

ONE LORD ONE VOICE ONE VISION

ONE

MAGAZINE

A Free Will Baptist Magazine

THE GENEROSITY PRINCIPLE

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FOUND FAITHFUL

The Martha Complex

LEGACY OF STEWARDSHIP

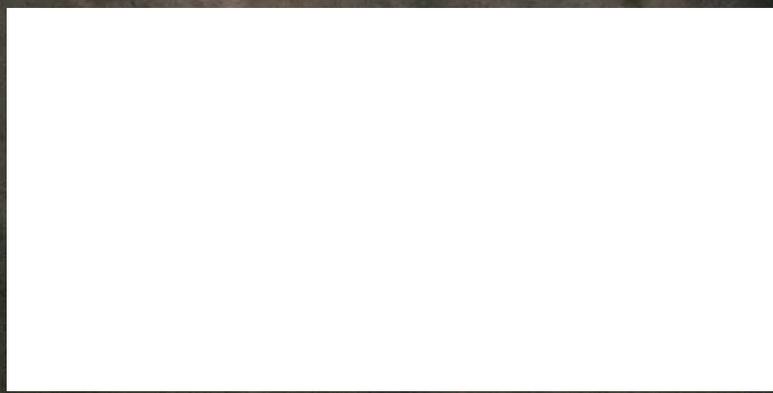
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UNIFYING VISION OF OUR
ROLE IN THE EXTENSION
OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

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Crowdfunding

Sometimes, truth really is stranger than fiction.

In late 2013, through the generosity of 741 complete strangers, Garrett Heath of San Antonio, Texas, raised \$17,542 to bring his dream to life—the “Pi” pan. (No, that’s not a typo.) Sure to make the Christmas wish list of geeks everywhere, his quirky pan in the shape of the Pi symbol really “broke the mold.”



PHOTO: the Pi pan.

Entrepreneurs Key Portilla Kawamura and Ali Ganjavian raised \$195,094 from 1,846 donors in 2012 to fund the “Ostrich Pillow,” strange-looking headgear designed to give users private space to relax (or even sleep) in public. The money helped catapult their company, Studio Banana Things, to the upper ranks of the world’s quirky vendor list.



PHOTO: the Ostrich Pillow.

Images from KickStarter.com

The list goes on and on—\$46,261 raised for Combat Kitchenware; \$3,119 to produce the Five O’clock Shadow crochet ski mask (keeping skiers warm while making them look burly); \$29,015 for the production of Griz Coat, realistic outerwear that, you guessed it, makes wearers resemble a grizzly bear. Perhaps the greatest head scratcher is the \$59,065 raised for no sock socks...dubbed “sole socks” and designed to let people go sockless without stinky shoes. Sixty grand? Really? Just wish I had thought of it.

These are only a few examples of a growing phenomenon known as crowdfunding or crowdsourcing. Since Kickstarter.com launched in April 2009, more than 10 million people have given \$2 billion through the site to a host of projects—97,000 and counting. Kickstarter was (appropriately) only the beginning. A number of sites have joined the funding fad—GoFundMe, RocketHub, FundRazr, and Crowdfunder, just to name a few. According to a report from industry research firm Massolution, in 2014 alone, companies and individuals across the globe raised \$16.2 billion, a 167% increase over 2013 (in the middle of a struggling economy). The premise of crowdfunding is simple: use the Internet to give a large number of potential supporters (backers) an opportunity to fund projects they deem worthwhile. Many donors, one worthy cause. Sounds almost... biblical.

I hate to burst the funding bubble, but God came up with crowdsourcing years before Al Gore “invented” the Internet. He called it tithing, first introduced in Leviticus 27:30-33 when God instructed Israel to give “all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree” to support the work of the priesthood and the care of God’s dwelling place. The premise was simple: a large number of supporters to fund the project God deemed worthy.

Jesus shared His own principles of giving in the New Testament when He instructed disciples to follow God, not money (Matthew 6:24); to give freely and quietly (Matthew 6:3-4); to give sacrificially (Mark 12:41-44); and to give with the right motive—a heart for God (Matthew 6:21). Thankfully, in my life as a preacher’s kid turned youth and music minister, I have experienced firsthand the faithfulness of God’s folks, especially Free Will Baptists. But today, the financial decisions of the faithful seem a bit complicated.

Kickstarter.com may have 97,000 opportunities to give, but the Church has her own fair share—denominational ministries, teen missions trips, local shelters, colleges (not to mention college students), crisis pregnancy centers, and local churches struggling to make ends meet. With so many worthwhile ministries, where should we put our money? May I offer three simple suggestions?

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Keep tithing. It's God's plan for funding His ministry, and it works at every level of ministry, from local church to national ministries. (Also, consider tithing on your estate. It's a great way to keep giving to ministries you love long after you are gone.)

Don't rob Peter to pay Paul. Don't be a

"bandwagon" giver, jumping on every new ministry cause. Instead, be faithful to commitments made already; those ministries are counting on you. Pray earnestly before making your next commitment, then stick to it.

Do your homework. Don't get caught

funding no-sock socks when souls are truly at stake. Give to reliable, accountable ministries that ultimately seek to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

You won't hear me say it often, but it may be time to follow the crowd...funding the work of the Kingdom. 



letters:

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

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

Email editor@nafwb.org or send correspondence to:

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

I really appreciate the current issue of ONE Magazine.

There are some outstanding articles. Particularly, two caught my attention. As a casual student of history and a Welch College graduate, I enjoyed every word of "John Welch and the Free Will Baptist University." And "Stuck!" strikes a common chord among denominational churches around our country. This article sounds a wake up call to stuck churches. Well done! You provide a positive influence on believers and ministries through written communication.

—Doug Randlett, Senior Associate Pastor
Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

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FOURTH AND INCHES

BY ERIC THOMSEN

The 1997 AFC championship game between the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Denver Broncos came down to a single play. On the opening drive of the second half, after driving the length of the field, Steelers' quarterback Kordell Stewart threw an interception in the endzone to Broncos' linebacker Allan Aldridge. The Steelers never recovered from the turnover, and Denver slipped out of Three Rivers Stadium with a 24-21 victory. Two weeks later, the Broncos hoisted the Vince Lombardi trophy after winning Superbowl XXXII easily over the Green Bay Packers.

That moment, that game, is seared into Troy Sadowski's memory. "I will never forget pre-game, the jitters, the Terrible Towels, the chants of 'Here we go, Steelers! Here we go!' and the stomp of more than 65,000 feet. It sounded like thunder as we ran up the tunnel. You could *feel* the excitement. And then to lose that way...that memory hurt a lot longer than the finger I broke during the second quarter. It was my shot to get to the Big Game...and I missed it."

That goal-line interception is the most vivid NFL memory for the six-foot five, 250-pound tight end who spent nine seasons in the League, playing for six teams: the Jaguars, Steelers, Bengals, Jets, Chiefs, and Falcons. It was a long run in the pros by anyone's standards.

MAJOR LEAGUE DAD . . . AND MOM

Troy was born and raised in the Atlanta area, and his family was anything but typical. His dad was the youngest of ten siblings, from a family of Polish immigrants who came through Ellis Island and landed in Pittsburgh (eventually becoming big Steelers fans). "My grandfather died when my dad was young, and I only remember my grandmother as a sweet, old lady who spoke few words of English; the one I heard most was 'Eat!'"

Troy's dad Robert escaped the steel mills by becoming a Major League pitcher. He played for the Milwaukee Braves and the Boston Red Sox and holds the distinction of being the last Braves starting pitcher at their final home opener in Milwaukee, defeating the Chicago Cubs 5-1. After his career in the Majors ended in 1966, Robert moved the family to Atlanta, reconnecting with former Braves teammates.

"It was pretty incredible to have a Major League dad," Troy recalls. "He was my coach for football, baseball, and basketball all the way through high school. Some of my sweetest memories from childhood are going to the ballfield with a trashcan full of baseballs. Dad would pitch the entire bucket then sit and watch while I picked them all up.

"My first time at bat, I remember thinking, 'This guy is a Major League pitcher...what if he hits me?' So, I backed away from the plate. My dad immediately said, 'Get back in there!' He threw one high and tight and hit me right in the back—on purpose. I remember him smiling and saying, 'See, that wasn't so bad, was it?'"

"I still have pictures of my dad and me with Hank Aaron and other stars of the Atlanta Braves. Dad and I were really close, and he poured all of his sports knowledge and love of the game into me."

Troy's dad was not the only athlete in the family, though. His mom was a fine athlete as well, and when his dad couldn't make it to a game, she would step in and coach the team. "The truth is" Troy admits, "Mom was way harder on me than dad ever was."

Troy's mom was the glue that held the family together, so it was a devastating blow for Troy when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, during his sophomore year in high school. She fought a valiant four-year battle against the disease before succumbing to its effects in 1986.

Watching his mother's struggle with her illness was tough for Troy, and ultimately decided where he played college ball. He chose University of Georgia to be close to her, and where she could come and watch him play. Sadly, his mother never got to attend one of his college games.

FOURTH AND INCHES

On the field, all was well...great, in fact! Troy became a four-year starter—a star at University of Georgia. He recalls his first game, the Georgia-Alabama game "between the hedges" in 1985, shown on national television. "What a terrible way to start my college football career. I remember running onto the field and being scared to death. I simply focused on blocking Cornelius Bennett (future five-time NFL Pro-Bowler and AFC Defensive Player of the Year). Somehow, I got through the game."

Troy quickly became known for physical play and exceptional run blocking. He achieved All-American status, attracting the attention of pro scouts and becoming one of the greatest tight ends in UGA's storied football history, according to most sports writers.

Off the field, Troy's life was in a downward spiral. Religion had played little part in the lives of the Sadowski family. Roman Catholics by tradition, they attended mass only on occasion, usually major holidays. While Troy knew *about* Jesus, he did not *know* Jesus. Without a moral anchor, and without the steadying hand of his mother, his behavior quickly went downhill.

