first bank in Alabama to offer ARMs, Adjustable Rate Mortgages. Pretty soon everybody was.”

Along the way, Waymon became mayor of his hometown as well. “Our mayor at the time knew nothing about money, so our city government owed millions. We were about to sink. Two months after I was elected, I had to file Chapter 9 bankruptcy for our municipality. In seven years, we paid most of it back and had positive cash flow,” he says. While mayor, he also brought in several new businesses and the West Alabama Service Club.

“I’ve said that when I was a banker, my hair turned gray; and when I was mayor, it turned loose. I just wanted to be a servant—do something for someone other than myself. Gail was my backbone through all of that.” Waymon said.

Serving is their style. “At the bank, Waymon took time with people. I remember a man, almost blind and really poor. Waymon taught him how to budget so he could get by. Lots of times, he took money out of his pocket to loan to people when they couldn’t qualify for anything from the bank.”

Waymon’s work with the bank, along with his years as mayor of his hometown, prepared him for serving denominational state and national boards. For more than 30 years, he has been on the board of the Alabama Children’s Home, and over a 15-year period served the National Association on the Board of Retirement and Free Will Baptist Foundation. He finished up his 12th year on the Foundation Board this past summer.

“Being on those boards has been a privilege. I didn’t grow up with a ‘silver spoon,’ so I know what kind of life many people have. I’ve tried to contribute what I can and what I know to make things better for others,” Waymon said.

When asked what guided him as he’s served on state and national boards, he said, “My philosophy has come from Ecclesiastes: *Whatever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might*. It was never in me to do only what I could to just get by. One of the highlights of my life has been to serve. Like in banking, you give good service, you meet people’s needs, and you leave it better for someone else.”

Waymon and Gail are in perfect harmony on that. **ONE**

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**About the Writers:** Bill and Brenda Evans live in Ashland, Kentucky. Bill is the former director of the Free Will Baptist Foundation and Brenda is a retired English teacher. Visit [www.fwbgifts.org](http://www.fwbgifts.org) for more information on planned giving that benefits your favorite ministry.

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# Event or Community?

BY NATE ALTOM

At Keystone Church, we have begun engaging in “discipleship discussions” every other week. Two men with business and team building backgrounds meet with me regularly to discuss what discipleship should look like in our church. These discussions are among the most productive and helpful I have experienced in ministry.

When we began, one of the men with little church background expressed that the idea of discipleship was new to him. I thought, “What a neat perspective to have.” That was until the other man expressed the same thing. I was floored by his comment, because he came from a well-established church with incredible foundations in the Bible. I began to make inquiries and quickly found that most “well-established, solid-church background” people had the same lack of understanding about what it really means to be a disciple. They just had not given it much thought.

The word *disciple* in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) carries an interesting context. If we consider the term *Christian* culturally, it is easy to be a Christian and remain passive. The majority of people understand *Christian* as something they are, a label they carry under their name. But when we understand a disciple is a *follower of Jesus*, it is impossible to stay passive. You cannot be a *disciple* (noun) without the *follow* (verb).

So, we changed our language at our church. Last year, we had an amazing year of seeing people make decisions to follow Jesus, or “become a Christian.” But our report also showed we baptized few. Oops, we messed up somewhere! For 2018, we made the decision at the end

of the year, the thing we want to celebrate most is the number of *disciples* made. This decision brought to light two important questions that changed our ministry. Why not think them through and see where they take *your* church?

## Where are disciples made?

Disciples are made at the altar call...just after the sermon, right? So, the goal is for people to get people to the church building to hear a sermon that will then bring them to a decision of discipleship. Not quite. Remember the story where Jesus healed a man and when a huge crowd gathered around Him, He preached to them? (Sounds like business as usual to me.) But then Jesus did something extremely troubling. He sent them all away. As a church planter, I actually got frustrated with His church-building strategy. My thought was, “Jesus, stir the waters, gather the crowds, and then do everything you can to keep the crowd. That is how you do this.”

When my church growth strategy looks at Jesus and declares He is doing it wrong, guess who is *really* wrong. Me. Sure, Jesus drew crowds, but crowd gathering was not His discipleship model. Crowd gathering was simply crowd gathering. The discipleship happened in the community.

Let’s apply that. We put 95% of our efforts and energy into a service on Sunday morning. That is where we focus volunteers, spend our money, and give our most attention. But if we rely on an event—something that happens once a week at one place—to be our discipleship-making model, get ready to feed a never-satisfied



beast. We began asking: “Do you attend an event on Sundays, or are you part of a 24/7 community?” Jesus clearly taught us to draw crowds, focus on a few, send the crowds away, and then repeat.

At Keystone, we decided to put *as much* emphasis on community as we do event. By the way, the community (Acts 2-3) is not even the small group gathered to be taught something. That is *part* of the community, but it is not all. Learning is only *one* aspect of a disciple’s following.

### Who is responsible for making disciples?

This question is much easier in light of the above answer. Who received the Great Commission? The disciples. So, who makes disciples? Not just the pastor—the disciples. Disciples make disciples. In fact, the very heart of the disciple definition is someone following Jesus to... make more disciples. You cannot follow Jesus without naturally producing more disciples.

If that is the case, are the majority of your people in your discipleship model heavily involved in making

other disciples? Mine were not. We set a goal that challenged every family to become part of making a disciple in 2018. This will *totally* mess up our statistics. If we do this right, we may see fewer people come to the altar on Sundays to surrender their hearts to Jesus, but more people surrender their hearts in a place that may not even be a church!

How can I say that? Our emphasis shifted from event to community. If a disciple is someone who follows Jesus by making more disciples, as people intentionally fellowship, learn, pray together, serve, and grow, they will create more disciples in the community. It will be more natural because disciples make disciples while being disciples rather than at a crowded event. **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Nate Altom is lead pastor at Keystone Free Will Baptist Church in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Learn more: <http://keystonefb.org>

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Single Table		Joint Table	
Age	Rate	Ages	Rate
65	5.1%	65/65	4.5%
70	5.6%	70/70	5.0%
75	6.2%	75/75	5.5%
80	7.3%	80/80	6.2%
85	8.3%	85/85	7.3%
90	9.5%	90/90	9.1%

# Recovering the Language of Judah

BY BARRY RAPER

## Nehemiah 13:23-31

I want to pose a challenge to you. Over the next few days, listen to conversations around you—television, radio, work, and home—and you almost certainly will hear phrases from the Bible, many spoken unintentionally. For instance, just last week I heard a sports talk show host comment on a coach who had “fallen from grace.” Consider this short list of common phrases people toss around today: *good Samaritan; it is better to give than to receive; salt of the earth; writing on the wall; and reap what you sow.* The list could go on and on.

Obviously, it is one thing to say these phrases and quite another to know their meaning. Still, this demonstrates how a language and a people are interconnected. When the people of God start losing their grasp on His Word, they quickly find themselves in danger of falling away from Him. In the final chapter of Nehemiah, the Jews faced a similar problem. They had lost their language—the “language of Judah” as Nehemiah described it. But their language was far more than their national identity; for the Jews, it was the language of salvation.

## Problem Described (verses 23-24)

This gradual loss of language resulted from intermarriage between Jews and foreigners, something strictly forbidden by the law. Ezra had pushed reforms regarding this behavior several years prior to Nehemiah’s account, but the reform obviously didn’t reach the entire population. Throughout the history of Israel, intermarriage between the Jews and surrounding nations was a serious spiritual stumbling block. Perhaps the most notable of those who stumbled and fell was Solomon. Nehemiah references Solomon and how his multiplied marriages turned his heart from God. What a tragic story! Yet, this passage shows the descendants of Solomon at it again. And Nehemiah makes it clear “the language problem” was a direct consequence of their sin: “And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and *could not speak in the Jews’ language*, but according to the language of each people.” The ESV translates it this way: “And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, *and they could not speak the language of Judah*, but only the language of each people.”

The real tragedy reflected in these verses is not that Jewish children were fluent in another language, but they could no longer speak the language of the Jews—the language of salvation. The Word of God had been transmitted carefully, both orally and in Hebrew writings. While Nehemiah’s generation was fluent in the language of the cultures around them, they had no idea how to talk or listen to God.

## Problem Resolved (verses 25, 28, 30)

How did Nehemiah solve the problem? In striking fashion...literally! Verse 25 reveals he contended with them, cursed them, hit them, pulled their hair, and made them swear an oath the behavior would change. In verse 28, he drove away those who would not comply, and in verse 30, he cleansed the priesthood from anything pagan or foreign. Wow!

This is our final glimpse of Nehemiah in Scripture, and it is a vivid one. The book started with the picture of a courageous, determined man who, after praying fervently, accepted the seemingly impossible task of rebuilding the Jerusalem wall. Throughout construction, he stood



resolutely against opponents of the project, and along the way, he cleansed the Temple and confronted sinful behavior on the Sabbath.

In this passage, we find this man of conviction in action once again. Obviously, God doesn't want us to change our families or loved ones or the church congregation by beating them, cursing them, or pulling out their hair (even if you feel like it). But we *would* do well to imitate Nehemiah's conviction and courage. He understood things had to change, and he determined to do his part to purge Israel from pagan influence. He challenged his countrymen to follow the Lord wholeheartedly. He understood if they failed in this commitment, if they allowed their children to be swallowed up by the culture around them, it was likely their religion—their faith—would be lost.

Things must change for us as well. Today's church faces a similar problem to the one in this passage. According to George Barna, less than 5% of Americans hold a biblical worldview today. Even more disturbing, the percentage of "born again" believers in America with a biblical worldview is only a few percentage points higher. He bases these numbers on responses to statements like the following in a nationwide survey:

- Is absolute truth defined by the Bible?
- Did Jesus Christ live a sinless life?
- Is God the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe, and does He still rule it today?

- Is salvation a gift from God that cannot be earned?
- Does a Christian have a responsibility to share his or her faith in Christ with other people?
- Is the Bible accurate in all of its teachings?

If you agree with these statements (and you should), you are definitely in the minority. According to Barna, however, only 9% of "born again" believers agreed (barna.com).

What does this tell us? Sadly, today's American church is more versed in the language of culture than the language of Christ. Jesus told His followers, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Judging by the way we talk, our heart is no longer centered on the language of Judah but the language of Egypt. And the language of Judah is central to our relationship with God. He communicates to us through His Word—His language of salvation. Just as the Jews in Nehemiah's day faced a significant "language barrier" to knowing God, the same is becoming true for the church today.

### Prescription Proposed

So, how do we restore the language of Judah? First, we must stop *syncretism*, or the attempt to fuse competing, even contradictory religions. We must avoid merging beliefs and practices that simply do not belong together. We cannot pick and choose our faith like a religious "buffet," selecting only as much of God's Word as we want, and leaving behind what we don't like or want. Instead, we must resolve this problem with the only

biblical solution—*repentance*. It is clear the sinful marriages in Nehemiah's day did not work—at least not for righteousness. Common sense tells us if a parent speaks a foreign language, the children in the marriage will also learn that particular language. The problem was that the Jews, who could or should have taught the language of their faith in their homes, failed to do so. Ultimately, they had a language problem. And, their problem was deeper than a marriage problem. It was a heart problem.

God's people have always been taught that faith is a matter of the heart. Deuteronomy 6 makes it clear the commands of God should be on our hearts, and we must teach them diligently to our children, throughout the natural routines of life, and not just on Sundays. This teaching takes place *from* heart to heart. Whatever resides most in your heart comes out in your speech. The question is: are you more versed in the language of the world or the language of Christ?

God's ultimate language, the message of salvation, is embodied in Jesus—the Word made flesh. He came and died in our place and rose again that we might know Him and have eternal life. The way to recover the language of Judah is to repent and return Jesus, the Lion of Judah, to His rightful place upon the throne of your heart. **ONE**

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**About the Columnist:** Dr. Barry Raper is program coordinator for ministry studies at Welch College and pastor of Bethel FWB Church near Ashland City, Tennessee. Learn more: [www.Welch.edu](http://www.Welch.edu).

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# Jasper & Ivy

BY STEPHEN  
KIMBRELL



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Jasper and Ivy were still experiencing jet lag the first time they came to our church. The couple and their one-year-old son Austin had just moved from Beijing, China, a few days earlier. After arriving in Irvine, Ivy googled “churches near me” and was excited to find a church plant meeting in an elementary school just minutes from her new apartment. As we talked in the back of our auditorium that January morning, Ivy quickly recounted her faith story. She had become a believer ten years earlier through a college ministry in China, but the Chinese government had shut down her church. Since that time, her church attendance and growth as a Christian had been spotty. It was obvious to me Ivy intended to make a change. She was excited about taking advantage of her newfound freedom to worship.

Jasper was a different story. Jasper was a 33-year-old agnostic. He had a bachelor’s degree in bioengineering and a master’s degree in language. He saw no logical reason to believe in God since everything in the world could be explained by science. In spite of his unbelief, Jasper came faithfully to church on Sundays and small group Bible studies in my home. At first, he used his son as an excuse to avoid actually sitting in the congregation or the group.

One Sunday after church, I invited Jasper and his family to join a group going out to lunch. We met at a nearby restaurant and enjoyed our meal outdoors in the beautiful California weather. Towards the end of the meal, Jasper began discussing his elusive quest to earn a driver’s license. At the time, he’d already failed his first attempt and was preparing to take the test again. I casually asked, “Do you have a study guide?”

I honestly thought it was a simple and straightforward question, but Jasper obviously misunderstood. He immediately paused—let out a long sigh—and began speaking nervously as if confessing a string of robberies. He said, “Pastor, I have to be honest with you. I don’t believe in God; I’m an agnostic.” Then, he obviously braced himself for the backlash from this bombshell revelation. I probably should’ve handled myself in a much more pastoral way, but at the moment my natural reaction was to laugh. And that’s exactly what I did.

After I composed myself, I said “Jasper, I wasn’t asking you if you had a Bible to study; I was asking if you had a study guide for the driver’s test.” Thankfully, Jasper saw the humor in accidentally confessing he didn’t believe in God.