As the "big man on campus" at Georgia, he thought he had it all figured out. He began partying—drinking, drugs, women, you name it. "I bought into Satan's lies hook, line, and sinker," Troy confesses. Thankfully, God sent four men into his life who cared enough to share the gospel with him. He had four distinct opportunities to accept Christ—four downs, as Troy describes them.

First down. Jim Cagle, Troy's high school football coach invited him to FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) meetings at least a dozen times before Troy accepted. "Finally got tired of him asking me, so I went. Heard the gospel; ignored it.

In one ear and out the other! I was a 16-year-old kid who knew everything. I didn't need Jesus in my life."

Second down. Charlie Whittemore, tight ends coach at University of Georgia invited Troy to church, and he went...but only to stay in the coach's good graces. Visiting in his home, however, made a great impact on Troy, and for a second time, he heard the gospel. Again, at a crucial time in his life, he chose to ignore it.

He finished his college career, entered the NFL draft, and was selected in the sixth round by the Atlanta Falcons. A few months later, after becoming a free agent, Troy found himself playing on Sunday for the Cincinnati Bengals. By all appearances, his life was falling into place. He was married, with two beautiful little girls, and an NFL career on the rise. "On the field, everything was great. Off the field, I was a mess. The weaknesses of college only got worse with a bigger paycheck. I never let it affect the way I played, but my lifestyle was tearing apart every other area of my life."

Third Down. When Troy's wife took his daughters to visit her parents in Atlanta and didn't come back, something snapped. Troy began partying like never before, and while he did his best to hide it from his teammates, somehow, offensive lineman Ken Moyer knew. He repeatedly invited Troy to Bible study until, finally, he went. To his surprise, he found that kicker Doug Pelfry and quarterback David Klingler were also part of the group. "Those guys just loved on me," Troy remembers. For the third time he encountered the gospel, but as low as he was, he chose to ignore it. He faced **fourth down and inches** from total disaster.

Troy and his wife divorced in December 1998 as a result of his continual partying. Today, his relationship with his daughters remains strained. "I was coming apart," Troy remembers, "and it was all my fault. I have no one to blame but myself for ruining my life...and theirs."



Then, during the 1996 off-season, his friend Buddy Harris invited Troy to play church softball—a ringer for First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Georgia. “What a switch!” Troy laughs. “No alcohol, no women, no cursing, and everyone kept inviting me to church. Finally, I went. On my fourth visit, I knew it was time. I stepped out and headed to the altar where I met Pastor Johnny Hunt. He paired me up with an altar counselor named Vic Smith—six feet eight, 300 pounds—he couldn’t have done any better. Vic took me to a back room, and after a long, difficult conversation, I accepted Christ.”

It wasn’t just a first down for Troy; it was a whole new game. “These four men remind me of the guys who brought their crippled friend to Jesus. When they couldn’t get in the house, they climbed the wall. When they still couldn’t get in, they tore a hole in the roof, and lowered their buddy to Jesus. They did whatever it took. I’m so thankful they didn’t give up on me. And it is the same with Jesus—He *never* gives up. He loved me all the way through my pride and my partying, and He was ready and willing to forgive me when I finally got His message of grace through my thick skull at age 31.”

A NEW GAME

Twenty years later, Troy has a new goal. Today, he works with Cornerstone Estate Planning and Free Will Baptist Foundation, dedicating his life to helping people plan for the future. His experience with the big money of the NFL has given him a unique perspective on wealth and possessions: “Sure, you get paid well, but remember that NFL stands for ‘Not For Long!’ I saved a lot of money, but as a result of my foolishness, I also went through a divorce that killed the portfolio. I was also dumb when it came to automobiles. Bigger, better...done. I went through \$65,000 just flipping cars during my career.”

Thankfully, Troy was wise enough to invest in the NFL “second career” savings (retirement) plan, with the league matching his contributions. After 30 years, at age 55, he will be fully vested and begin drawing a pension.

With an average yearly salary of \$325,000, Troy made more in his nine-year NFL career than most people do in a lifetime. Still, according to Troy, while the numbers may be bigger, the principles of stewardship are the same. “You have to plan ahead. So many people burn through their money without a plan and suddenly find themselves without anything. When it comes to money, you have to prepare...and not just for this life. You need to ask yourself, ‘Have I done everything I can to put my family in a good situation when they are grieving for me? Have I taken steps to continue supporting the ministries I love after I am gone?’”

The reality of death hit Troy in the face ten years ago, when he was diagnosed with cancer of the vocal chords. “The medical professionals asked about my will, my living will, my next of kin, and my heirs. I was terrified. I was a former NFL tight end, ten feet tall and bullet proof. Suddenly, I realized I wasn’t Superman after all. It changed my life. That’s how I got into estate planning, and today, I am quick to tell people that being prepared for death is one of the most important things in life.”

FINISHING STRONG

Ten years after his diagnosis, Troy is in good health and grateful for a new chapter in life. He has a job he loves, continues to rebuild his relationship with his daughters, who, in his words, are “proof that ‘smart’ skips a generation in my family.”

Troy is also enjoying life with his wife Beth, whom he describes as the greatest friend and accountability partner a man could have. He remembers talking to a neighbor in his driveway when a beautiful lady drove by on a golf cart. “I asked him, ‘Wow! Who’s that?’” A few minutes later, she drove back by...with seven kids on the cart. Thankfully, only one of them was hers.

Before long, the two found themselves on a three-and-a-half hour first date, enjoying hot wings. A little over a year later, they were married. She may be nearly a foot shorter than her NFL husband, but she’s perfect for him, according to Troy. “She is an incredible, godly woman who stands behind me and supports me. I have lots of friends, but she is my best friend.”

As he looks back over his life so far, Troy is grateful for second chances, but he also struggles with regret. “I just wish I had listened to Coach Cagle way back in high school. Who could I have influenced? What impact could I have made for God? The truth is, I’m embarrassed by the person I used to be. But by God’s grace, I am going to finish strong!” **ONE**

TROY’S ADVICE FOR AMATEUR ATHLETES SEEKING A PRO CAREER?



“If it’s football, grab a tennis racket or a set of golf clubs. Seriously, the number of players who move up the chain from high school to college to the pros is very small.

“Don’t get me wrong: pursue your dream, but have a backup plan. Get a legitimate degree. Understand there is more to life than just sports. Listen to your parents and take school seriously. You will never regret it!”

TELL ME, DOC, *How Long Does My Church Have?*

Pastors tend to shy away from a handful of questions: *How many? How often? What's new? Is my church slowly dying?*

The commentary on many of our churches is that the congregation is aging and may be one generation from ceasing to exist unless.... But what is that elusive *unless*? Few pastors, if shown what is needed, would ignore it and be content to decline. If our physical bodies show signs of trouble, we go to a doctor. We don't have "church doctors," but there are ways to diagnose some treatable church ailments.

Randall House has developed a Church Health Assessment to measure ten specific categories of health. Categories include: equipping families, building biblical worldviews, leadership, navigating change, outreach, discipleship, and developing volunteers or staff. The best part is that the Church Health Assessment is FREE and can be downloaded, or Randall House can send you a copy by mail.

Go to D6Family.com/DNA and click on Church Health Assessment to download a PDF and Excel file. Make copies for teachers, deacons, and other leaders. Combine or average everyone's results to see how you are doing. The results will indicate one of three possible descriptions—healthy, at risk, or dying. Each of the ten categories provides some prescriptions to increase your outlook in the future.

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PDF and Excel
file.

What does the future of your church look like?

You don't have to wonder or fear the answers. Download the assessment and find insight to make your church stronger. Your church deserves a long and healthy future.

Be the leader to walk the church through improving its generational health. **ONE**

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY Stewardship

By Brad Ransom

For many people, money is a really awkward topic. Financial issues are private. How much money we have (or don't have) isn't something we like to discuss. Throw in the added layers of tithing and giving and the conversation really becomes uncomfortable. Ironically, the Bible has a great deal to say about money. According to the article "Money and Motives" by Greg Laurie, "Fifteen percent of everything Jesus ever taught was on the topic of money and possessions... more than His teachings on Heaven and Hell combined."



"Digital options have revolutionized our giving! In the last two months, we have received 63% of our giving online, through our app, and text2give. A great majority of that comes on days other than Sunday."

Josh Bennett, The Springs Church, Marana, Arizona

I think the big difference comes in attitude. We need to stop looking at money from a human perspective and look at it from a biblical perspective. The teaching of Scripture regarding tithing and giving comes through the filter of stewardship. When we understand we are stewards (managers) of God's resources, tithing isn't a big deal. We aren't giving our money away; we're giving God's money back to God. Exactly. (And that's not a typo.) One hundred percent of everything we have belongs to God. When we tithe or give, we are only returning to God what is rightfully His. This is the concept of stewardship we should be living and teaching. I won't belabor the point, but I will share some practical ideas to help people give more conveniently in our churches.

I'm well into my 50s, and I vividly remember the days of putting cash in envelopes at church, writing checks, and rolling coins to put into the offering plate. Those days are gone for most people. Since we live in a technology-driven society, churches need to find ways to adapt to the 21st century giver.

Besides passing the plate, most churches don't have a strategy or system for stewardship. I believe we are missing an opportunity to receive donations from a large demographic in our population. If your typical church member's age is 55 or older (generally), most donations will come by check, with a little cash. If this describes your church, you're probably not missing many donations. If, however, the average age at your church is younger, especially 20 to 40-year-olds, remember they don't use checks and don't carry cash. By only passing the offering plate, you eliminate a large portion of potential income for your church. If you don't believe me, just ask any 30-year-old.

To merge stewardship with technology, let me suggest a few practical ideas any church can do:

Choose an annual month to emphasize stewardship. Teach stewardship, not giving or tithing.

Develop a stewardship system for your church. Think about every need your church has over the course of a year (regular budget items, general fund) as well as items such as capital stewardship campaigns, building funds, van funds, etc. Your stewardship system should include teaching moments before offerings. Take one minute to explain why people should give, and where money goes (besides paying bills, the pastor's salary, and insurance). People need to know they are supporting the church and local ministry by giving, but they are also supporting missions, church planting, higher education, and more (if the church budget includes these things). Plan to receive special offerings for denominational ministries, special events, or whatever else is important to your local congregation.

Create giving options. Your church needs to have a website with an option for online giving. This should include a recurring option, so people can tithe straight from their bank accounts each month. I know this may seem strange for some, but many people find this option convenient and will sign up if it's offered. It's not only convenient for the giver, but experts indicate that this single option can increase church income by 20% or more. Even if a person is on vacation or misses a Sunday offering, their gift will still automatically go to the church. What a blessing!

Develop a smart phone app. I won't suggest companies, but feel free to call the North American Ministries office if you have questions. Set up a "giving kiosk" in your church foyer or another convenient place. Givers can securely swipe a credit or debit card and enter the amount they want to give. Free card readers make this option very accessible.

Note: some fees are associated with online, app, and swipe giving, so do the research to see what will work best for your situation. Each church must decide whether or not the fees and costs of technological giving options are worth it. Most who use these options would say yes. If giving increases by even 10%, and fees cost 2%, the math suggests it is worth it. Ultimately, every church must decide for itself.

One final thought. Don't expect immediate results. New things take time to catch on. It is unrealistic to install a kiosk in your foyer and expect everyone to line up to use it the first Sunday. Give new methods time. Ask people if they've tried the new options. When someone has, inquire how it's working. Share positive comments publicly (but anonymously) and encourage others to try the new giving options. If you give each method some time, hopefully your church will enjoy positive results and give your members more opportunities to give back to God what is rightfully His. **ONE**



The Martha Complex

BY MARIE DRAKULIC

“Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. . .” (Luke 10:38).

Martha is one woman I certainly can relate to in the Bible. That’s because I have a “Martha Complex.” She was a detail-oriented people pleaser. Yeah, I can relate to that. She was a worrier. Check. She was overwhelmed and unglued. Double check. She was confused and hurt. Been there. Her emotions often led her words and actions. Can I get an amen? She was a spiritually hungry seeker of wisdom. That’s me.

I have read a growing library of books on the topic: *Hands Free Mama* (Stafford), *Worn Out Woman* (Stephens & Gray), *The Best Yes* (TerKeurst), *Taming the To-Do List* (Whitwer), *Saying Goodbye to Survival Mode* (Paine) and my personal favorite, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* (Weaver). I liked that last one so much, I have read it multiple times and threw in the sequel: *Having a Mary Spirit*.

The Bible doesn’t share much about the life of Martha, and you will probably find that commentators and authors differ in their opinions regarding her, but this is what I get from her story (and mine):

She was a detail-oriented people pleaser (Luke 10:40-41). Every time I read verse 40, I think of the big dinners we occasionally enjoy after Sunday morning church services. If you have been part of a church for any length of time, you know church people like to fellowship around food (a biblical concept, after all). A great deal of preparation goes into making these meals just right, and I’m in the “just right” business. I want to make sure that plenty of food is ready to go when hungry people arrive. I even think certain people should go first in the line. Here’s the problem, I also want to be the one sitting at the

feet of Jesus soaking in every word. And I tend to get frustrated when people don’t take their turns at helping, or when things don’t run as smoothly as I think they should.

Truthfully, I can be like this at home, too. Ephesians 6:7 reminds us, “With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.” Like Martha welcoming them into her home, I start out well, but somewhere in the middle, I forget that my acts of service are not for people, but for Him, and He isn’t concerned with the “just right,” but with my heart being right (see Psalm 19:14).

She was anxious, overwhelmed, and unglued (Luke 10:40-41, John 11). The Bible says Martha was worried when Jesus and His disciples came to her house. Can you imagine what it was like serving all those hungry travelers and the visitors who had come to listen to the Teacher? You know she was overwhelmed!

Some days, I wake up feeling that way. Before the day even begins, anxiety weighs heavy on my heart, and overwhelming fear whispers, “How will I make it through another day?” I know Scriptures tell me, “be careful (anxious) for nothing” (Philippians 4:6) and to “cast

your cares upon Him” (1 Peter 5:7), but when your responsibility is to take care of others with big needs, you worry about having enough strength to do it all. You fear letting them down. Sometimes, those fears threaten to drown out the truth of God’s Word.

Martha didn’t just care for the needs of her friends; she probably spent a great deal of time caring for the needs of her family when her brother became deathly ill. Maybe Martha felt like she had to hold it all together all the time. Doing it on your own is a sure-fire way to set the stage for unglued moments. And, that’s exactly what Martha had—an unglued moment. Right in the middle of the lesson, Martha shouted, “Jesus don’t you care? Tell Mary to get in here and help me!” (Okay, maybe those weren’t her exact words, but that’s how I would have said it.) Jesus knew Martha was coming unraveled. I can imagine Him putting His hands on her shoulders, looking deep into her eyes, and saying, “Martha, Martha.” In a moment, He changed her perspective.

That’s exactly what I need sometimes—someone to stop the merry-go-round, look me in the eye, and give me a new perspective. Someone told me the other day that I am the glue that holds our family together. Well, this glue feels a little wacky, more like Crazy Glue™ if you ask me. The reality is that I am too weak to face another day as a caretaker, and when I focus on my weakness, I come unglued. Second Corinthians 12:9-10 changes my perspective, however: *“My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities...for when I am weak, then am I strong.”*

She was led by emotions (Luke 10:40, John 11:20). Proverbs 4:23 warns, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it

are the issues of life.” Not only should we be careful about what we allow into our hearts (to take root and dwell there), but also what we allow to come out of our hearts in word and action. God made us emotional, relational people. Jesus Himself displayed a wide array of emo-

We must learn to filter hurt, frustration, and anger through the truth of God’s Word and rein them in with the help of the Holy Spirit.

tions in a variety of circumstances and interactions with others. It’s when out-of-control emotions lead to out-of-control words and actions that we find ourselves in trouble. We must learn to filter hurt, frustration, and anger through the truth of God’s Word and rein them in with the help of the Holy Spirit.*

She was hurt and confused (John 11:1-44).

God doesn’t always work in ways that make sense from a human perspective. That’s why Isaiah wrote, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9). I don’t know that knowing this has made the tough spots in my life any easier. I don’t think it did for Martha, either.

How do you reconcile the knowledge that Jesus loves you (verse 5) and has the power to perform miracles (verse 37), but chose to let your loved one die? Martha was confused. Why did Jesus let this happen? Can you imagine her utter bewilderment when He asked for the stone to be rolled away from the tomb? It is true that God works in mysterious ways. I wonder

if things got less confusing for Martha when she saw her brother rise from the dead. But God doesn’t always perform miracles and take away the problems, and life doesn’t always end with a happy-ever-after. Life often doesn’t make sense. Many times we are confused, but it is belief

despite confusion that matters.

When Jesus encountered Martha this time, she was understandably upset. Still, in the face of grief and confusion, she proclaimed, *“Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world”* (verse 27). Even when we don’t understand, God is good. His character is not determined by our circumstances.

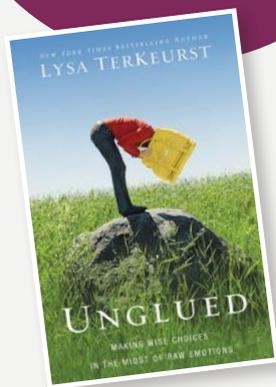
She was a spiritually-hungry seeker (Luke 10:42; John 11:20-27; John 12:1-2).

One thing I love about Martha was her brutal honesty with the Lord. She wasn’t afraid to ask tough questions. Her timing was not always appropriate, but I love that she didn’t hesitate to talk to Jesus like a friend. She was real about her struggles. I think we should all be like that. Sometimes, when I write or speak, I wonder if I sound as though I have it all figured out, that my life is in perfect order. I don’t, and it’s not.

Paul said in his letter to the church in Philippi, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12).

Writing is more than a passion for me;

*For more on healthy ways to handle emotions, check out Lysa TerKeurst's book **Unglued**.



it is therapy. Some days, I write to collect my thoughts and gain perspective (when I really want to spew and sputter). Other days, like today, I write from a small break in the storm, a moment of peace and reflection. Regardless of the timing, I want my writing to reflect my hunger for the Lord and His truth, and to share the areas where God has revealed Himself. I want others to recognize their own spiritual hunger, their soul-deep need for Jesus. Obviously, hospitality was a passion for Martha. A few short days before Jesus was to be crucified, we find her serving again. But this time, perhaps, her heart had changed and she served not to please others, but to give them an opportunity to get to know Him as she did.

This isn't the first time I have written about my Martha-like struggles, and it probably

won't be the last. I know my type-A personality leads me toward busyness and burnout. I often return to the words of Isaiah 30:15: *"In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength..."* Sadly, the verse goes on to say, *"...and ye would not."* This is a difficult lesson I am still learning.

Yes, God's grace is sufficient. Yes, His power is made perfect in my weaknesses. But I have to let Him. He won't force His help on me. Sometimes, I have to say no when I want (or feel obligated) to say yes. Sometimes, I need to ask for help (oh, that's a tough one). Some (most) days, things won't be just right. But "therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you," (Isaiah 30:18), and I don't want to miss that. I don't want to be so worried and bothered like Martha that I miss the good part—the only thing that is really necessary (Luke 10:42).

ONE

About the Writer: Marie Drakulic and her husband Tony are team members with Darryl Grimes, planting Flagship FWB Church in Erie, Pennsylvania: www.flagshipchurch.com.