A couple of months after that now infamous “study guide” conversation, Jasper cornered me after church and said, “Obviously, you know I don’t believe in God, but I do have a lot of questions.” We scheduled a meeting for later in the week. I also gave him a book to read and encouraged him to watch the newly released Christian film, *The Case for Christ*. I was completely surprised the next day to receive a text message from Jasper that read,

*Done watching. Great movie. I didn’t know Jesus Christ was a historical figure. Thought he was a character in a myth. Like a lot of Chinese myths, we have our own version of how everything was created, how humans came to be. But, those are just stories. More questions now.*

Later that week, Jasper and I met for coffee at the same location he’d confessed his lack of belief in God. As we began our conversation, he said,

*First of all, I’ve been to many churches before. Most of the time, the people seem like professional Christians. They are praying, crying, and talking about God in ways I do not understand. Then they ask me how long*

*I've been a Christian. When I tell them I'm not, they immediately try to convert me to believe what they believe. But, I can't. I feel like they are on a freeway going 80 miles an hour, but there's no entrance ramp for me to get up to their speed. They ask me to go from a dead stop to 80 miles an hour. But, at this church, no one has pressured me—even after I told you I don't believe in God. Over the past few months, I feel like I've been driving beside the freeway, allowed to observe and to pick up speed.*

As the conversation advanced, Jasper consistently asked questions concerning the creation of the world and the validity of the Bible. His questions didn't arise from a spirit of criticism, but one of interest and curiosity. Eventually, our dialogue led us to the resurrection of Jesus. Fortunately, I was already in preparation mode for Easter, so the evidence and events surrounding the resurrection were on my mind. I said, "Jasper, although you may have thousands of questions, the foundation of our Christian faith really comes down to one event, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ rose from the grave, He is God. If He did not rise, He is a fake. Ultimately, you must decide if you believe Jesus Christ is alive."

I began to walk Jasper through what I felt were some of the more convincing arguments for a resurrected Jesus. In the middle of my best Lee Strobel impersonation, Jasper interrupted me:

*"Wait! You mean Christians believe that Jesus physically rose from the dead—came back to life and walked around physically on the Earth before He went to Heaven? And there were people who actually saw him and confirmed it? I've always thought that you believed that Jesus died and His Spirit went to Heaven. Then an angel came down and told some people He was alive in Heaven and those people told everyone else. This is completely different. This changes a lot!"*

In this moment, I was struck with the amazing reality of a statement I had heard all my life: "Many people in the world have never heard the Good News of Jesus Christ."

Here I was, having a conversation over coffee with one of those people. He was intelligent, highly educated, and fluent in multiple languages, but he'd never heard the truth about Jesus.

Over the next few months, Jasper shared multiple coffees and conversations with several people in our congregation. He also continued researching about Jesus and Christianity. I could almost visibly see Jasper's heart and mind illuminated by the gospel message. The light of newfound truth gradually replaced the shadows of disbelief. Jasper explained it this way "All of my life, I've believed what I thought to be true. Now, at 33 years old, I'm encountering new truth contradictory to what I've always believed. Now, my mind is trying to determine which truth is true."

Eventually, during this process, Jasper confessed his belief in God. He witnessed too much evidence in nature and science to dispute the absence of a designer and saw too many "coincidences" in his life to deny God's existence. One night in our small group Bible study, Jasper announced publicly he had become a follower of Jesus Christ! I'll never forget his words as he tried to describe the process of moving from agnostic to believer in just a few months:

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HE WAS  
INTELLIGENT,  
HIGHLY  
EDUCATED,  
AND FLUENT  
IN MULTIPLE  
LANGUAGES,  
BUT HE'D  
NEVER HEARD  
THE TRUTH  
ABOUT JESUS.

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*It's kind of like learning to ride a bike. Before you learn, you can't imagine what it's like to ride a bike. It seems so foreign and difficult. But then you slowly begin to learn. What was foreign becomes normal, and eventually, you learn to ride. After you learn, you can't comprehend how you didn't know how to ride a bike before. You can't 'unlearn' what you've learned. That's how I feel about becoming a follower of Jesus. It's hard for me to recognize the way I used to believe a few months ago. But, I can't unlearn what I now know to be true.*



Since his decision to follow Jesus, Jasper has experienced several other major events in his life. On May 6, he publicly proclaimed his faith in Jesus by following Him in baptism. In June, he and his wife Ivy stood in our backyard surrounded by our small group and renewed their marriage vows as a Christian couple. In Jasper's words he "had invited Jesus into his life and now wanted to invite Him into his marriage."

As I think about Jasper's story, two emotions fill my heart. First, I'm ecstatic his life and eternity have been changed completely. I am thankful I had a front row seat to watch the gospel message and the Holy Spirit transform this man. Second, I am burdened by the countless other Jaspers in our world. People surround us who do not hold our values and do not believe in our God. They watch us Christians from a distance. They read our posts on social media. Sometimes, they even dare venture into our churches. From their perspective, we're on a freeway going 80 miles an hour. They need someone—anyone—to give them an entrance ramp to get up to speed. Not to church, nor to Christian culture, but to the only one who can truly change their lives: Jesus Christ. **ONE**



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**About the Writer:** Stephen Kimbrell pastors Grace City FWB Church in Irvine, California. Stephen is passionate about sharing the gospel, seeing believers grow in Christ, and training them to disciple others. He and his wife Lauren have three beautiful (and hilarious) children. Learn more: [gracecityirvine.com](http://gracecityirvine.com).

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# Yasmine's Story

BY MANDI MORGAN

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It was the last class of the day. The university professor finished her lesson and began to introduce a project. A group project, specifically, a 15-minute presentation and major research paper would take the place of a final exam. As the professor continued detailing her expectations, the students feverishly took notes. The bell sounded. Then one of the girls in our class leaned over and asked if she could be in our group.

To say we were stressed would be an understatement. The stress wasn't just coming from the project though. Neil and I were taking full-time university classes in Spanish, parenting three little girls, each with her own homework and afterschool activities, teaching English conversation classes at the university, and actively ministering in the local church. On top of all this, Neil started having health problems. He was undergoing tests, daily physical therapy, and nearly constant doctor appointments.

Now, one of our classmates wanted to work on a project with us. This meant coordinating schedules, when ours were already full and finding suitable meeting places. We agreed, somewhat reluctantly, for her to work with us and invited her over to our house later that week to begin.

The following day, Neil received a phone call from David, a missionary from England living in Madrid and working with university students. We had met with

David several months earlier to discuss the possibility of beginning a work with university students in our city of Alcalá de Henares. We put that ministry idea on hold due to the timing and craziness of our schedules.

David began to tell Neil he had received an email from an American professor teaching at a university in China. One of her previous students, now studying at the University of Alcalá, was having a hard time. In fact, this student was battling extreme depression and experiencing suicidal thoughts. David continued describing the bleak situation and asked if we could locate and minister to this girl in some way.

Obviously, we understood the seriousness of the situation and wanted to help. Yet, how could we locate one girl in the middle of a university of nearly 26,000 students? The task seemed nearly impossible.

Neil asked David to give us her name. We would do what we could to locate her. Several Chinese students were in a few of our classes. We could start by asking if they knew her. The conversation went something like this:

Neil: "Tell me her name, and we'll see what we can do."

David: "Sounds great. Her name is Yasmine."

Neil: "What? What did you say her name was again?"

David: "Yasmine."

Neil: "I don't believe this. We know her. She's in our class. She actually sits right beside us. She just asked if



she could work with us on our major year-end project. She's supposed to come to our house tomorrow."

We immediately saw God's hand in the situation and began to pray for our classmate. She came to our house, and we did everything we could to make her feel welcome. Our kids played with her. Our dog loved her. We ate. We laughed. We worked. We talked. And talked. And talked.

As we spent many, many days and hours working on this project together, she began to open up about her struggles. We made sure she saw a doctor. We checked on her regularly. We tried to help provide for not only her emotional needs but her spiritual ones as well. One day, as she sat at our table talking, Neil straightforwardly asked, "Yasmine, do you believe there is a God?" She sat in silence for a moment, thinking, and then responded, "I do believe there is a God. I just don't know his name." We were able to tell her the name above all names, the name of Jesus. We shared our personal testimonies with her.

The end of the semester approached. Our small group completed our research paper analyzing the economic and ecologic impact of tourism on Costa Rica. The day of our presentation came and all went smoothly. We made an A on both parts.

We learned far more from that project than the importance of tourism for Costa Rica. We learned about the struggles many international students face as they live abroad. Yasmine's struggles are a common occurrence. International students often have academic, social, and emotional difficulties that frequently lead to depression. More often than not, international students study in a second language. Their work is graded against the work produced by native speakers. Many have financial difficulties since they face restrictions regarding where they can work. They struggle against prejudices and stereotypes. For many of these students, their study abroad is the first time they have been away from their families. They find themselves alone. They find it difficult to make friends in the new country, so often mingle with students from their own country. This makes adapting

## TIPS FOR MINISTERING TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

We have a wonderful opportunity to minister to international students, but where do we start? The answer is simple: just be a friend. Here are a few hints and tips for reaching out:

- **Share your culture.** Most international students want to learn about the culture in which they are living. Invite them to community and church events such as Thanksgiving dinners, Easter plays or cantatas, July 4th picnics, backyard cook-outs, local town or state fairs, etc.
- **Show interest in their culture.** If you know nothing about their culture, a little research would be beneficial. Then, ask questions and listen. Try their food. Ask about their music, their holidays, their family, their favorite places, and their religion.
- **Be available.** When someone moves to a new country, they don't know many things. For example: where can you find the cheapest groceries, where is the best place to get a haircut, where is a good doctor's office, etc.
- **Encourage their English.** It is much easier for international students to hang around others who speak their native language, especially if they lack confidence in their English abilities. Encourage them. Help them if they ask. If they are having trouble understanding, slow your speech down, but not in a demeaning manner and don't start speaking louder.

to the new culture more difficult. They miss their food, their holidays, their weather, and their rhythm of life. They can't go home on short breaks throughout the semester, and the time zone differences make communication with their families even harder. All of this leads many international student to feel isolated. This isolation, and the discouragement that comes with it coupled with academic pressures and further amplified by financial struggles and cultural rubs, quickly leads to depression.

According to one source, in May 2017, 1.18 million international students studied in the United States. Many of these students struggle silently. For example, in a mental health survey done at Yale University among Chinese students, nearly 45% experienced symptoms of depression, and nearly 27% were unaware of any available counseling services. These students need to be pointed to professional counselors, but they also need love, acceptance, and social interaction. In addition to

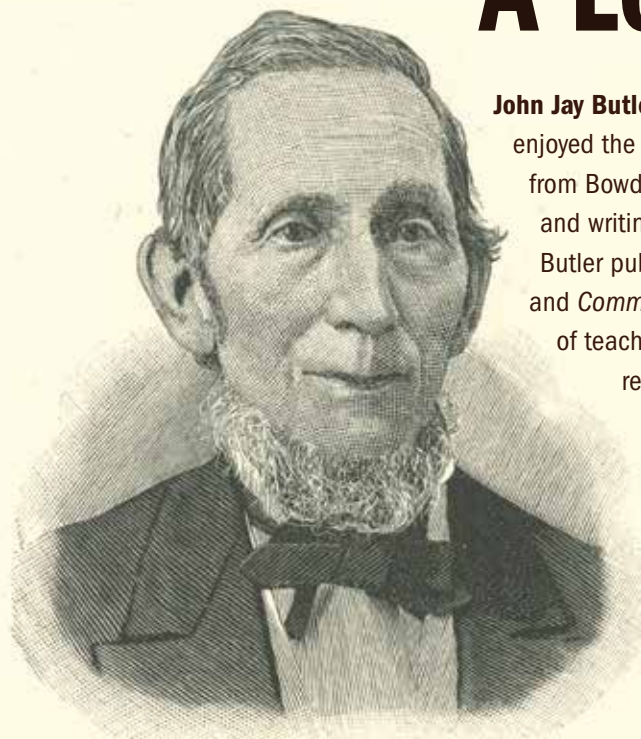
their emotional needs, many of these students come from countries with little to no gospel witness. International students represent a huge mission field in our own backyard. They present a wonderful opportunity for churches to minister to these students in towns and cities across America. With such an opportunity at our doorstep, we can be missionaries without learning another language or crossing a border. As George Barna once said, "In His wisdom and compassion, God has brought the mission field right to our door and affords us the outreach opportunities of a lifetime." **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Mandi Morgan and her family live in Alcalá de Henares, Spain, where they assist pastor José Manuel in the Esperanza Church. Mandi and Neil also teach English classes through the University of Alcalá and encourage and help the church with multiple outreach opportunities. Learn more: [www.fwbgo.com](http://www.fwbgo.com).

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# A Legacy of learning...



Prof. J. J. Butler, D. D.

**John Jay Butler was born in Berwick, Maine, April 9, 1814**, to Nathan and Adah Butler. While he enjoyed the typical New England village boyhood, John was anything but typical. After graduating from Bowdoin (Freewill Baptist) College in 1837, he dedicated his life to theological education and writing, eventually becoming the most widely-respected theologian of the Randall Movement. Butler published *Natural and Revealed Theology* (1861), *Commentary on the Gospels* (1870) and *Commentary on the Acts, Romans, and First and Second Corinthians* (1871). After 40 years of teaching, the popular professor retired at age 70 from Hillsdale College in Michigan. Though retired, Butler and fellow professor Ransom Dunn continued working, publishing the influential *Systematic Theology*, only months before his death. In addition to his theological works, Butler is remembered as an associate editor for *The Morning Star*, a Freewill Baptist newspaper. He was also an active abolitionist and faithful member of the Freewill Baptist Anti-Slavery Society.

**Why not start your own legacy of learning** with an endowment through FWB Foundation to benefit ongoing denominational publishing efforts.



**FREE WILL BAPTIST FOUNDATION**  
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# Snapshots Around the World



**Japan:** Representatives from Japan Free Will Baptist churches gathered April 28-29, 2018, at Koinonia FWB Church in Nopporo, Japan, for their annual meeting. Three messages from Leviticus, fellowship, and breakout sessions highlighted the two-day gathering. Pastor Keiichi Kimura was installed as the new executive secretary for the association.

**France:** The JPense event on April 27 attracted around 170 people, including a number of nonbelievers. Joel Teague's message shared the truth of the Word of God.

**Brazil:** The Marincek FWB Church in Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil, held its annual mother-daughter banquet Saturday, May 12. Around 80 people registered for the event.

**Bulgaria:** Josh and Lydia Provow and their children bought a house in Shumen in May. They began living in an apartment in June while the house, which will serve as both a home and a meeting place, is renovated.

**Japan:** Two churches in Hokkaido each baptized two new believers Easter Sunday. Two boys were baptized at the Koinonia Church and a mother and her daughter were baptized at Miharashidai.

**Spain:** The Alpedrete Church hosted an evangelistic event called *Café Concierto* (Coffee Concert) May 19. A guest Christian songwriter wove his testimony through the songs, delivering a message of hope and salvation to 76 people, including 18 unchurched people. The church youth group served coffee, tea, croissants, and cinnamon rolls to the guests.



## Missionaries in Need

**Antioch, TN**—Five missionary accounts show deficit amounts:

- India Ministries/Carlisle Hanna: -\$86,121.73
- Steve and Lori Torrison: -\$14,221.25
- Dennis and Carol Teague: -\$8,591.14
- Lázaro and Ariadna Riesgo: -\$3,617.72
- Jerry and Barbara Gibbs: -\$1,394.47

Five accounts remain underfunded:

- Don and Ruth McDonald: \$4,142.11
- Daniel and Shelby Culwell: \$8,763.20
- Tyler and Kellie Penn: \$8,880.22
- Rusty and Brenda Carney: \$10,938.03
- Nathan and Linda Snow: \$12,431.46

**Japan:** Judy Bailey rejoiced in the graduation of 22 preschoolers from her Mommy and Me classes at Kamifukuoka Christ Church in Tokyo, Japan, early this year. The children, who moved to a traditional Japanese kindergarten, represent 20 families who need Christ. A new class with six moms and children began in April.

# Ivorian Pastors' Retreat

## Koouafo, Côte d'Ivoire—

Thirty-five pastors and a few wives gathered April 10-13, 2018, for the annual pastors' retreat in the village of Kouafo-Akidom in northeastern Ivory Coast. Leaders invited Kenneth Eagleton, IM's director of field partnerships, to serve as the retreat speaker/teacher. Pastor Thomas Appiah, the Ivorian association's missionary to Ghana, was also present.

Deliberate times of prayer punctuated teaching sessions



on spiritual gifts and discussion of ministry-related issues. The group celebrated the Lord's Supper and feet-washing as well.

Kenneth and his wife Rejane served 18 years as missionaries in Côte d'Ivoire prior to the civil war in 2002. [ONE](#)

# Sarah Mayhew With the Lord



**Antioch, TN—**Former missionary to Côte d'Ivoire Sarah Mayhew joined her Savior May 23, 2018. Her family surrounded the 91-year-old as she transitioned to life eternal.

Appointed to missionary service in July 1963, Sarah and her husband Archie (deceased October

26, 1997) departed for language school in Lausanne, Switzerland, in September 1964 and arrived in Ivory Coast a year later.

The Mayhews began efforts in Bondoukou, planting a church that continues to serve the community. They moved frequently, filling in for other missionaries on stateside assignment. Later the couple focused on village evangelism, beginning churches in Tanda and several other villages. Discipleship and developing local leadership became priorities for the prolific evangelistic couple. They began a youth center/read-

ing room ministry in Tanda, working with high school students.

Once the couple returned to the States (1981), Sarah served beside her husband in the pastorate. They were married almost 53 years.

General Director of International Missions Clint Morgan wrote, "What an absolutely great woman of God! She and Brother Archie were shining examples of dedicated ministry during their time in Côte d'Ivoire."

Pastor Tim Rolen officiated a memorial service June 9, 2018, in Hughson, California. [ONE](#)



## A TIMELY LOGO UPDATE FOR A TIMELESS MISSION

IN EARLY 2018, THE DIRECTORS OF FREE WILL BAPTIST

International Missions commissioned a new logo. While they wanted a fresh identity for the organization, they also needed to address the ongoing security concerns facing today's missionaries. The result? A simple, timeless mark that communicates the mission of IM, while minimizing security risks.

### MOSAIC GLOBE

- + Multiple, bright colors represent multi-cultural ministry
- + Hints at ancient piazza and mosaic tilework
- + A modern touch on a timeless medium



### HIDDEN ICHTHUS

Woven into the globe is a subtle nod to the ancient ichthys, the secret symbol used by early Christians to identify themselves to one another.

**THE MISSION**  
TO LABOR WITH THE  
BODY OF CHRIST TO FULFILL  
THE GREAT COMMISSION.

[WWW.FWBGO.COM](http://WWW.FWBGO.COM)

### IM LOGO OBJECTIVES

- + Limited brand continuity (recognizable)
- + Fresh look and fonts
- + Feature a globe
- + Represent multiple cultures
- + Keep security in mind (not overtly Christian)

### THE FONT

Clarendon Light is a serif font adapted from the Clarendon typeface released by Thorowgood and Besley of London in 1845. The design is credited to Robert Besley, a partner in the foundry and originally engraved by punchcutter Benjamin Fox.

# Social Integrity

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

It is a good thing the Internet and social media were not around when I was younger. I'm sure I would have said or posted something that would still embarrass me today. Truthfully, I have said and done many things I regret, especially when I was younger, but most people don't know what I said or did. I'm also thankful to those who do know about these things, but do not hold them against me. We live in a mob-like atmosphere today on social media, where anyone can be criticized and ostracized by the mob for their words and actions.

I remember taking a safety driving class many years ago that taught the proper way to pass on a two-lane road. Most people assume the first steps are to signal your intention to pass and make sure the road is clear. According to this instructor, the first step is to determine if the pass is necessary. He pointed out that if we are going to turn off the road in a mile anyway, the safest move is not to pass at all. This safety tip has powerful implications for the social media world. Your

opinion about what someone has said or done may be correct, but you should consider whether it is necessary to state that opinion.

Many times, our own opinion may be flawed because we don't have all the facts about why someone said or did a particular thing. Even if we do have the facts, will our criticism help build up the individual or tear them down? This is an area few of us have conquered, and James 3 refers to the tongue (*text* in this case) as an out-of-control fire.

It's also important for us to give those who may have lost control of their tongue or acted indiscreetly the benefit of the doubt and not write them off forever. In 2 Timothy 4, Paul states Mark was profitable to him. Earlier, Paul did not want to work with Mark because he abandoned the group on his first missionary journey. It is a good reminder that even folks who fall into youthful



"Seriously?!"

indiscretion can still be useful in the Kingdom. I'm grateful to those who did not write me off based on what I said, did, or even who I was as a young man. **ONE**

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**About the Columnist:** David Brown is director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. To learn more about the grants program, visit [www.fwbgifts.org](http://www.fwbgifts.org).

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**October 20, 2018**

Madison FWB Church | Madison, AL

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# D6 QUICK START GUIDE

## HOW TO TEACH THE D6 CURRICULUM

Welcome to D6 Curriculum! As a teacher, you are a key part of delivering God's Word to the children, teens, or adults in your class. This quick start guide will give you an overview of how to effectively use D6 Curriculum.

### START HERE

Now that you've taken the plunge and ordered D6 Curriculum, begin by unpacking and organizing all your resources so you can see all the components and how they work together. Separate the resources by age groups, then identify which resources are for **CHURCH** use and which are for **HOME** use. You can easily identify each by the small church or home icon on the cover of the resource.

### CHURCH AND HOME WORKING TOGETHER

Every age group using D6 Curriculum in the church will be studying the same biblical theme at the same time (with the exception of some preschool lessons). This creates a comprehensive discipleship plan for the entire church and encourages discipleship to continue throughout the week in a family or community setting. Be sure to encourage parents to use Home Connection, Splink, and Devotional Study Guides for each member in their family.



*Teaching Guides with Teaching Essentials* provide everything teachers need to communicate effectively.

### TEACHING GUIDE:

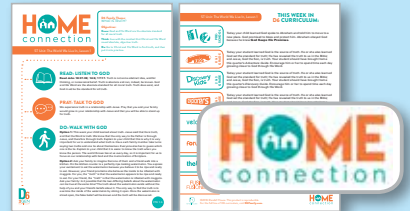
Use the *Teaching Guide* to prepare each week. Read the *Welcome* section at the beginning of the guide, after the Table of Contents. This section lays out your objectives, the D6 teaching and learning methods, that quarter's themes, and other additional resources for your specific age group. A digital version of the *Teaching Guide* is available for download with the purchase of a *Teaching Essentials* kit (URL and code included in the kit).

AVAILABLE  
IN PRINT  
AND  
DIGITAL

USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME USE AT HOME



A FREE weekly email packed with three ideas to help you and your family engage in spiritual conversations



A one-stop resource for connecting the entire family with a passage to read together, suggestions to help you pray together, and activities to do together to put your faith in action



### D6 DEVOTIONAL STUDY GUIDES

Full-color, interactive, fun, and exciting tools to resource each member of the family and church to connect with God and each other on the same theme each week

### AT-HOME RESOURCES:

Be sure to identify and share all resources for at-home use with your class, including D6 Devotional Study Guides for each age (available online or by calling 800-877-7030) and our free parent tools, Home Connection and Splink (available at D6Home.com). Talk Sheets from Fusion Teaching Essentials for parents to use to spark discussions.

### WEEKLY LESSON:

Each weekly lesson follows the D6 CLEAR Learning System™, which easily lends itself to any class or group style:

### CLEAR Learning System™

- Connect** captures the learners' attention and answers the question: Where is this lesson going? Connect helps teachers meet learners where they are and lead them into Bible study.
- Learn** answers the question: What does the Bible say? With sound scholarship and insightful commentary, Learn helps teachers address the points where biblical truth and contemporary life intersect.
- Explore** addresses nuances of the theme or study text such as cultural background, historical context, theological importance, etc. You will find Explore notes interspersed throughout each teen and adult lesson.
- Apply** answers an often-unspoken question: What difference does all this make in my life? Apply helps learners see how the biblical truths they have just heard fit into life in the twenty-first century.
- Respond** reminds us that Bible study and life change go hand-in-hand by encouraging learners to take practical steps to apply the biblical principles they have learned to daily life. This makes Respond the perfect lead-in to each week's daily devotions in the Devotional Study Guide.



# STRATEGY



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**WORKING TOGETHER**

**GENERATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP**

## AT CHURCH:

- Teach Family-Aligned Lessons
- Unparalleled Discipleship and Depth
- Can Be Used in Large Group/Small Group, Life Groups, or Sunday School
- Children's Worship Complements Theme
- Plan Around Family Themes
- D6 Digital or Printed Version

## AT HOME:

- Devotional Study Guides for Each Age
- Splink (Free weekly email packed with ideas for parents to find teachable moments with their kids)
- Home Connection (A free, weekly, downloadable, printable guide that connects church to home and families to one another by providing a short synopsis of what each age group studied that week.)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**D6 FAMILY:** [d6family.com](http://d6family.com)

**D6 CURRICULUM:** [d6family.com/d6curriculum](http://d6family.com/d6curriculum)

**D6HOME:** [d6home.com](http://d6home.com)

**D6TEACHER:** [d6teacher.com](http://d6teacher.com)

**D6TEACHERFB:** [facebook.com/groups/D6CurriculumTeachers](https://facebook.com/groups/D6CurriculumTeachers)

**D6 PODCAST:** [d6family.com/podcast](http://d6family.com/podcast)

**D6 BLOG:** [d6family.com/blog](http://d6family.com/blog)

## PREPARATION:

We recommend beginning your preparation one week in advance. Read the lesson in your *Teaching Guide* and the Bible study text several times, gather suggested supplies, and select which lesson options you will use (Connect, activities, etc.). Remember, the *Teaching Guide* is just that—a guide. As the teacher, you know your students and how to best engage them. Tap into your creativity to connect your students with the truth of Scripture.

## LESSONS

include Lesson Objectives; D6 Doorposts, which identify central ideas to a biblical worldview; Teacher Tips; and a visual Timeline, which will help you place that week's Scripture in historical context.



### D6 DOORPOSTS™

KEY PRINCIPLES THAT FRAME A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

- The Bible is God's Word.
- God is a personal, spiritual being.
- God created the universe and everything in it.
- I am a special creation of God, with an eternal soul.
- I am engaged in a spiritual warfare.
- Sin brought death and destruction into the world.
- Bad things happen because the world is a sinful place.
- I cannot save myself; I need a Savior.
- God offers salvation and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ.
- God established the home to make disciples and transfer the faith.
- God established the church to make disciples and transfer the faith.
- Jesus Christ is the Sovereign Lord of all.

*Timeline In Each Old Testament & New Testament Unit Showing Where the Biblical Events Fit In World History.*



## A FIT FOR ALL SIZES: D6 CURRICULUM SUPPORTS A DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY THAT FITS MANY DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS.

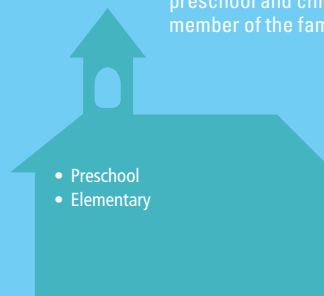
### OPTION A:

Both the church and home are fully engaged. The church uses D6 Curriculum for every age and class/group, and every home uses D6 devotional study guides for every member of the family.



### OPTION B:

A church may only use D6 Curriculum in some age groups, but still provide D6 devotional study guides for home use. Even if D6 Curriculum is only used for preschool and children, the church provides devotional study guides for every member of the family, including parents, to encourage discipleship at home.



### OPTION C:

The church may use other resources in its classes and groups, but the families use D6 devotional study guides. This encourages every member of the family to have his or her own time with God and His Word each day, and it facilitates spiritual conversations at home. With this option the church can provide resources for the family, or families can purchase for themselves.



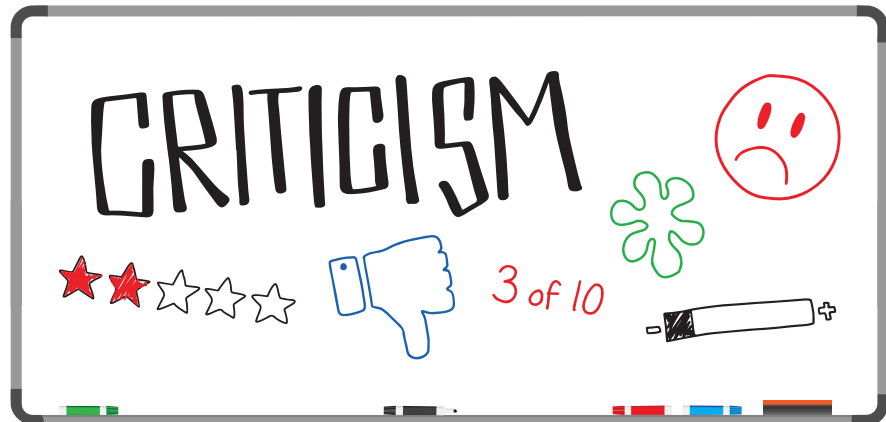
**D6 IS A DISCIPLESHIP PHILOSOPHY THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN ANY SETTING.**

# LAWS of Handling Criticism

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

Leaders should spend a great deal of time thinking through decisions, plans, and policies before implementation. Still, people sometimes surprise leaders with harsh words. Criticism feels like an attack. Two portions of the brain deal with attacks. One catalogues all previous emotional memories while the other determines optional responses, the “fight or flight” mechanism. The higher the level of a leader’s narcissism, the more likely he or she will dismiss criticism as false. Inversely, leaders with lower self-esteem think the criticism is true. Leaders must ignore the flight impulse and control their fight mechanism to neither dismiss nor wallow in criticism. How do they do this? The LAWS of handling criticism help you navigate opposing ideas. What are the LAWS?