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Brown on **Green** >>

Aunt Hazel's Tomato Farm

I was born in Bradley County, Arkansas. Bradley County's main claim to fame, however, is not the production of Browns (although many have been produced there) but tomatoes. The county hosts the Pink Tomato Festival each June, where its most famous crop is displayed prominently and consumed.

While I did not grow up in Bradley County, I spent several weeks there during tomato-picking seasons. Uncle Fay and Aunt Hazel Mann raised the finest tomatoes in the county. Even though I'm no expert on growing tomatoes, I learned several valuable lessons from my time with them.

Lessons From the Land

Producing a good crop every year required hard work. Work began the previous year after tomato plants stopped producing. It was important to disc the field and mulch the plants, which were later plowed under as fertilizer. Later, land that remained undisturbed all winter was broken up, fertilized, and planted. The soil was prepared.

I also learned growing tomatoes is risky. No one is guaranteed a good crop. A spring storm can leave wind and hail damage. Too much rain is as bad as too little rain. The possibility of damage from insects looms every year. Some risks can be reduced through proper management, but some are acts of God.

LIKE THE PRUDENT FARMER, EVERYTHING POSSIBLE MUST BE DONE TO MANAGE FINANCIAL RISK.

Tomato farming does not always produce a profit. Sometimes, proceeds from the crop do not meet expenses. Yet with the land, hard work, and careful management of risk, farmers anticipate a nice profit.

Managing Money Today

The lessons from Aunt Hazel's tomato farm carry over to my work at Free Will Baptist Foundation, where I help manage endowments. Funds placed with the Foundation are like the land. For endowments to produce a good and consistent income, they must be managed carefully.

In 2003, the Foundation Board voted to pay out 5%, instead of all the earnings on planned gifts. This enables us to "prepare the field" for future harvests by planting excess earnings into the endowment to produce a larger financial crop for future generations. This will make it possible for Free Will Baptist ministries to receive a steady income, even during down markets. The excess earnings

"plowed" back into the endowment "soil" can be used to grow a consistent return.

Risk also must be managed properly. Some advise taking no risks at all, but that would be like a tomato farmer refusing to plant a crop because he might lose



money. Like the prudent farmer, everything possible must be done to manage financial risk. But risk is part of the process of producing a crop. At the Foundation, we balance a mixture of stocks and bonds to minimize risk, but it can never be completely eliminated.

Many Free Will Baptist individuals, churches, and organizations have given the Foundation "land" to farm. Thank you! Based on current policy, it is conceivable that over \$400,000 in earnings will be harvested this year alone to support various Free Will Baptist ministries. At the Foundation, we want to be good stewards of that which is placed in our hands and do our best to produce a good crop of earnings every year. What portion of your money do you want the Foundation to farm? We'll treat you right! **ONE**

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



Do You Have A **PLAN** (for Retirement)?

By Dexter Brummitt

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As a bivocational pastor raising three kids, with a stay-at-home wife, I counted on my secular job and retirement system to provide my family's needs. For a long time, what I got from pastoring churches didn't amount to much anyway. We worked hard and sacrificed to stay ahead and provide for things we needed... and a few that we just wanted. Sometimes, things were tight, but gradually we accomplished most of what we'd hoped. God was gracious and always provided for the things we really needed.

As time went by, we became so focused on the present—raising kids, church ministry, and working at a secular job—we didn't look too far ahead. Then I began to see some of the older employees where I worked take their retirements. I noticed most of them talked about looking for other jobs so they could survive financially, and still do some of the things they had planned.

I began to wonder if the retirement system I had been counting on was going to be enough. I was hoping to take my retirement as early as possible so I could have more time to focus on

ministry and family and, hopefully, slow down a bit. The more retirees I saw working after their retirement, the more interested I became in the plan offered by the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement. I opened an account and have been contributing to it. It would have been better if I had started earlier and contributed more, but I'm thankful for the way it has grown, even through turbulent economic times.

Now that I have retired from my secular job, I understand better why those earlier retirees were concerned. I'm glad my Board of Retirement account is there. It will take up the slack when I no longer receive a pastoral income.

Every minister should have a plan, and he should be working that plan with the understanding that God always delivers. Sometimes he delivers in a miraculous way that's unexpected or unforeseen from a human perspective. But most of the time, He delivers by leading us to do the right thing that will reap benefits later on.

About the Writer: Dexter Brummitt has been a bivocational Free Will Baptist pastor for more than 30 years. He currently pastors West Greene Free Will Baptist Church in Mosheim, Tennessee.

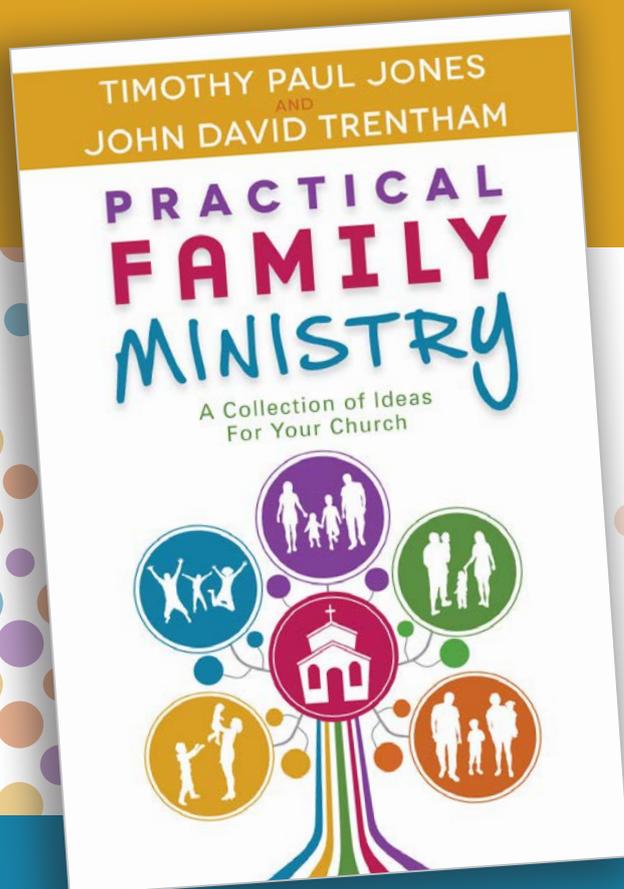
DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?

Do you have a plan for retirement?
A plan will be a great encouragement,
To work your plan and stay on track.
Having a plan puts you ahead of the pack.
Most folks don't make a plan.
I guess, they don't think they can.

Do you have a retirement account?
Money invested over time will amount
To relief and comfort as we get old.
It may even keep us out of the cold.
You need to make preparations today.
'Cause when you retire, you'll still have bills to pay.

The Board of Retirement is on your side.
They'll help you get started, then reach your stride.
Your investment will gain and continue to grow.
When you retire you'll have something to show.
You'll live the life you planned to live.
You may even have something more to give. **ONE**

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STATEMENTS in RETIREMENT PLANNING

By John Brummitt

We have all heard them: “You can always keep working if you need more in retirement.” “We will have our Social Security.” And, of course, one of my favorites is, “You only need 70-80% of your income in retirement.” All of these are false (or at best misleading) statements.

For some reason, even though we have not prepared for this 20- to 30-year stage in our lives, we act as though we will still be able to maintain our current standard of living...or at least close to it. Let's take a deeper look at each one of these statements, and consider the truth about them.

✗ “You can always keep working if you need more in retirement.” In a recent study by the Employee Benefit Research Institute on Retirement Confidence, 67% of workers plan to continue working some type of paying job after retirement. Because life expectancy has increased, and healthcare has advanced, people are living longer. This makes continuing to work a possibility. However, 81% of those surveyed said they would probably need to work to make ends meet, and 74% would need to work to have health insurance.

Continuing to work is a very real need for many people facing retirement. The problem is no one is guaranteed the ability or opportunity to continue working. Sometimes, health concerns may eliminate your options and prevent you from

working. Companies often downsize or force retirement, and few companies are looking to hire new employees who are approaching (or beyond) retirement age.

✗ “We will have our Social Security.” Two major misconceptions are common about Social Security: 1) that Social Security pays enough to replace your working income, and 2) Social Security will be gone by the time you retire. The truth is closer to the middle. Social Security is a valuable resource for the retirement years, but it will not cover all your expenses in retirement.

The Social Security Administration projects it can maintain the current structure until 2036, but in 2037, benefits may be

reduced 22% to keep the program active. They will continue to be reduced unless changes are made to the current structure. Even if you receive a Social Security benefits projection, you may still receive 22% less Social Security benefits. If you knew that in 25 years you were going to lose 22% of your annual income, what preparations would you make to handle the loss of income? You should begin making those adjustments!

✗ “You only need 70-80% of your income in retirement.” If you currently save 20 to 30% of your income, yes, you can live off of 70-80% of your income. Unfortunately, most people do not save anywhere near this amount. The

typical retirement contribution is around \$100 per month. At \$100 per month, your annual income would have to be \$6,000 per year for you to save 20%. If you make \$40,000 per year, \$100 per month is saving 3%.

The other problem with this statement is that it leaves out another key factor about retirement income. It takes a long time to save enough in a retirement account to provide 70% of your current income. If you make \$40,000, then 70% would put you at \$28,000 a year in retirement. That means you need at least \$435,000 in retirement funds to receive \$28,000 per year for 30 years, guaranteed at 5% interest per year.

Don't get caught up in these misleading statements without actually considering the “real” numbers needed to ensure your future. When it comes to retirement planning and your financial future, know the actual numbers you need to shoot for in planning. The sooner you establish a plan, the better off you will be. **ONE**

About the Writer: John Brummitt became director of the Board of Retirement in January. 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.

How Did I
Arrive Here So

QUICKLY?

BY GLENN POSTON

The last thing on my mind when I began pastoring 42 years ago was setting aside money for retirement.

I was 21 years old with a wife and new baby when a wonderful, little church called me to become its pastor. It was a loving church, and the people became family to us. I was the first full-time pastor, so it was a step of faith for them to pay \$75 a week and provide a small parsonage. (That was about what I was making at my part-time job during my last semester at Welch College.)





IF YOU START EARLY AND MAKE CONSISTENT CONTRIBUTIONS, YOU WILL BE SURPRISED HOW MONEY ACCUMULATES.

I reasoned that God had called me, and He would provide. He did; but I must admit, had it not been for my wife's parents and a special couple in the church who took us under their wings, we might have starved. It also helped that the kind owner of the little grocery store across the street from the church somehow detected my plight and voluntarily extended a running account for those times when we didn't have money for baby formula and essentials like bread and milk.

In those days, I thought I had many years to worry about retirement. I thought, "Once school is behind me, and my church grows and can pay more, then I will start saving for retirement."

Our first son was barely out of diapers when my wife announced we were going to have a second child. While happy about our growing family, we wondered how we could afford two children. Again, I reasoned, "God will provide." But I must tell you that every time we thought we were "getting ahead," something came along that prevented us from saving for retirement. Three things often get forgotten in a pastor's pay package—taxes, health insurance, and retirement!

I learned a great deal about prayer and trusting the Lord during those early days of ministry. God was good, and I have no complaints about how churches provided for us. My favorite line about my salary is, "My church pays me more than I'm worth...I just can't live on what I'm worth."

I really don't remember when we began saving for retirement. The biggest mistake I made was not starting soon enough, because the greatest friend of retirement is time. If you start early and make consistent contributions, you will be surprised how money accumulates. Even if you can't put much aside, a small but consistent amount over a long period of time really adds up. Proverbs 13:11 reminds us that whoever seeks to get rich quickly will see it dwindle quickly, but whoever gathers little by little will see great increase.

Though I hope to continue in ministry for several years, I am nearing retirement age. I often wonder how I arrived here so quickly. It seems like only yesterday I began this journey with my young wife. We have discovered two essential elements necessary for retirement: age and money. Age will come whether we plan or not, but a comfortable retirement only comes through careful planning and putting aside funds.

While it may be true that churches should do more to help with the pastor's retirement, the fact remains that every minister must take charge of his own retirement. **ONE**

About the Writer: Glenn Poston is promotional director for the Tennessee State Association of Free Will Baptists. To learn more about starting your own retirement savings, visit www.BoardofRetirement.com.


 LEGACY OF
STEWARDSHIP *By Pam Jones*

We have absolutely no control over some things in life. April 15—tax day. Sudden sickness. Children grow up and leave home. Loved ones die. In time, we will pass off the scene as well. However, one thing we can control is our legacy.

Have you ever considered your legacy as stewardship? We need to be good stewards of the heritage we pass to our children and grandchildren. You help form their character. If you hate, they learn to hate. If you curse, they learn to curse. But, if you love and respect others, your children will do the same.

As a child in Northwest Arkansas, our family did not possess many material things. I lived in a four-room house without running water until I was ten years old. To say the least, we were poor. But my parents did have love, and they taught me to have the same. That is a gift no amount of money can buy. We did not inherit tangible things, but we received gifts of love, character, and respect.

My husband Tommy and I have three grown daughters: Bobbie, Jenna, and Mandy. They will not receive much wealth from us either, but I want to leave them with things that are even more valuable—characteristics I already see growing in them and want them to pass to their own children. First is love. If a child knows nothing else when a parent dies, they should know they were loved.

If parents would love their children unconditionally, it would change the next generation. So many adults have deep-seated problems because they were not loved as children. Don't just tell your children you love them; *show* them you love them. People who knew my dad always said he loved well. Can people say that about you? Do you love well?

I also want to pass down the trait of honesty. I want my children to know my word means something. Be honest, dependable, and trustworthy. Sadly, far too few people put high value on integrity.

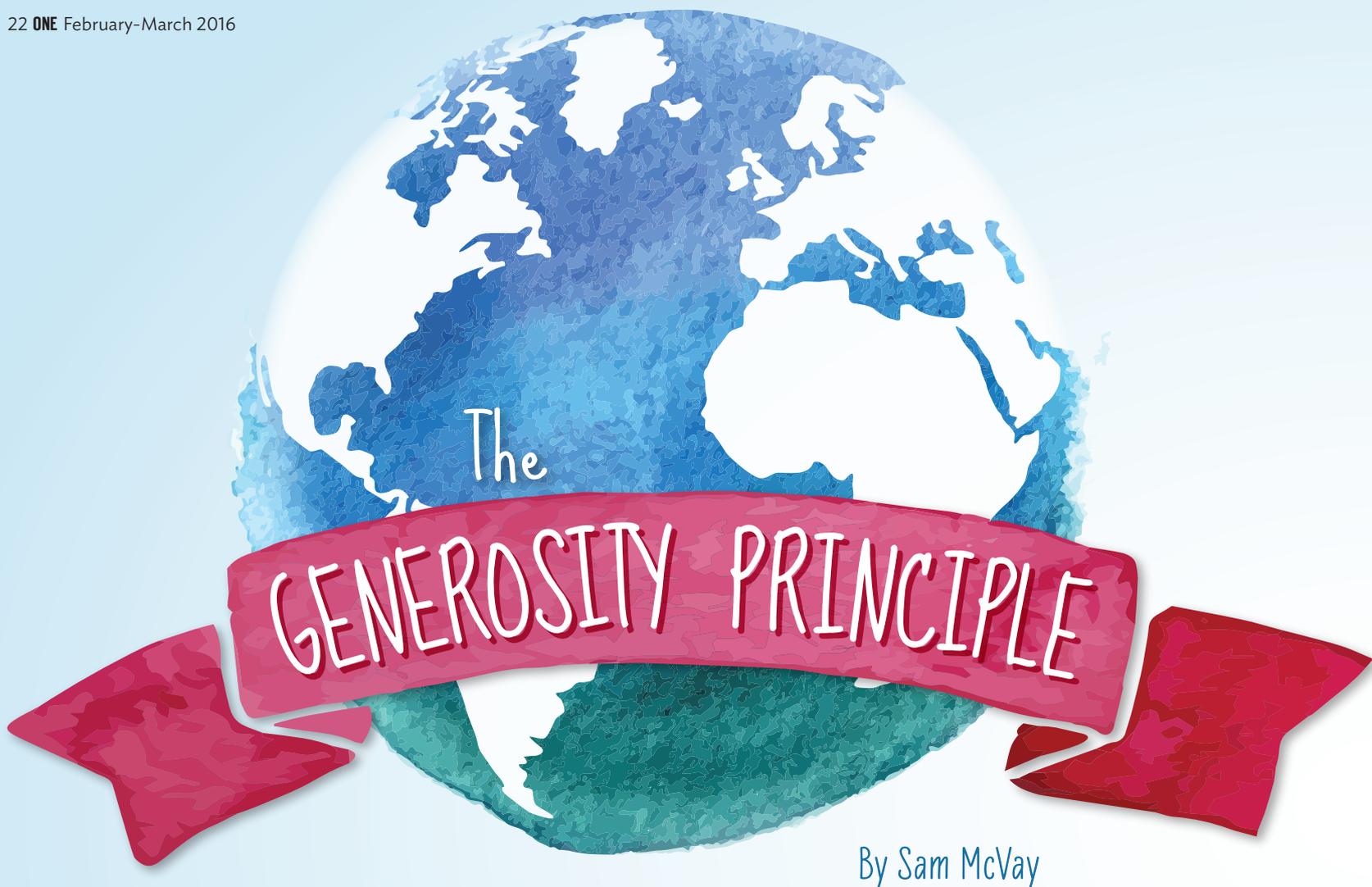
I could mention many other traits I want to pass to my daughters, but for the sake of space, I will only share one more: a sensational desire to serve God. My daughters and I led worship at a retreat last weekend, and I was awed by their genuine love and worship of God. I thought to myself, "I may not leave wealth to my girls, but they caught something far greater, a sincere love for Christ."

What are you leaving behind? Land? Wealth? Or something eternal? These qualities can be your legacy of stewardship, continued in your family for generations to come. ONE

About the writer:

Pam and Tom Jones serve as church planters in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Learn more about North American Ministries: www.FWBNAM.com.





By Sam McVay

Four pastors explain how the principle of generosity is taught and demonstrated in their local churches. I pray God will use their examples to motivate us to do more to support missions around the world.

Giving in the Small Church

How big does your church have to be before you give to missions? Should you reach a certain attendance before giving to outside causes? I would say, “As soon as you function as a church, start giving to missions and other outside causes.” After 32 years in my present pastorate, it is difficult to remember when our church was not committed to giving beyond our doors, but there was a time when we were “casual” givers. We were not really committed to it. If we thought we could afford it, or if some great need came up, we gave.

However, at one point we made a conscious commitment to give beyond our immediate ministry. As a deacon expressed, “From the point we really committed to giving to missions, God has blessed us, and we have faced few money issues since.”

Over the last several years, our church has given about 26%

of our total income to outside causes. We average about \$900 per capita, per year, to outside causes. These causes include State Mission Shares plan of support, International Missions, Co-op (for all ministries at district, state, and national levels), Welch College, youth camp, benevolent work, and a local crisis pregnancy center among others.

To give this way, the congregation must make a couple of mental/spiritual adjustments. **First, you have to be willing to live by faith.** Our church has never had a large savings account for a “rainy day.” We don’t set money aside in the Free Will Baptist Foundation or a bank. We operate week-by-week, month-by-month. It would be nice to have money in savings when an air conditioner goes out, or a roof leaks, but that is not always possible in a small church committed to giving.

Second, you must be more interested in Kingdom work

than in self-work. You look at things and decide, “Is this nice, or is it necessary?” An attractive, well-maintained church building is necessary, but there are varying degrees of “attractive.” Is giving so others can hear the gospel more or less important than our comfort and our wants?