**Listen.** Don’t immediately start defending your position. Listen to the specifics of the criticism and repeat back those concerns before



responding. Novice leadership begins formulating a response while the person is still voicing criticism without listening for truth in the complaint. Listening goes a long way with critics.

**Ask questions.** When critics voice concerns, ask them *what if* questions to help them see the issues from your perspective and evaluate the context or situation further. Questions also prevent premature responses.

**Watch emotional responses.** Don’t “marry” your ideas but “divorce” your emotions from the criticism. Don’t assume the attack

is personal even if expressed that way. Improve ideas based on the criticism. Emotionally charged words from either side lose credibility. Calm carries the day.

**Seek right.** When hearing criticism, do not defend immediately. Pause and determine what is right, even if it resembles what your critics are saying. See criticism as a “rest area” to evaluate the “road map” of decisions. Seek right over being right.

None of the LAWS of criticism allows the person with the “spiritual gift” of criticism to hold you hostage. But when delivered by the occasional critic, identify criticism as an opportunity to improve your idea and your relationship with followers. Don’t dismiss criticism without applying the LAWS of listening, asking questions, watching your emotional responses, and seeking right.

## LEADERSHIP QUOTE

*“Don’t let compliments get to your head and don’t let criticism get to your heart.”*

—Lisa TerKeurst



## RECOMMENDED BOOK

***The Listening Leaders: The Ten Golden Rules to Listen, Lead, and Succeed***

By Lyman K. Steil



# Curriculum Discipleship Plan

## 2018 Scope and Sequence



### September 2018 Old Testament

*(1 Kings) Influence of Godly Leadership*

- Week 1 - Choosing God's Way
- Week 2 - Seeking God's Presence
- Week 3 - Following Wise Counsel
- Week 4 - Confronting Sin
- Week 5 - Standing for Truth

### October 2018 Special Topic

*(Romans) The Effect, Extent, and Remedy for Sin*

- Week 1 - The Curse of Sin
- Week 2 - The Cure for Sin
- Week 3 - Justified by Faith
- Week 4 - Freed from Sin



To order, call 1-800-877-7030  
or visit [www.d6curriculum.com](http://www.d6curriculum.com)



*(continued from page 9)*

you, speaks to you, and gives you guidance, you can trust Him wherever He takes you. “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.” The last year has been a “valley of the shadow of death” experience for me personally. I can say without any doubt I have never felt closer to God than in that valley. He has never revealed Himself to me that intimately before or since. He will never leave you or forsake you. You are cozily wrapped close to His heart, and just like my daughter, you can find peace wherever He leads you, because of His nearness.

Have you noticed I keep comparing us to babies? I know it's not flattering, and I hope no one is offended. The comparison rings true, though. Like babies, we are helpless; we are emotional; we are frail. We are powerless to go anywhere or accomplish anything on our own. But God is capable. He loves us. He is trustworthy. *He is ever-present.* So let's actively lean into His presence. When we draw close to Him, we are home.

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isaiah 40:11). **ONE**



**About the Writer:** Katie Speer and her husband Daniel received approval for a second two-year internship to Japan in December 2017. Their first internship ended in August 2017 after their daughter Audrey's battle with bacterial meningitis and Katie's own severe health struggles. The

Speers will work at Good News FWB Chapel with Donnie and Ruth McDonald during this internship. Their goal is to become career missionaries with IM. Sign up to receive their monthly email: [www.fwbgo.com](http://www.fwbgo.com)

# Why I Want to Be an Army Chaplain

BY DAVID DODSON

Not everyone has the opportunity to grow up in the home of a hero, but I did. Not every child has a model of what it means to live with loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage, but I did. I saw these characteristics every day, embodied in my hero, my dad. To be nurtured by such a man—the man who has influenced me beyond all others—was a privilege.

My father, Kenneth Dodson, is a true American hero. He was awarded the bronze star during the Vietnam War for courage under fire. I remember listening to his war stories as a kid and thinking he was ten feet tall. Since my childhood, I have had an affinity for the army and have pictured myself within its ranks, just like my dad, on many occasions. This is how my dad has influenced me.

But this is only one way my dad influenced me. Greater yet, my dad influenced my life by showing daily courage and compassion for the people to whom he ministered as a local church pastor. At age 19, I also answered this call of God upon

my life and have sought to emulate my dad, my hero, in serving God and His people. This is how my dad has influenced me.

However, the greatest way my dad influenced me is by developing in me an attitude to be willing to go wherever God would send me, and minister to whomever He would have me minister. I have an absolute peace God is calling me to blend my dad's two worlds that so greatly influenced my life—army and ministry—to faithfully serve our men and women who serve us so valiantly. I desire to glorify God as a pastor to soldiers, an army chaplain. I want to live out an example to my own children, so one day they can say, "Not everyone has the opportunity to grow up in the home of a hero, but I did." **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** CH (CPT) David Dodson is the newest Free Will Baptist military chaplain. He is currently at the Army Chaplain School in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. After graduation, his initial assignment will be at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, with the 82nd Airborne Division.

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# Rebuilding for the Glory of God: Restoring Hope to a People Devastated



September 19, 2017, is a day no Puerto Rican will ever forget. Hurricane Maria hit the island with 155 mph winds, causing catastrophic damage totaling an estimated \$91.6 billion and claiming the lives of many Puerto Ricans. The Free Will Baptist church, pastored by José Correa, was not exempt from the devastation. The building sustained significant damage, including the loss of the entire roof from the sanctuary and the destruction of the parsonage.

Thanks to God, who never leaves or forsakes us, in the midst of these past few months He has been on the move in the hearts of Free Will Baptist people on behalf of Puerto Rican brothers and sisters. Through generous gifts to disaster relief and with the help of a group of South Carolina Free Will Baptists, the church now has a new roof on the sanctuary and a new bathroom.

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters, for much work remains to be done, but we know we serve the God who can meet every need. **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Stephen Hyman has been a full-time pastor for 13 years, and has held several offices for the state of South Carolina.

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# Empowered for “Such a Time as This”

REVIEW OF THE 2018 POWER CONFERENCE | MAY 28-29 | PIGEON FORGE, TENNESSEE

BY ERIC THOMSEN

On Monday, May 28, *Alberto*—one of the strongest sub-tropical storms ever recorded during the month of May—made landfall along Florida’s Gulf Coast. At the same time, a few hours to the north, more than 400 Free Will Baptists from 15 states ignored the threatening clouds as they gathered at the Music Road Hotel and Convention Center in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, for the fourth annual Power Conference hosted by North American Ministries. While weather may have been less than ideal, the warm fellowship, uplifting music, and powerful preaching soon made conference attendees forget the wind and rain outside.

The opening session kicked off with a concert featuring award-winning gospel bluegrass group Southern Raised followed by a conference regular—comedian and songwriter Aaron Wilburn—and concluding with the unforgettable sounds of a 80-voice praise choir from Valley Forge FWB Church in Elizabethton, Tennessee. The congregation joined the choir on familiar gospel songs, and the convention center reverberated as hundreds of voices raised in jubilant praise.

After the music, Randy Johnson, pastor of Valley Forge Church, explored the Old Testament story of Esther, sharing three things required for such a time as this:

**SEMINAR SPEAKERS**

**Kenneth Akers**, director of Master’s Men

**Bruce Barnes**, executive director,  
Virginia State Association

**Rick Bowling**, director of FWB Hispanic ministries

**Elizabeth Hodges**, director, WNAC

**Jim McComas**, director of church revitalization

**Brad Ransom**, director of church planting

**Kerry Steedley**, director of chaplain support

1) know God is the real source of power; 2) identify and embrace God’s “signals” of providence; and 3) serve God’s intended purpose, even when it puts you at risk. “Finish strong,” Johnson concluded. “Just keep on going. We need you. You’re ‘on the clock,’ and it is ticking down to the Lord’s return.”

Tuesday, two panel discussions were an exciting new feature to the conference. During the morning panel, five “seasoned” pastors—David Crowe (TN), Jeff Jones (NC), Curtis Linton (OK), Tim Stout (OH), and Randy Johnson (TN)—shared a broad spectrum of practical advice for thriving in ministry over the long term. Tues-

day afternoon, five “under 50” pastors—Noah Taylor (TN), David Sexton (VA), Zane Brooks (KS), Josh Baer (NC), and Josh Bush (KS)—offered their unique perspective on ministry, with its challenges and stresses. These men urged listeners to continue Word-driven ministry that is always relevant yet true to the gospel.

Between the opening and closing panels, seminar speakers presented 12 sessions exploring a wide variety of topics, from taking faith to Facebook (and other social mediums), how to celebrate God and country appropriately, overcoming stress, and planning short-term missions trips.

Nursery and childcare (with activities and worship services designed for children) were provided throughout the conference under the direction of Nicole Hackett; Grace and Charity Crowe; Josh and Christy Llewellyn and daughters Destiny and Abby; Mollie and Linda Lawler; and Beth Roysden. From life-sized board games and crafts to action songs and Bible stories, children enjoyed a Power Conference experience geared just for them.

On Tuesday evening, attendees enjoyed an encore concert from Southern Raised and Aaron Wilburn before David Crowe, executive director of North American Ministries, delivered the closing sermon. Crowe reminded listeners of three times in God’s Word every believer should remember: *even when* (we were yet sinners; Ephesians 2:5); *even now* (there is hope; John 11:22); and *even so* (come, Lord Jesus; Revelation 22:20). He encouraged listeners not to get bogged down in the details of the future but to concentrate on the blessings and challenges of God’s will *today*. When believers are focused on what God has for them today, He gives more opportunities than ever dreamed possible. “When my time comes,” Crowe concluded, “I want to know I have been faithful today, because He has been faithful to me so many times.”

The Power Conference is a ministry of North American Ministries and provided free to all attendees. “Four years ago, we started this conference to help our denomination address the important issue of church revitalization,” shared conference director Jim McComas. “Since then, we have expanded our objectives to encourage pastors and their families, as well as workers in the pew. We love and appreciate our pastors and our people, and we have been honored to bring this conference back to Pigeon Forge.”

Conference planners were successful in meeting this goal of encouragement and inspiration, according to East Tennessee pastor Rodney Holloman: “I left the Power Conference this year feeling encouraged from the preaching and marvelous singing, equipped from the seminars and edified from the great fellowship. We are so thankful for this blessing from North American Ministries.”

“What a joy it was to meet in Pigeon Forge with Free Will Baptists from 15 states,” said David Crowe, director of North American Ministries. “It was our largest attendance yet, and the messages and seminars were spot on, providing inspiration and practical instruction. The singing by the Valley Forge Church Choir, Southern Raised, and Aaron Wilburn was amazing. I’ve heard nothing but positive comments and appreciation for the conference.”

For more information about North American Ministries and the 2019 Power Conference, visit [www.fwbnam.com](http://www.fwbnam.com).

ONE

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**About the Writer:** Eric K. Thomsen is managing editor of *ONE Magazine* and president of the Evangelical Press Association.

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# Understanding Your Retirement Savings Options

BY JOHN BRUMMITT

If you asked the average American if he or she is good at handling money, the most common answer would be no. Interestingly, a recent study showed that one in six Millennials has \$100,000 squirreled away in some type of saving or investment fund, and close to half of Millennials have at least \$15,000 put away for the future. While Millennials stereotypically are viewed as not being good with money, many are doing much better than previous generations. In spite of being a generation saddled with enormous student debt, lack of employment opportunities, and frequent job changes, they manage to be conscientious about their finances. Their greatest fear regarding the future is not saving enough.

Generation X falls behind Millennials on this front, but this generation is beginning to catch up. As more and more of the Boomers reach retirement unprepared, younger generations realize more work needs to go into preparations for the future.

In today's world, retirement planning options are almost endless. While any number of vehicles will carry you to retirement, six should top your list:

## 401(k) and 403(b)

(Board of Retirement is a 403(b) plan.) For most people, these employer-sponsored retirement plans are the easiest and best place to start investing for retirement. These plans have high contribution limits and usually the cheapest fees since they pool large amounts of assets.

## Solo 401(k)

These work like an employer 401(k) but are available for sole proprietors.

## SEP IRA

SEP stands for Simplified Employee Pension and is primarily used for self-employed or small business owners. These accounts are easier to set up than Solo 401(k).

## Simple IRA

This plan allows employers with less than 100 employees to set up IRAs with less paperwork. Employers must either match employee contributions or make unmatched contributions.



## IRA

Anyone can contribute to an IRA. You can receive a tax deduction on your contributions, as long as your taxable income remains under a certain limit.

**Note: All earnings on all of the accounts above are tax-deferred until withdrawal. Contributions also lower your taxable income for the year they are contributed.**

## Roth IRA

Roth IRAs are a little different: you do not deduct contributions from your current taxes. Interest gained on these funds grows tax-free and you pay no tax, as long as certain criteria are met, such as withdrawal after age 59 and a half.

The savings option you choose will depend on your situation. If you work for an employer offering matching contributions, *always* take the match. You are *guaranteed* 100% return on your investment. If you don't have the

option of participating in an employer-sponsored plan, either an IRA or a Roth IRA is a good place to start. An IRA can act as a "secondary" retirement account for those who have employer retirement plans already.

Understanding your retirement savings options allows you to get the most out of your retirement. Knowing which vehicle provides the greatest opportunity to accumulate assets and deliver the greatest tax benefits not only frees up funds in the present but in the future as well. No matter what option you choose, the next steps are all the same: start saving early; be consistent in your contributions; and do not touch it before retirement. **ONE**

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

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# Goals for Retirement

BY JOSHUA EIDSON



Everyone knows a person needs to save for retirement. Maybe you've even enrolled in your company's retirement program. And maybe you have a portion withheld from each paycheck into your retirement account. But do you know *how much* you need to save for retirement?