The time to start giving is now! As you do, your people will capture a vision beyond your walls, and God will prove Himself faithful to provide your real needs.

Randy Bryant, Pastor, Ryanwood Fellowship FWB Church, Vero Beach, FL

Missions in the DNA

Our church is a giving church for a few reasons. First, pastors who labored in this church before me made missions a priority. Second, we have sent missionaries in the past. Third, we have organized giving through a donor-identified envelope system. It makes giving a priority and makes it clear how we should give and how often. Although the system lacks all the bells and whistles of online giving or mobile giving, many people still use it.

I take zero credit for the generosity of our church. I looked at the budget before I agreed to come on staff and immediately noticed Central Oaks is a giving church. This emphasis on giving has been going on since before I was even thought about (and I mean by my parents, not just Central Oaks).

Missions is one of our core values. We call it “God’s Glory Among All People.” Every Christian should realize giving to missions is an opportunity to obey the Lord and build His Kingdom on earth. Some of our people make very little money and still give faithfully. Others are in assisted living facilities and still give to missions. It’s simply part of who we are. It’s in our DNA.

Jacob Riggs, Pastor, Central Oaks Community Church, Royal Oak, MI, centraloaks.com

Faithful Giving by the Local Church

The first and most important aspect of supporting missions is teaching and preaching the necessity of global outreach. Jesus gave us the Great Commission, and we must take that as our greatest calling as believers. We cannot reach the world alone but must support those who go and reach the nations.

The local church must keep missions and individual missionaries before the congregation. We have a history of hosting missionaries in our church. I like to invite home missionaries and international missionaries to share their ministries and support

needs at our church and district meetings on a regular basis.

Our church has an advantage: several members have answered the call to church planting and worldwide missions. We have supported them as they built churches in Illinois, New Mexico, and Arizona. We have sent members to Mongolia and France. We have supported many of our congregation on short-term mission trips to Arizona, Africa, Cuba, Russia, Panama, Japan, and Tajikistan. Nothing raises awareness and funding like sending your own people.

Finally, I must commend our congregation; they are a generous people. Generosity can be taught, preached, and exemplified, but ultimately it comes from the heart. Even in the midst of a building campaign, our folks continue to be generous in giving to outside ministries. The Spirit of God must cultivate the generous heart. When we seek to please Him in all things, we realize “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Ernie Lewis, Pastor, Blue Point FWB Church, Cisne, IL

Developing a Mission People

Many churches desire to make a difference in their local ministries and around the world. One way this is achieved is developing a mission strategy. God has called His Church to be involved in His redemptive plan and engaged at every level—local, state, national, and international missions.

Psalm 96:3 says: “Declare his glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples.” Everything a church does must be tied to missions. It is easier to engage people consistently with missions and mission giving when every ministry is tied to “making disciples.” At Connect Church, we have tried to stop doing anything that is not producing disciples. We continually evaluate and tweak every system and strategy. Because the glory of God is the goal, and missions is the means, missions stays on the forefront at all times.

As church leaders, we must develop more than a strategy for missions giving; we must develop missions people. This requires continued maintenance and leadership implanting vision into the DNA of a church. Any strategy will lose steam after a while.

Missions cannot be something a church does, missions must become who the church is. Every activity of a church must be tied to “Declaring the Glory of God to the Nations”—be it local, national, or international.

To ensure mission support remains important, Connect Church includes mission giving in our operating budget. We designate a percentage of our operating budget to missions. Each year, we identify missionaries, needs, and causes God has placed

on our hearts. Many families support missions by designated giving to our mission budget, but everyone in our church supports missions through tithes and offerings.

We recognize that people respond to stories. We want to support missionaries by bringing them to our church. I want our people to develop personal relationships with missionary families. We do this as missionaries are available or passing through town. However, several years ago, I became aware that our missionaries are rarely together to share burdens, needs, stories, and praise.

Years ago, International Missions had to eliminate a much-needed annual stateside missionary retreat. This retreat had two purposes: to disseminate information and to provide a safe place

God is using our denomination to bring a message of salvation to people around the world. We believe He is calling all of us to be engaged in this work through our prayers and financial support.

for our missionaries to relax and refresh in community. Connect Church has begun to underwrite this annual retreat. Every missionary, board member, support staff member, and their families are invited to attend this three- to four-day event.

Our church provides the retreat center, prepares the food, serves the meals, and provides childcare. The final day of the retreat, we invite missionaries to worship with us at Connect Church. We try to honor the missionaries and their children in an appropriate and meaningful way. I especially want young children to have fond memories of those missionary-loving people at Connect Church. During worship, we ask nothing of our missionaries. They have only one objective—worship together. Our people interact with many of them during a church-wide dinner after Sunday worship. Every four years, our church meets every missionary family (new and existing). Throughout the year, when I tell stories, our people feel invested and want to contribute.

We love partnering with International Missions. Not because we agree with everything. This cannot be the measure of part-

nership, or we would only partner with ministries we control. We partner with IM because we trust their hearts. We trust their theology. We trust their stewardship. We support many causes and currently have three full-time missionaries from our church. None are with IM. Most do not qualify to be sent by IM. However, we continue to support IM because we trust the vetting process. We also know we want the same thing around the world—the glory of God. Supporting IM is virtually risk-free as they carry the burden of responsibility for Free Will Baptists to declare the glory of God to the nations.

Just before renowned missionary to India William Carey boarded ship, he was asked by friends to reconfirm his commitment. They wanted to give him a way out. Carey responded by saying, “I will go down into the pit itself, if you will hold the rope.” Our responsibility is to “hold the rope” for those willing to declare His glory to the nations. We must make sure they have the resources necessary and release control to the Holy Spirit. I have a responsibility as pastor of Connect Church to empower my people to declare His glory!

Blaine Rogers, Pastor, Connect Church, Russellville, AR

God is doing amazing things around the world through the ministry of Free Will Baptists. In the past year, hundreds of young French people have heard a clear presentation of the gospel. Some have accepted Christ as Savior. Many others are involved in Bible studies, seeking His truth. In Panama, 11 Free Will Baptist churches are working to start 33 new churches. The number of Free Will Baptist churches in Africa has more than doubled in the past decade. Missionaries have been appointed to go to the Samburu tribe, an unreached people group. The list goes on and on. God is using our denomination to bring a message of salvation to people around the world. We believe He is calling all of us to be engaged in this work through prayer and financial support.

If you are not seeking God’s direction on how you can be part of what He is doing around the world, you are missing out. Our missionaries would love to come to your church to share what God is doing around the world and how you can be part of this vital ministry. 

About the Writer: Sam McVay is director of church relations for Free Will Baptist International Missions. Learn more; get involved: FWBGO.com. If you would like to host a missionary at your church or gathering, call 877-767-7736.

How can she hear,
**EXCEPT
THEY BE
SENT?**

Romans 10:13-15

wm 

APRIL 24, 2016

FREE WILL BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS
WWW.FWBGO.COM

MISSION: STEWARDSHIP



40%

of the world's 220 **heads of state** once studied in the U.S.

- + An estimated **886,052 international students** study in the U.S. annually. More than 80% will return to their birth countries without being invited into an American home.
- + **86 countries** now prohibit or restrict Western missionaries from ministering freely.
- + The **median age** of adherents to Islam is 23 years; Hinduism is 26; and Christianity 30.

\$6.2 MILLION

International Missions budget for 2015

- + The Mission was more than **\$450,000 behind** budget at press time.
- + Approximately 250,000 Free Will Baptists live in the US. Using the budget above, that's only **7¢ per person, per day** for missions
- + If every evangelical Christian gave 10% of their income, the Church could support over **2 million missionaries**.
- + American Christians spend 95% of church funds on home-based ministries, 4.5% on cross-cultural efforts, and **.5% to reach the unreached**.
- + The average evangelical church budgets 4% for home missions and 5% for international missions.

90%

 of cross-cultural missionaries work among people groups **already reached by the gospel.**

\$12.5 TRILLION

Spent by North American and European Christians on **themselves and their families** each year

- + Christians in the U.S. earn **\$12.3 trillion** a year. Evangelical Christians account for approximately \$7 trillion. Only \$700 billion is given to Christian causes, the same amount spent on Christmas and 1.7% of the income.
- + U.S. Christians give \$45 billion to all mission efforts, the same amount Americans spend on **dieting programs**.

70,000 people **die** every day without ever hearing about Christ.



ONE IN THREE

of the world's people cannot read the primary language they speak.

- + 16,761 people groups in the world; **7,050** are **unreached** people groups (UPG).
- + 6,909 languages worldwide with 4,400 **without even a portion of the Scriptures** available
- + **5.7 billion people** (80% of the world) are primarily oral communicators



2.2 BILLION

of the world's population professes Christianity (30.7%). Approximately 550 million are evangelical.

- + **1.6 billion Muslims** in the world (23.2%)
- + 1.1 billion people have **no religious affiliation** (16.3%)
- + 1 billion **Hindus** (15%)
- + 376 million **Buddhists** (7.1%)

CHANGE THE STATISTICS.

- + Pray
- + Support financially
- + Be engaged
- + Share your faith
- + Encourage others to do the same

FWBGO.COM

Around the World >>

Board Holds Year-End Meeting

Antioch, TN— The Board of Free Will Baptist International Missions met December 9-10, 2015, in the Antioch, Tennessee, offices. “Free Will Baptist International Missions exists to labor with the body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission. This is our entire focus and the very reason for our being. It is also a good reminder,” stated General Director Clint Morgan, “for all of us as we look at finding the most effective ways for IM to share the gospel, impact lives, disciple believers, and plant churches.”

Among other decisions, the board took a decisive step by adopting the following motion: “...for FWBIM to adopt a designated-giving funding system with individual accounts. All account balances remain as designated.” This bold statement reflects the board’s desire to maximize the gospel witness through our missionaries’ sacrificial efforts in the context of Free Will Baptist churches, pastors, and supporters.