## Income

Several things must be considered to determine how much you will need in retirement. First, remember many retirees will receive some Social Security and Medicare benefits. If you haven't prepared, this can be a portion of your retirement income. It can ease the burden of saving throughout your career, but it should not take all the pressure off needing to save yourself for retirement. Social Security is designed to be a safety net, not the primary source of retirement income. Remember to consider all potential sources of income for your retirement: retirement savings plans, Social Security, personal savings, annuity contracts, maybe even passive income from a "side gig" you helped start.

## Expenses

However, you must also consider the other side of the equation—expenditures. For most retirees, the largest drain on their financial resources comes from medical

expenses. This is where years of contributions to Medicare really help, as Medicare benefits are a huge source of relief on the financial strain of medical expenses. Retirees also need to consider their monthly living expenses, and any debt load they still carry from working years. Taking a European cruise, serving a non-profit in Africa, or leaving legacy or inheritance gifts after their passing—all are valid goals and concerns to be weighed.

## Longevity

The last area to consider, and one becoming an increasing concern, is longevity. With life expectancy increasing in developed countries, many retirees simply live longer than expected and so outlive their financial resources.

These considerations quickly become individualized, so there's not one specific number that will work for everyone. The retirement industry provides some general guides regarding how much you should plan to have

saved, such as annually saving 15% of your income for retirement and planning to have enough saved so your annual retirement income will replace 70-80% of your work life income. But guides are all these are. Everyone's

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NO ONE EVER  
COMPLAINS  
THEY HAVE  
SAVED TOO  
MUCH FOR  
RETIREMENT.

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situation is unique and so are the retirement needs. Each person must consider his or her personal situation and retirement goals, remembering to consider all potential sources of income and the myriad areas of expenditures. The more you do during your working years to prepare for your retirement—

paying off all debts, maintaining health insurance coverage, living a healthy lifestyle, and saving—will help ease the financial strain of your

retirement years. No one ever complains he or she has saved too much for retirement.

One must consider many things to plan properly for retirement. Let our office serve you and your fellow church members. The Board of Retirement has resources available to map out a plan for your retirement needs, from the retirement fund calculator on our website, individualized education, and other planning resources. Contact our office directly at 877-767-7738. **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Joshua Eidson is accounting administrator for Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement. A native of Middle Tennessee, Joshua graduated from Welch College in 2007, where he earned a B.S. in business administration. He and his wife Rachel have four children.

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# Calling for History...



**In early 2014**, the Historical Commission began the task of creating a digital archive of minutes from national, state, district, and quarterly meetings. Over time, these valuable records are being added to **www.FWBHistory.com**, made available to anyone, anywhere in searchable PDF format.

**We need your help!** Gaps still remain in the collection. If you would like to donate books or records, please contact collection curator Phillip Morgan: **pmorgan@welch.edu**. Let's work together to preserve the amazing story of our movement for the next generation of Free Will Baptists.

**www.FWBHistory.com**



# Lost in Translations?

BY ZACH VICKERY

*Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtaine, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooveth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water, even as Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flockes of Laban were watered. Indeede without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacobs well (which was deepe) without a bucket or some thing to draw with.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Find the original introduction to the King James Bible online:  
<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1611-Bible/1611-King-James-Bible-Introduction.php>.

This quotation comes from the introduction to the original 1611 version of the King James Bible. It expresses the need for Bible translations people can understand. Just like the editors of the KJV, many other translators have seen the need to continue producing English Bible translations in language that makes sense to modern-day people. Today, with so many Bible translations available we are left asking: What Bible translation should we use? Which translation is the best?

The Bible, or at least the Old Testament, has been often translated since the second century BC when 70 scribes took on the task of translating the Pentateuch. This Greek translation, along with Greek translations of other books of the Old Testament, came to be known as the Septuagint, the very first “version” of the Bible.<sup>2</sup> These scribes used a variety of translation techniques, just as translators use different approaches to Bible translations today, each aiming to represent the original language. Some translators attempt to match the original text formally, meaning they attempt to reflect the same word order, grammatical forms, and word-for-word equivalents in their vocabulary. Other translators are more interested in creating a translation that best captures the meaning of the text.

Some people prefer translations that follow the original text in word-for-word fashion, or at least in the most literal way possible. Others prefer a translation that reads more like a modern English letter or book. Sadly, the issue of translation methods has divided many churches and stirred up much controversy. Some argue adamantly there is a single authorized version everyone should use. Unfortunately, settling on a single translation is not that simple.

### Terminology Problems

The most common way a translation is judged is based on its literality, but many issues arise from using the terms *literal* and *free* to describe a translation. If one uses these terms, he must specify the aspect of the translation to which he or she refers. In what way is translation *literal* or *free*?

2 The word *Septuagint* originally referred to the first translation of the Pentateuch. Today, scholars refer generally to the Greek Old Testament as the Septuagint, even though the term is not precise.

Most of the time, when one discusses the literality of a translation, he is referring to how closely it follows the original languages in terms of quantitative equivalence. In other words, the term *literal* describes a translation that follows the source text word for word. For every Hebrew or Greek word, the translators use one English word, following the same word order most of the time.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, the term *free* describes a translation that translates in a thought-for-thought manner, or perhaps phrase by phrase. This approach gives translators more flexibility to make sense of the source text in the target language. It allows them to use common terminology, syntax, and grammar to convey the meaning of the original text.

The problem with describing a translation as literal or free is that the terminology is ambiguous. Translations can be, and often are, both literal and free in different respects. For example, a so-called literal translation may literally reproduce the word order of the original text, but in doing so, it is not as precise in conveying the meaning as a free translation. Thus, a translation can be literal in terms of word order but free with respect to meaning. At the same time, a free translation, while accurately conveying the general meaning of the text, may miss various points of emphasis in the original passage.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a translation can be free regarding the word order but still convey the literal meaning of the text.

Because of these issues, one should not judge the quality of a translation solely on its literality. The process of translation is complicated, and these ambiguous terms literal and free are not helpful when assessing the accuracy of a translation.<sup>5</sup>

3 As much as some would like to produce an English translation that matches the original word order exactly, it would be nearly impossible to understand in English if the translators did not give themselves at least some flexibility.

4 For example: biblical authors would sometimes place a noun or verb at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize the subject or the action.

5 Because of the ambiguity in the terms *literal* and *free*, many have resorted to using the terms *formal equivalence* to refer to translations that closely bind themselves to the original text, and *dynamic equivalence* to describe translations that are more like a paraphrase.

## Translation Challenge

The abundance of English translations evidences the fact that producing a quality translation is challenging, primarily because of semantics. *Semantics* deals with the study of meaning in languages, and this complicates finding a simple English equivalent for a Hebrew or Greek word. A single word in an original language may take on a variety of meanings in different contexts, and a single English word may be the correct translation of the original in one context but wrong in another.

Mark Strauss illustrates this problem of semantics using the word *key*. In the English language, *key* can refer to a number of things: an unlocking device, a solution to a puzzle, a main point, a musical note, the buttons on the keyboard, a location on a basketball court, and perhaps others. If someone were translating the word *key* into another language, he probably could not find a single word to convey its entire semantic range.<sup>6</sup> The same challenge presents itself when translating the Hebrew and Greek Bible into English.

## Conclusion

So, which translation should we use, and which approach is best? The main thing we need to remember is that translations are simply that—translations produced by imperfect humans. From the most formal equivalent to the most dynamic equivalent, flaws are apparent in each method. The important thing is to know what type of translation you are using and to understand its purpose. Formally equivalent translations leave less room for subjective interpretation but often result in hard-to-understand English. Dynamically equivalent translations may be easier to read, but one must remember that translators took some liberties by deviating from the original syntax and word order to produce a smoother translation.

It might seem daunting to learn how each translation committee approached the text in the original languages, but this is a fairly simple exercise. Many Bibles include an introduction in which the committee explains their translation philosophy and provides information

6 Mark Strauss, “Bible Translation Philosophies.” NIV: <https://www.thenivbible.com/bible-translation-philosophies>

about the exact Hebrew and Greek versions from which they translated. A great example is the introduction to the 1611 KJV quoted at the beginning of this article. The introduction provides a lengthy explanation of the translators’ reasons for producing another English translation. It gives a brief history of Bible translations up to that point and stresses the need for another translation people could understand properly.

If your Bible does not have an introduction, readers may find translation information online. For instance, the webpage for the ESV translation starts by saying, “The ESV is an ‘essentially literal’ translation that seeks as far as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer.”<sup>7</sup> The reader immediately knows the translators’ intention was to produce an English translation that accurately captures the essence of the original languages—attempting to produce a word-for-word translation—while also paying close attention to using understandable English. On the other hand, the NIV website makes clear the intention was to produce a translation focused more on the *meaning* of the original rather than the precise words. The approach is said to “balance transparency to the original with clarity of meaning.”<sup>8</sup>

Even with their flaws, translations are a gift for which we should be thankful. Not everyone has the easy access to Scriptures in their own language as English speakers. Rather than allowing translation options to overwhelm us, we can take advantage of the unique benefits each translation method offers. **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Zach Vickery and his wife Emily live in Cambridge, United Kingdom, where he is studying the Greek Old Testament at the University of Cambridge. Zach holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Welch College in Gallatin, Tennessee. When he isn’t studying, Zach enjoys spending time outdoors and reading.

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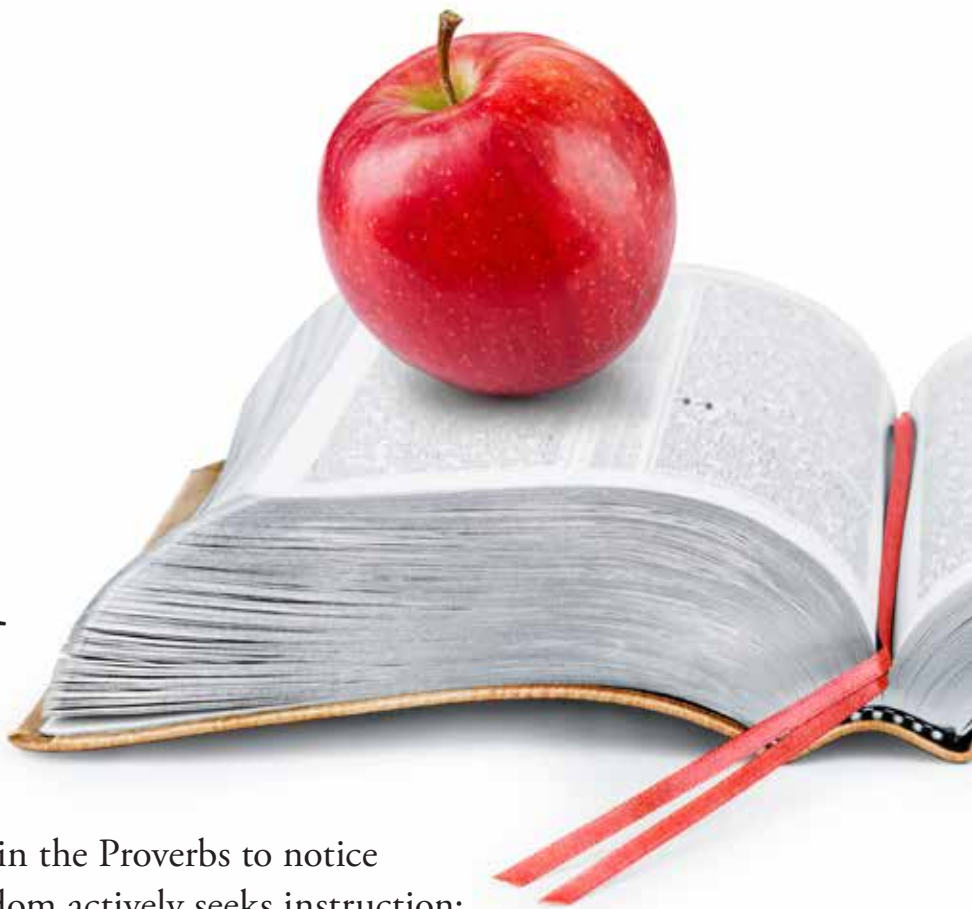
7 “Preface to the English Standard Version.” ESV: <https://www.esv.org/translation/philosophy/>

8 Translation Philosophy.” NIV: <https://www.thenivbible.com/about-the-niv/niv-translation-philosophy>

# The Right Kind of Instruction

BY DANIEL A. WEBSTER

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You only need to read a short while in the Proverbs to notice two dominant themes: 1) godly wisdom actively seeks instruction; 2) godly wisdom actively *seeks the right kind* of instruction. If this is the case, we must examine the teachers we allow to influence our thinking.

I am thankful for the opportunity to teach at Welch College as an adjunct instructor. When I was in school, several of my professors had a massive impact on my life, and it is an immeasurable blessing (and responsibility) to know I may play a small part in impacting the life-direction of my students.

The release of the movie *God's Not Dead* a few years ago sparked a renewed interest in the religious beliefs of community college and university professors. The movie portrays an individual of strong faith who stands up to his antagonistic, atheist professor. As in Proverbs, he refuses to receive instruction of a fool who claims there is no God (Proverbs 14:1).

But is the movie accurate? Do these types of things really take place at secular schools? While I have heard stories of professors who mock the faith of students,

I have also heard firsthand accounts of professors who were kind and accommodating of students' faith. An examination into the research conducted by Gross and Simmons provides helpful insight on this topic. Neil Gross, former assistant professor of sociology at Harvard University and currently Charles A. Dana Professor of Sociology at Colby College, and Solon Simmons, assistant professor of conflict analysis and sociology at George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, recently (February 6, 2007) conducted research to find out "How Religious Are America's College and University Professors?"

## Do You Believe in God?

A large sample of professors from community college, four-year universities, non-elite PhD programs, and elite

PhD programs were asked to affirm statements with which they agreed. Here are the actual results concerning these professors' belief in God:

- 10.0% "I don't believe in God."
- 13.4% "I don't know whether there is a God, and I don't believe there is any way to find out."
- 19.6% "I don't believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power of some kind."
- 4.4% "I find myself believing in God some of the time, but not at others."
- 16.9% "While I have my doubts, I feel that I do believe in God."
- 35.7% "I know God really exists, and I have no doubts about it."

Common wisdom often suggests the majority of college professors are atheists; according to these results, this is not true. But the fact that only 36% of professors claim they "know God really exists and have no doubts about it," should cause great concern.



### Having a Form of Godliness but Denying Its Power

When surveying the data, two findings were quite startling. The first concerns the question of origins. Gross and Simmons's research found that 84.1% of professors surveyed disagreed with the following statement (with 75.3% registering strong disagreement): "The theory of intelligent design is a serious scientific alternative to the Darwinian theory of evolution." That's right—84% of the professors surveyed do not believe God created the world.

This is important. While 36% of those surveyed did, in fact, believe in God, only 16% believe in God as Creator. The research goes on to survey these professors' view of Scriptures. Only 6.1% of professors believe "the Bible is the actual Word of God."

Even among professors who claim *God is not dead*, a smaller percentage actually believe God reveals Himself through the Scriptures. I can't help but be reminded of Paul's description of the last days, when people have "the appearance of godliness, but deny its power." These "are always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:5-7). One who claims belief in God yet denies the Scriptures has only a form of godliness. I sincerely pray for the 6.1% who have a faith rooted in the Scriptures, that they would be a light in this dark world.

### Does It Really Matter?

If I am getting a degree in business, does it really matter that my professor doesn't believe the Bible is the actual word of God? If I am getting a degree in biology, does it really matter that my professor doesn't think the theory of intelligent design is a serious scientific alternative to the Darwinian theory of evolution?

Yes, it matters.

University students, regardless of major, take up to half of their college courses in general education fields pertaining to things like human origins, marriage, sexuality, gender, the family, religion, philosophy, the meaning of life, the value of human life, and so on. These are biblical matters that must be viewed in light



of Scripture. Both business majors and biology majors are taught from a perspective not only contrary to but often hostile to Christian faith.

Additionally, we must approach all study of all subjects with the presuppositions God exists and He created, that He reveals Himself to man through Christ and the Scriptures, and He plays an active role in His world through the Spirit and the Church. Unfortunately, many believers have a false dichotomy between what is learned at school and what is learned at church. This should not be—truth is God’s truth, wherever it is found.

At Welch College, as a regionally accredited institution, we are blessed to offer 40 programs of study taught not only by professors who are experts in their fields (65% hold terminal degrees in their areas of study), but who hold the Scriptures to be the inerrant and sufficient Word of God.

The Proverbs state godly wisdom actively seeks instruction. This is clear in the declaration “fools despise wisdom and instruction.” But, godly wisdom also listens to the right kind of instruction. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. We must incline our ear to men and women who first and foremost fear the Lord. To be the right kind of people, we must receive the right kind of instruction. **ONE**

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**About the Writer:** Daniel Webster is director of enrollment services at Welch College. He served four years as lead pastor of Glad Tidings FWB Church in Asheboro, North Carolina, and ten years as an associate pastor at Gateway FWB Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Webster has written young adult curriculum for Randall House since 2014. He has master’s degrees in biblical studies and church music. He and his wife Kimberly have three children, Aaron, Julianna, and Noah. Learn more about Welch College: [www.Welch.edu](http://www.Welch.edu).

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# Houske and Talbot to Serve as Welch Resident Directors

**GALLATIN, TN**—Welch College has named Russell Houske as men’s resident director at Welch College and Rebekah Talbot as women’s resident director, according to Jon Forlines, vice president for student services.

“We are pleased to announce Mr. Houske and Mrs. Talbot will serve in these roles,” Forlines said. “We believe they will continue the excellent job done by Anna McAfee, who served as women’s resident director for eight years, and Mike Edwards, who served as men’s resident director for seven years, as well as five years in the 1990s.”

Talbot, a 2012 Welch music education graduate, served as a

music teacher in North Carolina public schools before returning to Welch as academic office manager for two years. She has served as a homemaker and photographer since 2016. She and her husband, Chris, who serves as campus pastor and teaches youth and family ministry at Welch, have two sons: William (age 2) and James Elliott (eight months).

Houske recently joined the Welch staff as facilities services manager, after serving as a bi-vocational youth pastor, pastor, and paramedic. He recently completed a B.S. in General Christian Ministry and is now enrolled in the master’s program in Theology and Ministry. He and his wife Amber have four children: Jacob, a

freshman at Welch, Jackson (15), Carleigh (14), and Cayden (12).

“Our resident directors and their spouses are really like dorm parents,” Forlines said. “In recent years, the spouses have played such an active role, we’ve begun to think of them in this way. Chris Talbot and Amber Houske are going to be sharing some of the RD responsibilities. Both the Talbots and Houskes are exceptional Christian couples who will bring their ministry backgrounds to this role which is so important in the spiritual formation of our students.”

The new resident directors began their duties in June.

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## Welch College Graduates 56 in Commencement Exercises

Welch College conferred degrees on 56 students in its first commencement exercises on the new campus in Gallatin, Tennessee, according to Provost Matthew McAfee. Commencement exercises were held in the Student Activities Center. The gymnasium space

was converted into an auditorium with more than 700 seats for the baccalaureate service on Thursday evening, May 10, and commencement on Friday morning, May 11. The college awarded degrees in multiple programs, including two-year associate’s degrees, four-year

bachelor’s degrees, and the new Master of Arts degree in Theology and Ministry. Forty-four percent of the class graduated with honors.

Dr. Claude O. Pressnell, Jr., president of Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, delivered the commencement



address, challenging graduates to pursue Christ's call to glorify Him in their vocations and to transform the world for His Kingdom. Dr. Robert E. Picirilli, professor emeritus of Welch College, presented Thursday evening's baccalaureate sermon. He urged this year's graduating class to consider how they will finish their course of life, drawing their attention to the words of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

On Thursday afternoon, May 10, Welch's second class of graduate students received the M.A. in Theology and Ministry and participated in the hooding ceremony, held in the Presidents Dining Room of Celorio Hall. Dr. Kevin Hester, dean of the School of Theology, charged these graduates regarding the importance of maintaining appropriate emphasis on both theological study and its application to life and ministry. A reception followed for graduates and their families.

President Matt Pinson recognized Physical Plant Director Bruce Bilbrey on his retirement for 40 years of faithful service to Welch College. "His life of service showcases the call to glorify Christ in one's vocation with excellence

and hard work," Pinson said. Mike Anderson, also a member of the maintenance department, was recognized for 25 years of faithful service to the college and Michael Oliver, program coordinator for psychology and major gifts officer, was recognized for ten years of faithful service. President Pinson also honored Gary Turner on his retirement as athletic director and program coordinator for exercise science. Dr. Ron Callaway, program coordinator of intercultural studies, was named Academic Advisor of the Year.

The college commends to you and to the work of the Lord the members of the 2018 graduating class.

#### **Associate of Science Degrees**

Mariah Bonet Moore  
Wellington, KS  
Biology

Abby Danielle Walker  
Washington, NC  
Biology

Brittany Lynn Wilson  
Willow Springs, NC  
Business

Whitney Gail Wright  
Lucasville, OH  
Biology

#### **Associate of Arts Degrees**

Elisha Kenneth Cameron  
Macon, GA

Andrew Michael Deel  
Antioch, TN

Rachel Marie White  
Bristol, VA

#### **Bachelor of Science Degrees**

Rachel Laine Anderson\*  
Pleasant View, TN  
Child Development and Learning  
Licensure K-5

Hunter Aaron Barnes  
Guin, AL  
General Christian Ministry

Samuel David Benninghoff\*\*\*  
New Bern, NC  
General Christian Ministry

Lisa Marie Bromley  
Joplin, MO  
Music Performance

Jannai Rose Bullard  
Virginia Beach, VA  
Exercise Science

Gabriel William Cameron\*\*\*  
Macon, GA  
Child Development and Learning  
Licensure K-5

Benjamin Glynn Campbell  
Pocahontas, AR  
General Christian Ministry

Joshua Lewis Mohan Chapman\*  
Hannibal, MO  
General Christian Ministry

Eleanor Brett Conley\*  
Eureka, MO  
Business Administration

Eric Lansdon Cowart  
Eastpointe, MI  
General Christian Ministry

Jimmy Earl Daniels\*\*\*  
Reyno, AR  
General Christian Ministry

Madison Haley Eastman\*  
Toney, AL  
Business Administration

Camryn Allen Eaton  
Cypress Inn, TN  
General Christian Ministry

Alyssa Juanita Hill\*\*\*  
Norton, VA  
Business Administration

Russell Douglas Houske\*  
Dover, TN  
General Christian Ministry

JaTravius Charrod Jones  
Atlanta, GA  
Business Administration

Jonathan Andrew Lewis\*\*\*  
Chicago, IL  
Exercise Science

Jacob Tyler Lute\*\*\*  
Wheelersburg, OH  
Music Performance

Rae Ann Mahaney  
Reynoldsburg, OH  
General Christian Ministry

Hailee Renée Mann\*\*  
Bristol, TN  
Biology

Taylor Nicole Marsh\*  
Nashville, TN  
Early Childhood  
Licensure PreK-3  
Child Development and Learning  
Licensure K-5

Kendra Elizabeth Massey  
Belmont, MS  
Business Administration

Bailey Cheyenne Metcalf  
Salem, IL  
Psychology

Carlos Miguel Mireles  
Miami, FL  
Exercise Science

Mackenzie Blaire Moody\*\*\*  
Clayton, NC  
Business Administration

Robert Gene Moore  
Wilmington, NC  
General Christian Ministry

Kayla Dawn Newland  
Washington, NC  
Biology

Samantha Diane Patton  
Nashville, TN  
Psychology

Tanner Christian Pruet  
Greeneville, TN  
Psychology

Taylor Austin Pruet  
Greeneville, TN  
Psychology

Maredith Claire Ryan\*  
Ina, IL  
English Education  
Licensure 6-12

Caleb Wayne Saunders  
Seffner, FL  
General Christian Ministry

Stephen Anthony Seeley\*  
Dallas, NC  
General Christian Ministry

Kori LeeAnn Slem  
Manassas, VA  
Child Development and Learning  
Licensure K-5

Layton Gregory Smith\*  
Ozark, MO  
General Christian Ministry

Sam Anthony Temple  
Olive Branch, MS  
Business Administration

Jacob Daniel Voltz  
Magnolia, TX  
Business Administration

Kennedy Ivana White  
Pleasant View, TN  
Biology

Josiah Carey Willis  
New Bern, NC  
Youth and Family Ministry

Whitney Gail Wright\*\*\*  
Lucasville, OH  
Psychology

**Bachelor of Arts Degrees**

Stacy Nicole Allison\*\*\*  
Dickson, TN  
Intercultural Studies

Damaris C. Hernandez\*  
Clinton, TN  
Intercultural Studies

Brandon Kyle Presley\*  
Knoxville, TN  
History

Michael Houston Pugh  
Millington, TN  
Pastoral Ministry

Matthew John Saunders\*\*  
Dover, TN  
History

Abigail Catherine Settle\*  
Pleasant View, TN  
History

**Master of Arts Degrees**

Joshua Adam Butler  
Ahoskie, NC  
Theology and Ministry

Franklin Todd Parrish  
Gallatin, TN  
Theology and Ministry

Ricky Wayne Taylor  
Northport, Alabama  
Theology and Ministry

Eric K. Thomsen  
Joelton, TN  
Theology and Ministry

\*\*\* Summa Cum Laude - 3.75

\*\* Magna Cum Laude - 3.50

\* Cum Laude - 3.25

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# called

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling,  
not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace,  
which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began...

The blistering temps and sweltering humidity of Little Rock summertime couldn't keep 5,000 Free Will Baptists from packing out ten convention hotels and flooding the streets July 22-25, at the Statehouse Convention Center, which sprawls along the banks of the Arkansas River in the Capitol City.

Gathering under the theme "Called" from 2 Timothy 1:9, each convention service focused on a specific area of that calling. After Jeff Crabtree, pastor of Serenity FWB Church (NB, CAN) and member of the Welch College's board of trustees, opened the convention with a Sunday School lesson on Psalm 118, North Carolina's Josh Baer, pastor of Cramerton FWB Church (NC) and North American Ministries board member, followed with the first sermon of the convention. Expounding on the call to salvation, Baer asserted, "Although filled with theological implications, the call to salvation is simple enough a child can understand." On Sunday evening, Ben Gibson, pastor of Phillips Chapel (AR), reminded congregants we are called to holiness. Using 1 Thessalonians 4:7, he explored three gifts of this call: identity in Christ, direction, and morality. He ended the sermon with an exhortation to repent and to seek holiness.

---

Monday's landmark bilingual service appropriately explored the call to unity (Ephesians 4:4). After the congregation sang "Oh the Blood" in both English and Spanish, International Missions' Lázaro Riesgo, a native Cuban, preached in Spanish, with Florida pastor Jose Rodriguez translating. He urged, "The Church should strive for the same sense of unity that exists in the Trinity." Tuesday evening's speaker, 1040i founder Mike Cousineau, reminded the congregation God calls us to suffer (1 Peter 2:21). He does not guarantee physical safety. "The priority of following Jesus is not safety," Cousineau admonished. "The cross has never been safe...we need to stop insulting God by safe living." The Wednesday evening missions service placed an exclamation point on a week of dynamic worship. A children's choir joined the convention choir and orchestra for a rousing anthem before a parade of missionaries brought the congregation to its feet. North American Ministries Director David Crowe challenged Free Will Baptists to answer the call to preach the gospel, acting locally and thinking globally. Altars filled, and the conference ended the best way possible—men, women, boys, and girls answering God's call upon their lives.

Throughout the week, convention music coordinator Kevin Justice, worship leaders Joshua Riggs and Micah Turnbough, orchestra leader Chad Donoho, and other members of the Music Commission created a stirring music program built around convention theme song, "We Believe." With a choir of more than 100 voices, a praise band and orchestral ensemble, and a congregational choir of thousands, the hall filled with sound, and the singing boomed throughout the convention center.

Services were streamed live once again, thanks to the efforts of the Media Commission, with nearly 50,000 people watching at least some portion of a service during the week. For the second year, live streaming was bilingual, offering services translated into Spanish.

Called to *holiness*, called to *unity*, called to *suffer*, and called to *preach* the gospel—powerful, convicting services were the highlight of this year's convention, but business also proved memorable. The big news broke Tuesday afternoon when Keith Burden announced his 2019 retirement from his role as executive secretary. Although the announcement left delegates in a mood of contemplation as they face a big

decision next year in Cincinnati, they could not help but rejoice as the reports that followed highlighted amazing things God is doing in and through Free Will Baptists.

## Highlights to Remember

**Early Impact.** Each year, convention-goers come together on the Saturday before the convention to impact the host city. This year, 60 Impact Little Rock participants volunteered at a VA healthcare facility, while another 55 worked at the Arkansas Food Bank. At the VA center, volunteers organized donated clothing and freshened up outdoor sitting areas, "making a lasting impact on this facility by serving those who have served us," according to Director Ken Akers.