The board endorsed goals proposed by the International Missions Leadership Team (IMLT). The team proposed increasing five areas by 20%: the financial reserves, the number of international churches, the number of believers internationally, the number of monthly donors, and the number of cross-cultural missionaries. The goals reflect the team’s commitment to the IM Mission Statement. The IMLT plan to achieve these goals within a five-year period or by December 2020. More information concerning these goals will be released in the near future.

Doug and Miriam Bishop completed a two-year internship in Eastern Hokkaido, Japan, in November 2015 and returned to the States. They delivered a report of the highlights of their ministry in Japan. The couple received approval for career missionary status.

The board interviewed **Joel and Lydie Teague** who completed a two-year internship and returned to the States in November as well. The Teagues requested and received a two-year extension of their internship to allow them to meet the educational requirements for career service.

Mirial Gainer, career missionary to Japan, requested the board consider her request to retire effective June 1, 2016. Mirial plans to return to the States to act as a live-in caregiver for her mother. The board approved this request. Mirial has served faithfully in Japan since 1976.

The board approved an operational budget of \$6.03 million for 2016. Projected self-funded programs carry the total budget to \$8.14 million. IMpact projects, The Hanna Project trips and projects, student missions, etc. require fundraising separate from the operational budget.

All board members (Danny Williams, chairman, AL; Janice Banks, OK; Nelson Henderson, AR; Jeff Manning, NC; Greg McAllister, CA; Tom McCullough, MI; Jeff Nichols, TN; Robert Posner, TX; Mark Price, OH) were in attendance. ■

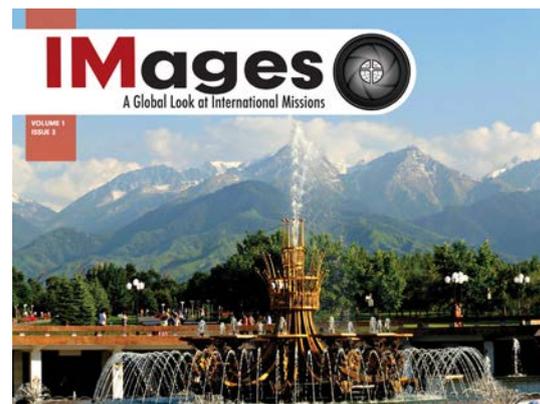
IMages Launched

Antioch, TN—International Missions launched *IMages*, an interactive, digital newsletter, in August 2015. The second issue delivered in September, beginning the typical bimonthly cycle. Distributed through e-blasts and social mediums, and archived on IM’s website (www.fwbgo.com) under the About tab, the newsletter is image-driven with links to additional content. A click of the mouse takes the reader to videos, stories and additional text, photos, the opportunity to email a missionary, and relevant content housed online. Readers may view the newsletter online or download a PDF for reference and viewing.

“The newsletter, produced on the ‘off months’ of *ONE Magazine*, is made possible by a grant from the Free Will Baptist

Foundation” explained Deborah St. Lawrence, communications manager. “The grant enabled us to dream and think a little differently about this project. We wanted the newsletter to allow us to reach more people with the Mission’s stories, to motivate individuals to give and pray and go. We desired those invested in IM feel this content was created just for them. At the same time, we hoped millennials and younger generations would find it engaging and relevant to their reading style.”

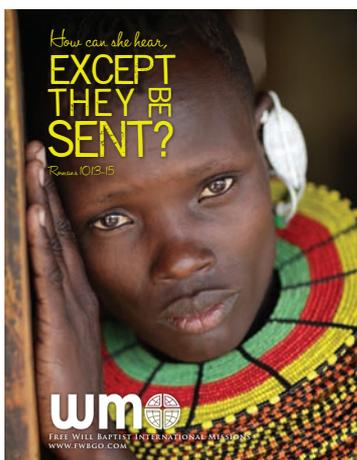
David Shores, Illinois pastor and former IM board member, reviewed the inaugural issue: “What a refreshing format. The title—*IMages*— tells it all: missions—past, present, and future. I love the personal way the message of the gospel comes through in this



new publication.”

“We have been delighted with the reception,” stated Deborah. “Feedback has been positive. However, we welcome comments that stretch us and encourage us to provide an even more satisfying experience.”

World Missions Emphasis 2016



Antioch, TN—April, designated World Missions Emphasis Month, provides an opportunity for churches around the denomination to focus on the work God is accomplishing through Free Will Baptists around the world. The month culminates with many churches receiving a World Missions Offering on the last Sunday.

“Make no mistake, we want our churches to take

an offering April 24,” emphasized Director of Church Relations Sam McVay. “However, we don’t just want your money. We want our churches—all our churches—to experience the synergistic effect of pulling together to accomplish a singular goal.

“We believe focusing on what God is doing through missionaries and workers around the world and praying diligently for overseas churches, pastors, national leaders, Bible colleges, evangelistic efforts, missionaries, and more will result in more than funding for overseas missions being raised. We believe individuals will recognize God moving in their hearts to witness to their coworkers, neighbors, and friends. We think our churches will be infused with a new sense of purpose. As churches and individuals recognize the Great Commission is bigger than one offering a year, people will decide to make monthly commitments to fund missions. And as people release their hold on their resources, we believe they will become more available for service and God will call more people to labor in the harvest locally, our colleges will see higher enrollments, both North American Ministries and International Missions will struggle to process all the candidates applying for service, and funding will not be an issue.”

International Missions has resources available to help your church focus on global missions. *Free downloads* include bulletin inserts, children’s stories with coloring pages (two new this year), videos, and more. Use the online store to order free directories, posters, prayer cards, and banks, as well as other materials. Or, call International Missions (877-767-7736) and a staff member will help you.

Snapshots



Doug and Miriam Bishop

Japan—Doug and Miriam Bishop completed a two-year internship in Japan and returned to the States November 19. The IM board approved the couple for career missionary service in the December 2015 board meeting. The couple is in the process of raising the additional support necessary for career service.

Côte d’Ivoire—Four new pastoral students began the 2015-16 school year at the Côte d’Ivoire FWB Bible Institute: Daniel Kambou (19), Jérémie Hien (33), Gemain Hien (26), and Jonas Kambou (41-year-old father of two). More trained pastors are needed as new churches are planted.

France—Joel and Lydie Teague returned to the States November 27 after completing a two-year internship in France. Their work focused on *J’Pense* (I think about it) events and discussion groups aimed at young people. Several young people accepted Christ as Savior during their time on the field, including Jonathan and Claire during their last two weeks in France.



Joel and Lydie Teague



Settling an Estate May Take **DOGS, COWBOYS, & LAWYERS**

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS



Brenda Bunch's father died three years ago—suddenly and unexpectedly of a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm. He was at ease with the Lord, prepared, and ready to meet him. He loved his two daughters, Brenda and Sandy and their families, and his good Christian wife who had died four years earlier. He was prepared. Mr. Selvey had even made arrangements ahead of time for the funeral, casket, clothing, and burial site.

In fact, he made every arrangement, except one. After the funeral, Brenda and her sister Sandy found his will in a safe-deposit box, clearly written but never notarized. Legally, their good father was unprepared for death.

Brenda Bunch and her husband Stan recently talked with us about the quandaries their family fell into after her father's death. None were what her father ever intended. Making his plans legal would have changed so much.

Brenda and Stan were not unacquainted with trials. But the problem of settling her father's estate was different from the up and down of ministry during 29 years as missionaries in Panama

or in their roles now as teacher (Brenda) and executive director (Stan) of Missouri Free Will Baptists. Of course, it is harder to see through tears.

Brenda's father was a farmer in southwest Missouri, mostly cattle and hay. He owned 320 acres of land, tractors, balers, rakes, brush hogs, cattle, farm buildings, and a home. Right away, Brenda and her sister Sandy engaged a lawyer who said, "This will be easy. You girls get along well. There's no debt and no contestants. We'll be settled in six months." The lawyer became the executor, and they became evaluators of their father's assets. They were to get back to him a little later.

The lawyer was right about one thing,

There were no family quarrels. Brenda and Sandy decided to divide up duties. The two of them would prioritize and organize, because Sandy was especially good at that. Stan would do the phone work, and Allen, Sandy's husband, would research and set a selling price for the farm equipment. The plan worked well. "It drew us together. I joked with Brenda and Sandy that they had become plantation owners, and Allen and I were their workers, but it worked. Still does. Allen and I are best friends now," Stan said with a grin.

But their teamwork was certainly tested. Mr. Selvey had 60 acres committed to a five-year renewable Conserva-

tion Reserve Program administered by USDA. Uncle Sam's white-collar hirelings weren't always easy to deal with; in fact, they were sometimes downright "frustrating," to use Stan's word. They found life insurance policies from the '60s and '70s but had inadequate documentation, "a nightmare to wade through," Brenda said. And at first, they weren't sure what they would do about a partnership Mr. Selvey had in his hay business, but the other farmer wanted to stay. So, they drew up an agreement: he bought Mr. Selvey's hay equipment, leases the haying acreage, maintains fences, and has storage access to the farm buildings. According to the agreement, the family is responsible for insurance and taxes.

Then there were the cattle to round up and sell. Mr. Selvey's herd of four-legged walking steaks had a reputation, especially the alpha bull, an 1,800-pound Limousin that had sometimes chased Mr. Selvey under his tractor. The Limousin also was known to jump cattle chutes and walk on the backs of his female counterparts to escape. The auction yard at Fort Scott, Kansas, had told Mr. Selvey not to bring any more of his stock there to sell. They were too wild.