Plans for volunteers at Arkansas Food Bank changed dramatically after a powerful storm knocked out electricity to the food bank's neighborhood. The team of would-be potato sorters quickly transformed into a grounds crew, cleaning debris from the windblown property. Despite the intense heat and humidity, volunteers of all ages energetically worked up a sweat. At the end of the morning, team members gathered to pray over the food bank. Volunteer Coordinator Amber Bryant told volunteers, "It wasn't the impact you thought you were going to make, but you made an *unexpected* impact."

**Still Rising.** The 4,714 who registered for the convention in 2018 continued the upward trend in attendance, marking a six-year high. In addition, the number of seminars, panel discussions, workshops, and activities expanded from 83 in 2017 to 89 in 2018. After a number of lean years, the financial outlook also increased as departmental budgets surpassed pre-recession levels, with the annual budget nearing \$30 million.

**Exhibiting Excellence.** The Exhibit Hall featured the highest number of exhibitors in years. Educational booths like Randall University, Welch College, and Southeastern FWB College were ready and waiting to interact with prospective students and alumni. International Missions spotlighted strategic partners from around the globe. Ministries such as Bible Mission, Bridge Builders, Village of Hope Uganda, and Jungle Kids for Christ explained to interested visitors how they share the gospel with the unreached in unique ways.



North American Ministries' booth celebrated 80 years of ministry. These are only a handful of the exciting opportunities enjoyed by visitors to the hall.

**Laughter, Latté, and Ladies.** Always a joyful event, WNAC's fellowship on Monday night was filled with laughter. Missionary kids Amy and Caroline McDonald serenaded the sold out crowd before the entire McDonald family shared some of their favorite verses with the 300-plus women in attendance.

## Business at Hand

**General Board.** On Monday, July 23, the General Board heard reports from nine national agencies and four commissions as Moderator Tim York guided board members through a three-hour, 48-minute meeting. The board approved a flurry of recommendations, including the 2019 denominational budget of \$29.9 million; an Executive Committee recommendation the 2024 convention be held July 21-24, in Tampa, Florida; a recommendation to raise representation fees to \$175 in 2020 and \$200 in 2025 to address rising convention costs; a recommendation that a five-member Committee on Denominational Research (funded by a grant from the FWB Foundation) be formed to guide and undertake denominational research; that Welch College be allowed to make financial reports based on the college calendar; and to publish the Free Will Baptist *Yearbook* in digital format to save money and stay current. All resolutions were approved by delegates during the business session, and Moderator Tim York appointed Danny Baer (NC), chairman; Ron Hunter (TN); Eddie

Moody (NC); Tim Eaton (OK); and Mark McPeak (TN) to serve on the research committee.

Clerk Randy Bryant additionally read the names of 19 appointments to national committees: Credentials (5), Nominating (6), Resolutions (5), and Obituary Committee (2). During the Tuesday and Wednesday business sessions, delegates approved reports from the following departments:

## Executive Office

Executive Secretary Keith Burden expressed thankfulness for a stable financial picture, noting the Executive Office—including building services and *ONE Magazine*—ended in the black. Burden warned, however, that expenses, especially convention expenses, continue to rise, requiring ongoing budgetary vigilance. “We are profoundly grateful for those who continue to support this office and make this financial stability possible,” he concluded.

Burden introduced Dr. Danny Dwyer, administrator of *Rekindle* church revitalization. Dwyer explained the program will connect coaches with struggling churches for a 12- to 16-month period to bring churches into spiritual health through a series of steps to renewal. “This is a giant step in the right direction for our churches,” Burden observed regarding the program. Burden additionally thanked the Foundation for a grant underwriting two upcoming “bonus issues” of *ONE Magazine* (PULPIT) designed especially for pastors and their families.

At the conclusion of his report, Burden announced his retirement, effective December 31, 2019. “Only a few individuals have had the opportunity to serve as executive



secretary of the denomination,” Burden noted, “and it is a privilege and responsibility I have not taken lightly.”

After thanking Burden for his fine work as executive secretary, Moderator Tim York announced the following procedure for selecting a new executive secretary:

1. The Executive Committee is charged with the responsibility of presenting a single candidate for the position of executive secretary to the General Board of the National Association of Free Will Baptists by July 2019.
2. The Executive Committee will receive candidate recommendations for executive secretary until October 30, 2018. A candidate profile form must accompany each recommendation. This form will be made available at [www.nafwb.org](http://www.nafwb.org) by August 1.
3. All pertinent information regarding this process will be dispersed to pastors, state leaders, General Board members, state papers, and printed in *ONE Magazine*.
4. The Executive Committee will recommend one candidate to the General Board.
5. The General Board will recommend one candidate to the National Association.
6. The executive secretary will be elected by majority vote of the National Association.

## Randall House

Director Ron Hunter acknowledged the positive financial momentum experienced in 2016-17 continues into 2018. This continued turnaround is a result, he explained, of making financial health a top priority for the department. Hunter expressed thankfulness for good cash flow, the absence of short-term debt, increased assets in operational accounts and reserves, and manageable long-term debt as the department ended 2017 with a gain of \$238,747.

Dr. Hunter expressed a renewed, intentional emphasis on discipleship through curriculum and materials, training conferences (Truth & Peace, YET, and the Engage Leadership Network), and events such as the Vertical Three and D6 Conferences. He noted the D6 Conference continues to expand, now with international events in Norway, France, and Southeast Asia. In light of the growth and development of Randall House events, Hunter announced a careful review and revision of Randall House event policies. He also identified a focused effort to increase

academic books and resources for maximum influence in the culture.

Hunter closed his report by telling delegates, “Your publishing house has published books to help your ministry, curriculum for everyday discipleship, and the D6 conference to get you on the right track. We are here to help.”

Hunter honored outgoing board member Mark Braisher (OK) for 12 years of committed service to the Randall House Board.

## North American Ministries

David Crowe, general director of North American Ministries (NAM), thanked God and faithful givers for helping the department make significant financial progress by reducing deficits by nearly a half-million dollars over four years. He expressed gratefulness for financial progress made without staff or program cuts, while providing a free conference each of the four years. In addition, NAM introduced a new program of church revitalization and strengthened the chaplain support ministry.

The department continues to expand its ministry, with 89 church plants (both English-speaking and Hispanic congregations), resulting in more than 1,200 salvation decisions in 2017. Two churches launched in 2017-2018 with six additional churches to launch by the end of the year. Crowe announced the Hispanic work in Rupert, Idaho, has reopened and the department is making plans to open another Hispanic church in Buhl, Idaho. In addition, Dr. Rufo Gómez is moving to Nashville, Tennessee, to begin a new work.

Church revitalization also continues to expand, now hosting revitalization weekends designed to help churches make immediate changes to restore growth and health. In May, the fourth *Acts 1:8 Power Conference* celebrated a record attendance of nearly 500, and was well received by conference-goers. Master’s Men continues disaster relief efforts, responding to natural disasters in Georgia, Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico, and St. Croix, USVI, in 2017.

Crowe honored two church planters whose congregations reached self-supporting status since last year’s convention: the Kivettes at 180 Church (TN), and the Osborns at Oakland FWB Church (TN). Kerry Steedley honored Chaplain Roy Swisher and his wife Jan for their service and congratulated Chaplain Swisher on his retirement.

## Board of Retirement

Director John Brummitt celebrated record enrollment over the last two years, with 124 new participants in 2016 and 125 in 2017. This, along with contributions from existing participants (up 52%) and funds from the new institutional investing program resulted in the largest one-year net increase in the 48-year history of the department: \$9.27 million.

The new institutional investing program is available to any church or church agency looking for a greater rate of return on organizational assets. Brummitt celebrated an 11.1% return to the program over the last six months of 2017. With the help of a grant from the FWB Foundation, the Board of Retirement will produce biblically-sound financial resources and financial training events for new ministers.

Brummitt urged listeners not to wait to start saving for retirement but to be good stewards by saving early. “Our desire is that every Free Will Baptist employee will be prepared for retirement,” Brummitt concluded. “This will allow them to move into new ministries during retirement years.”

## Free Will Baptist Foundation

Director David Brown challenged listeners to help the Foundation “make history” by investing in the financial future of the denomination. He noted the Foundation made some history itself last year, with a record \$8.4 million increase in assets.

Although the department experienced a \$104,000 loss in operating expenses in 2017, Brown explained this was due to lingering cancellations of estate plans expensed in 2017. The issue has been resolved by increasing the price for estate planning from \$2,300 to \$2,995 and additional organizational adjustments. While the department may continue to experience a loss in the area of estate planning, Brown insisted the program is a significant and worthwhile investment in the future of Free Will Baptists.

In spite of a volatile stock market during the first half of the year, the Foundation captured \$500,000 in capital gains before the instability began. As a result, the Foundation had the ability to award 27 grants to Free Will Baptist ministries and efforts around the world in 2018.

In closing, Brown noted, “Our future can be a great one. When we look to the future and project where we will be

as a denomination 50 years from now, I know I won't be here...but I know the Foundation *will* be here and many of the ‘future gifts’ we are working on today will be contributing income to a future denomination...Our history hasn't been written yet. Let's make it a good one.”

## IM

General Director Clint Morgan thanked Free Will Baptists for faithfulness during recent difficult years but urged listeners not to rest on these previous accomplishments, noting, “Let's be careful not to miss God's *greatest* blessings by being content only with His blessings.”

Returning to a 2017 proposal, delegates approved the department's name change from Free Will Baptist International Missions to IM, Inc. The change was made for accessibility and security reasons when obtaining visas to limited access countries.

Morgan celebrated advances in the 20 by 2020 initiative, with 34 new churches contributing to IM since 2015; liquid reserves at 25.9%, well above the 2020 goal of 20%; one new missionary; 5,436 new non-western believers, surpassing the 2020 goal; and 365 new FWB churches outside of North America, again exceeding 2020 expectations. “God has worked in amazing ways,” he concluded.

Morgan advanced four strategic objectives for the Mission: 1) broaden the Free Will Baptist footprint in India; 2) form teams to reach immigrants and refugees as their numbers continue to increase worldwide; 3) adopt the “NONs” (16% of the world's population who claim no religious affiliation) as an unreached people group; and 4) develop more international teams.

Morgan mourned the passing of Radostin Tsvetkov, an integral member of the Bulgaria team. The 30-year-old collapsed and died April 4 while playing basketball with a group of boys. He also remembered former missionaries Jimmy Aldridge, Tom McCullough, and Sarah Mayhew, who also died this year. He honored 12-year IM Board member Nelson Henderson (AR) for his service, along with retiring missionaries Dale and Sandra Bishop (Japan, 44 years) and Robert and Judy Bryan (France and Côte d'Ivoire, 50 years).

## WNAC

WNAC Director Elizabeth Hodges celebrated God's graciousness to (and through) Free Will Baptist women. The

# 2018 AT A GLANCE CONVENTION

## REGISTRATION

NAFWB attendees - **3,871**

Vertical Three - **3,416**

Total Attendees - **4,714**

Note: Many attendees register for both conventions.

## SPEAKERS

Sunday School, July 22  
Jeff Crabtree (NB)

Sunday Morning, July 22  
Josh Baer (NC)

Sunday Evening, July 22  
Ben Gibson (AR)

Monday Evening, July 23  
Lázaro Riesgo (TN)

Tuesday Evening, July 24  
Mike Cousineau (OK)

Wednesday Evening, July 25  
David Crowe (TN)

## 2019 YET TEAM

Jace Cooper (NC)

Jacob Snow (Japan)

Samuel Rodriguez (FL)

Collin Long (MO)

Katie Burke (GA)

Nate Mattingly (KY)

Jacob Robertson (MS)

Mason McClintock (GA)

Layla England (KY)

Helen Shtefan (FL)

Sarah Johnson (GA)

Abby Myers (MI)

Erin Goucher (MS)

## ELECTED IN 2018

**Welch College** - 2024

Will Beauchamp (FL)\*

Theron Scott (SC)

Tim Campbell (AR)

**IM** - 2024

Danny Gasperson (NC)

Mark Price (OH)\*

Robert Posner (TX)\*

**Randall House Publications** -  
2024

Kendall Ross (AR)

Mike Mounts (OH)\*

Mike Trimble (MI)\*

**Women Nationally Active  
for Christ** - 2024

Amy Johnson (IL)\*

Khristi Shores (NM)

Sarah Sargent (OH)\*

**Commission for  
Theological Integrity** -  
2019

Thomas Marberry (OK);  
replacing Randy Corn, who  
resigned for health reasons

2023

Matt Pinson (TN)\*

**Historical Commission** - 2023

David Crowe (TN)\*

**Music Commission** - 2023

James Stevens, (TN)\*

**Media Commission** - 2023

Stephen Lopes, (TN)\*

**Executive Committee**

To be elected in 2018:

2021

Glenn Poston (TN)\*

Edwin Hayes (OH)\*

Mike Wade (OK)\*

## General Officers

**Moderator** - Tim York (TN)

**Assistant Moderator** -

William Smith (GA)

**Clerk** - Randy Bryant (FL)

**Assistant Clerk** - Ernie Lewis (IL)

*\*replacing himself or herself*

## 2019 BUDGETS

Executive Office - \$829,241

FWB Foundation - \$2,214,000

North American Ministries  
(Home Missions) - \$5,032,620

IM - \$7,200,000

Retirement - \$659,120

Randall House - \$4,948,000

Welch College - \$8,774,753

WNAC - \$242,500

Theological Commission - \$5,700

Historical Commission - \$5,295

Media Commission - \$5,460

Music Commission - \$6,125

**Total** - \$29,922,814

## Download photos:

[nafwb.yerbyphotography.com](http://nafwb.yerbyphotography.com)

**General editor:** Eric Thomsen

## Reporters and Editors:

Karlee Alberty, Emily Faison,

Deborah St. Lawrence,

Victoria Thomsen, Phyllis York

**Photographers:** Abigail Fawbush,

Sydney Walker, Rodney Yerby



department received several large gifts enabling WNAC to eradicate all debt and focus on expanding its ministry. Women across the nation gave a half-million dollars to missions and ministry causes this year. Gifts to the Steward Provision Closet totaled \$42,000, and met the specific needs of 145 home and international missionaries.

Women continue to support the next generation through the department's three scholarship programs, and the 2017 *Shine!* conference, hosted by Randall University had the highest registration to date. Hodges announced an upcoming *Shine!* conference on October 20 at Madison FWB Church (AL).

Internationally, WNAC hosted a retreat for 35 Bulgarian women (including seven non-believers); helped with a Panamanian retreat attended by 110 women, where seven were saved; and assisted a Panamanian youth camp where 50 non-believers attended and 22 accepted Christ. WNAC also partnered with Oklahoma WAC to provide a Uruguayan women's retreat.

"God is working among us, and we are thankful for the doors of opportunity He has opened," concluded Hodges. "We want to broaden our outreach while we keep our original purpose...Together, we can do more for Him."

## Welch College

"This has been an amazing year of growth!" exclaimed Matt Pinson, president of Welch College. He noted the college set a 33-year enrollment record, with full-time students up by 11% over the previous year. This growth is reflected in annual financial increases as well: tuition up 7%, unrestricted gifts up 13%, and more cash gifts than any other year in the college's history (outside of the recent capital campaign).

However, Pinson also acknowledged the financial challenges facing the college due to unexpected construction expenses, increased operational expenses for the new facilities, and lower than expected community grants. Still, he noted overall finances are as expected and encouraged listeners to pray hard and trust the Lord. "We will be out of relocation debt in five years," Pinson predicted. "We are thankful for the Free Will Baptists who have given so faithfully to this relocation effort."

Pinson honored Trustees Ken Simpson (MO) and Mark

Stripling (AR) for 12 years of service to the board and celebrated the release of *Light and Truth: a 75-Year Pictorial History of Welch College*.

**Music Commission.** Doug Little, chairman of the Music Commission, thanked those who plan and implement music for the national convention. He indicated the Music Commission is developing a website funded by a recent Foundation grant. The interactive site will offer worship tools, training materials and videos, and the ability to network. "A vibrant music ministry is essential for every church," Little concluded. "And the Music Commission exists to come alongside and help those churches."

**Media Commission.** The Media Commission continues to focus on live streaming at the national convention, with a growing number of viewers watching services in both English and Spanish. The commission additionally continues to expand the text-to-give and online giving program that allows attendees and online viewers alike to participate in convention offerings.

**Commission for Theological Integrity.** Commission chairman Matt Pinson encouraged listeners to participate in the 22nd annual theological symposium, October 22-23, 2018, on the campus of Randall University. He indicated the commission is currently compiling the next issue of *Integrity Theological Journal*.

**Historical Commission.** Eric K. Thomsen, commission secretary, honored Chairman Dr. Robert E. Picirilli for his multi-decade efforts as curator of the FWB History Collection. This year, the collection made the transition to its new home on the Gallatin campus of Welch College, where it continues to complete the FWB Minutes Project, seeking to digitize all denominational minutes in searchable digital files and archive those documents on [fwbhistory.com](http://fwbhistory.com).

**In other business,** delegates heard the report of a committee formed to consider the feasibility of forming a national church revitalization department. While the committee acknowledges this real and serious need, committee chairman Stan Bunch advised against forming a new department, recommending an emphasis on existing revitalization efforts by the Executive Office and North American Ministries. The committee advises these programs continue, working strategically, cooperatively, and jointly in revitalization efforts. **ONE**

## UNSEEN | VERTICAL THREE CONFERENCE | LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

BY KARLEE ALBERTY

For 50 years, young people across our denomination have come together to fellowship, serve, compete, and worship. This year was no different. Free Will Baptists were reminded the future of our denomination is bright as 3,400 young people met in Little Rock. Participants experienced an unforgettable, life-changing week as they were challenged to strengthen and grow in their faith by the theme *Unseen*, from Hebrews 11:1.

The conference kicked off Sunday morning with a powerful message by Jacob Riggs, Pastor of Central Oaks Community Church (MI). He spoke on “What to Do When God Doesn’t Feel Near” and challenged listeners to trust and obey God’s Word over their feelings. Kendall Ross, Pastor of Ozark FWB Church (AR), followed on Sunday evening with a message about the “Unseen War” described in Ephesians 6. He encouraged students to prepare for this war by putting on the Armor of God and knowing who the enemy is. He reminded listeners the enemy’s main weapons are the lies he speaks into our lives when he attacks us at our weakest points. Monday evening, Jake Manning, Youth Pastor at Unity FWB (NC), spoke on three necessities of a growing faith. He challenged students to have an awestruck fear *of* God, an all-inclusive love *for* God, and appropriate trust *in* God. Manning reminded listeners we are not enough on our own, but God is enough! During the final service, Dr. Frank Turek taught students to defend their faith with common examples relating to cosmology.

The Vertical Three Conference also allows tomorrow’s church leaders to worship through services geared toward their ages. This year, Katie Greenwood and team led 109 preschoolers in exciting Bible lessons, crafts, and games each night. Johnny Miller led 264 1st through 3rd graders in great worship and challenging Bible lessons. Steve Greenwood led 314 energetic 4th-6th grade students in 456 Worship, challenging them to grow in their faith.

Kid’s Corner proved a highlight of the 2018 conference. The event provided an opportunity for kids to release some energy during the day by participating in fun games and crafts while their parents enjoy CTS competitions or sem-

inars. Johnny Miller and staff managed the event Monday through Wednesday.

Serve the City, under the leadership of Jane Parker, left a great impact on the host city of Little Rock. This community service-minded ministry gives conference participants the opportunity to serve the host city each year. This year, through 22 different service projects, 200 individuals were served at 21 different locations. At the same time, 150 homeless care bags were packed and distributed. During the annual convention blood drive on Wednesday, 23 units of blood were donated. Serve the City continues to provide a great opportunity for attendees to be the hands and feet of Christ while attending the conference.



During the Wednesday ceremony, CTS and other awards were presented. The **Youth Leaders of the Year** award went to Josh and Christi Smith. **Youth Group of the Year** was awarded to Temple FWB. And **Youth of the Year** was presented to Sydney Walker. The **Jim Lauthern Award** was awarded to Charlie Elliot for his hard work and dedication. This year, the CTS Ministry Expo had 906 entries and 1,804 competitors, and the Wednesday night awards presented an exciting opportunity to celebrate all the hard work from competitors and coaches.

The 2018 Vertical Three Conference was filled with great competition, powerful worship, and lasting memories. If you were unable to attend the Little Rock conference, we invite you to join us in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 21-24, 2019, when the conference theme will be *Identity* (Ephesians 4:24), exploring who we are in Christ. We hope you choose to join us in Cincinnati. **ONE**

# Failure to Communicate

BY KEITH BURDEN

Our granddaughter had just celebrated her third birthday. She, along with her parents and brothers, were attending the national convention in Memphis, Tennessee. Though her name is Julia, we affectionately refer to her as Juju. She's one of my sweet knuckleheads.

My wife and I (aka Nana and Papa) wanted to spend some time with the grandchildren, so we decided to take them on a short riverboat cruise on the Mississippi. As we made our way to the dock, a rare mid-July rain shower popped up.

In short order, the tickets were purchased, and we boarded the paddlewheel driven vessel. Because of the rain we opted to sit inside the cabin around a table rather than outside on the upper observation deck and get wet. We instructed the grandchildren to remain seated while the boat was moving to avoid falling and risk injury.

In hindsight, it probably wasn't the best excursion for three young children. While the tour guide's commentary about the sites along the shoreline was

interesting to the adults, it was obviously not very exciting for younger passengers.

Julia was bored out of her mind. On more than one occasion I had to summon her back to her seat. Finally, unable to sit still any longer, she slipped from her chair and began walking toward the cabin door. In a serious tone I said, "Julia. Come back and sit down."

Pausing momentarily, she gave me a backward glance and then kept walking away. With the most stern, grandfatherly voice I could muster I said, "Juju! You obey me." She stopped dead in her tracks, turned and said matter-of-factly, "Papa, I am *not* an old baby."

A few seconds of awkward silence ensued. Then her brothers began snickering under their breath. Finally, unable to contain it any longer, the entire family burst out in laughter. It was one of those hilarious, priceless moments we will never forget.

That amusing incident serves as a reminder we need to pay attention when communicating with others. What we *say*, and what

others *hear*, is not necessarily the same thing. Good intentions are no substitute for good communication skills.

An effective communicator follows a few basic rules: keep it simple; think before you speak; hear through the ears of the listener. Otherwise, you may experience a failure to communicate and someone may think you're calling them an "old baby."

"So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?" (1 Corinthians 14:9a).



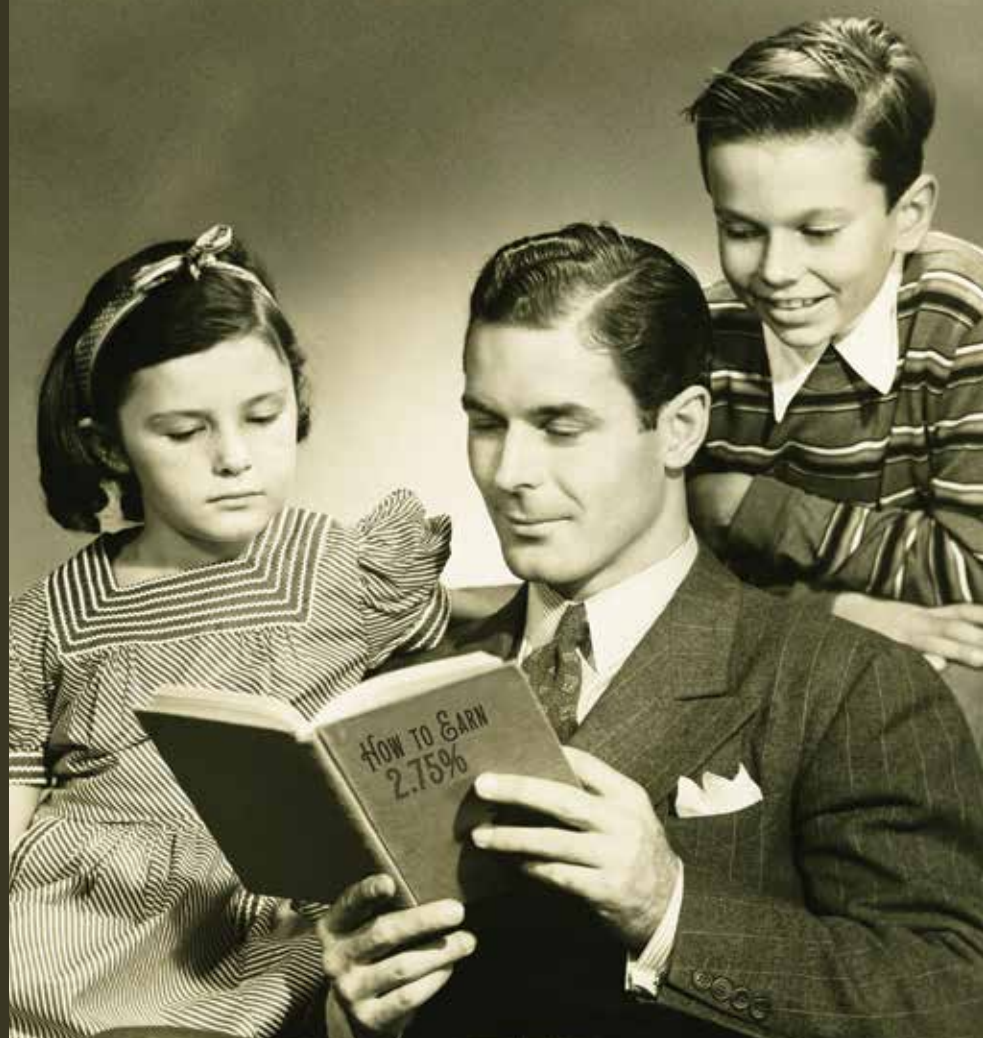
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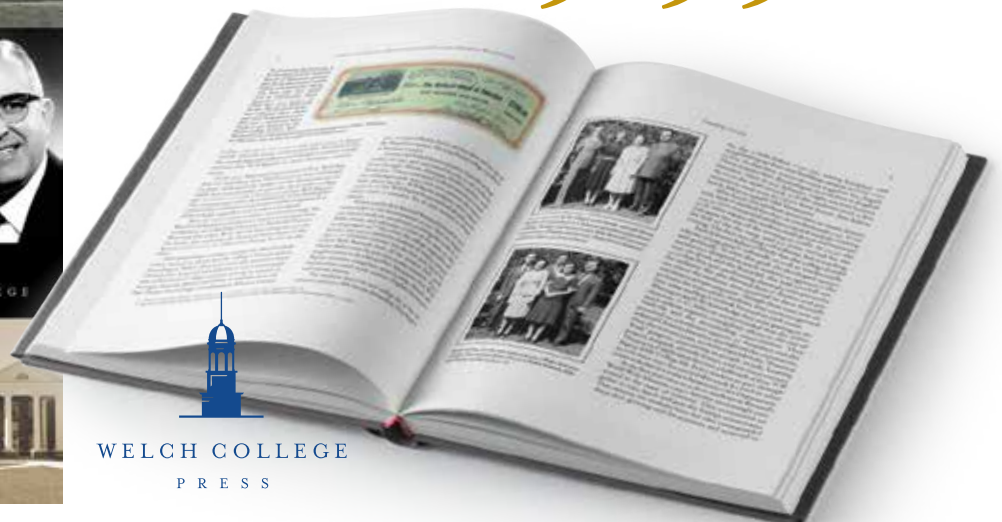
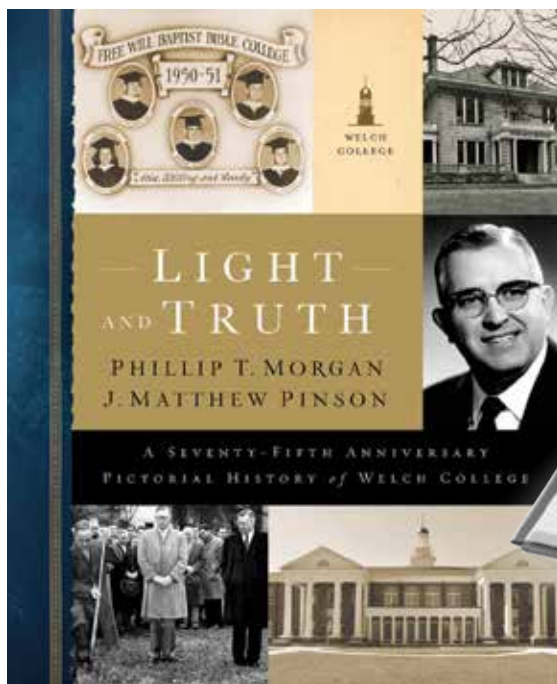
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