Brenda and the others hired professional cowboys for a roundup. Promptly on roundup morning, four men and one woman rolled out of their pickups with boots, spurs, lassoes, ten horses, 15 cattle dogs, and five horse trailers. They ran the big Limousin until he was winded, tightened the lasso around his neck, and got him in the trailer. A younger bull jumped a five-foot stall, but a pit bull snagged him in the lips and held on until the cowboys got him roped and tied up rodeo-style. After everything in sight had been rounded up, the cattle dogs were sent out into brush piles and draws and roused out 20 more cows to load onto trailers headed for the cattle auction in Joplin, Missouri. The cowboys

were expensive but worth every penny. The cattle—even that full-of-himself Limousin—sold at a premier price.

Brenda and Stan talked about other things they learned from the process as well. Unlike the prompt and efficient cowboys, the lawyer turned out, by his own admission, to be slow as molasses in winter. The settlement took three times as long as he promised. A year into the proceedings, Stan asked what they needed to do to speed things along. "You all don't need to do a thing, but your lawyer does," the lawyer admitted. A riding accident and a love for deer hunting, among other things, covered up the stack of Selvey estate documents on his desk. Settling an estate often takes more time than you think or want.

Flies get in the ointment, too. One is upkeep on the property in the meantime or repairs if you are going to sell. Stan manned the brush hog and tore down a worse-for-wear hog barn with floors made of old railroad tracks. Eventually, he and some helpers pulled out 70 tons of old steel rail, a big fly in anybody's ointment.

Other things are left as is. Brenda and Sandy have kept the house. Their mother's quilting stuff is still there. Once a month or so, they set up the quilting frame, talk and tack, and stitch their lives together tighter and tighter. In the summer, their children and grandchildren come also. Surprising to some who settle family estates for the first time is how the emotional value of things often outrank the monetary value—what to keep, what to let go. Always a dilemma. Again and again, for many, love trumps money.

In addition to these boots-on-the-ground learning experiences, Brenda and Stan share some advice for settling an estate the right way:

Don't put off legally preparing for your death, whatever your age. Take action. Mr.

Selvey began; he made a will, but got stalled. No one wanted to seem pushy, so no one urged him on. Now, Brenda wonders whether her father was waiting for them to remind him, to suggest notarization, for example. Stan, too, wonders. "I'm his son-in-law, and I wish I'd said more, taken the lead." Somebody needs to, has to. And somebody will, eventually, before death or after, as Brenda and Stan learned, but with greater difficulty, worry, and delay.


**TRUST SOMEONE
NOW, OR YOU WILL
HAVE TO TRUST
SOMEONE ELSE
AFTER YOU DIE.**



Along the way, the Bunches have gathered other tidbits, such as *properly evaluating property*, especially real estate, because to undervalue it now may create a tax burden later. Also, *do an annual net worth statement* the first of each year to assess your financial progress. *Organize legal documents* and make sure your heirs know where they are.

Use *Free Will Baptist Foundation*, the Bunches also recommend. They are in the process of finishing their own plans: a Living Trust, a will, power-of-attorney, living will, and other end-of-life plans. "David Brown and the Cornerstone consultants are great," Stan said.

Above all, Stan says, "Just get your stuff done and in order. Trust someone now, or you will have to trust someone else after you die. That'll be much harder."

ONE

GIVE ME THAT



MOUNTAIN

BY DAVID BROWN

Caleb was 85 when he asked Joshua to give him the mountain near Hebron. Even at his advanced age, he wanted a challenge. His story reminds me of Free Will Baptists. We often choose to work for God's Kingdom in hard places at hard times. We sent our first missionary, Laura Belle Barnard, in the middle of the Great Depression. Our national college opened in the fall of 1942, nine short months after the Pearl Harbor attack plunged the United States into World War II. They were not opportune times, but we did it anyway.

Hopefully, in the years to come, Free Will Baptist Foundation can help all Free Will Baptist ministries conquer their mountains. Our grant program will soon provide crucial financial support for ministries; endowments continue to provide significant income; planned gifts are a growing part of funding the future, while money management helps Free Will Baptists manage what God has already placed in our hands. And, of all we are doing, the growing estate-planning ministry could have the biggest impact, as more people remember Free Will Baptist ministries in their estate plans.

GOING STRONG

God richly blessed the Foundation. Total assets increased almost \$8.4 million and we had record growth. This means total assets have increased \$27 million since the beginning of the Great Recession, and almost 76% since the end of 2008.

We helped more than a thousand families plan their estates, with over 150 presentations made in at least 13 states. While the Foundation does not “make a profit” on this aspect of ministry, we offer this program as a service to our members and continue to add staff members to meet the growing demand.

In its first year, the Foundation made ministry grants totaling \$75,000 to six of the seven national departments and two of the four national commissions.

In short, it was a great year. But it is only the beginning.

NOT DONE!

The Foundation has the potential to help connect generous individuals to ministry. We do this by helping individuals make major gifts in a tax-advantaged way, set up planned gifts that will pay the donor (and perhaps their children) significant income before it passes on to ministry. Recently, one family committed to a unitrust of \$3 million, a gift that could be transformative to ministries.

Estate gifts play an ever-increasing role in fulfilling ministry dreams. Many have already committed to leaving a portion of their estate to Free Will Baptist ministries. I believe we will also see many more estate bequests as we develop long-term relationships.

I used to be concerned about what other denominations thought about Free Will Baptists. Their criticism really bothered me. I’m older now, and truthfully, I could care less what other denominations think about us. What really bothers me is when I hear a Free Will Baptist say, “We are ‘done’ as a denomination.” We are not done and here’s why:

International Missions. Every Sunday, between 20,000 and 25,000 people gather in North Carolina and Oklahoma Free Will Baptist churches, but the largest gathering of Free Will Baptist people takes place outside of North America. Apparently, some don’t know we have 27,300 Free Will Baptists gathering outside North America every Sunday. Our goal has been to pioneer unreached people groups, evangelize, disciple, and train local leaders to continue the work so IM can move to another unreached people group. We have seen this process work in Cuba, Panama, and Cotê d’Ivoire, and today, we are opening new fields to start again. It may take us many years to build churches in the

“hard” places, but International Missions is not done.

Home Missions began in 1938, and for 20 years, every missionary was a bivocational tentmaker, and they scattered everywhere. Today, church planters continue to go to the hard places in North America. Not just places with no Free Will Baptist churches, but places with few Bible-believing churches—the Northeast, the West, and the Southwest. They are tackling the challenges of church revitalization, and Free Will Baptist chaplains continue to minister to men and women in the military from base to battlefield. Home Missions—now North American Ministries—is not done.

Welch College. The sun never sets on the ministry of Welch College, with graduates serving God around the globe. Every area of Free Will Baptist ministry has been impacted by Welch College. Our theology has been shaped by Welch graduates. The director of every national department is either graduated from or attended Welch College. Today, Welch College is in the process of relocating the campus and starting a graduate school. Tremendous challenges? Absolutely! But Welch College is not done!

Randall House. Every major publisher now emulates Free Will Baptist Sunday School curriculum; they want to emphasize generational discipleship like D6. Randall House is on the leading edge of Christian publishing, rising to the challenges of new technology and changing readers. Randall House is not done.

WNAC. In the last two years alone, WNAC raised over \$900,000 for missions. The organization was formed in June 1935, five months before the National Association came together, and the work of Free Will Baptist women is still going strong. WNAC is not done.

Board of Retirement. We don’t just have a retirement program; we have one that is among *the best* church pension plans in the country. The Board of Retirement has continued to thrive and grow, despite the largest recession in nearly a century. If it weren’t for the Board of Retirement, the Foundation would not exist. They are not done.

California Christian College, Hillsdale, and Southeastern are not done. Free Will Baptist Family Ministries, Alabama Children’s Home, our state offices, and many other regional Free Will Baptist organizations are thriving. They are not done.

I have had the privilege of visiting many of our churches, and I have been to all of our state and district meetings. We have amazing men in our pulpits. Many lead vibrant growing churches that continue to reach people. Let me assure you, our churches are not done.

STANDING STRONG

Near the end of 1 Corinthians, in chapter 16, Paul described a great door of opportunity open to him. I have heard many sermons about this portion of the verse, but few about the second part of the verse that describes the opposition Paul encountered. As long as we live on this earth we will face opposition. The devil will never stop opposing the work of God. Yet Free Will Baptists have a great door of opportunity open to us, if we stand strong against the opposition.

In *The Return of the King*, final book in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien, Aragorn, the man who would be king, speaks to his troops as they approach the final battle. They have no reason to expect to win, and his troops stand facing their adversaries with terror in their eyes. “Hold your ground! Hold your ground!” Aragon tells them. “I see in your eyes the same fear that would take the heart of me. A day may come when the courage of men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship, but it is not this day... This day we fight! By all that you hold dear on this good Earth, I bid you stand.”

We do not serve an earthly king but the King of All Creation. When He comes, He will not be riding on a horse but on the clouds. And I encourage you to hold your ground. We know how the battle

will end. There may come a day when our courage fails, and we break the bonds of fellowship, but it is not this day. A day may come when our denomination loses its way and comes crashing down, but it is not this day!

Are Free Will Baptists done? No, and in many instances we’re just getting started. Those who suggest Free Will Baptists are done remind me of the ten spies who gave Moses a bad report about the Promised Land—whiners looking for reasons they could not succeed. Remember what happened to them? They all died, wandering in the wilderness 40 years. When Joshua prepared the troops to conquer the land 40 years later, they were tired of wandering.

I hate to admit it, but Free Will Baptists have done their share of wandering over the last 40 years. It’s time to stop wandering. We don’t have time for that anymore. Lack of communication has created walls that separate us. It’s time to tear down those walls and get back to God’s business. After 40 years of wandering, Israel still faced a tough battle, but this time, they realized God was going before them

Free will Baptists face many challenges as we continue to go to the hard places, but God has gone with us in the past, and we can be sure He will be with us in the years ahead. In His strength, let’s all say, like Caleb, “Give Me That Mountain!” **ONE**

About the Writer: David Brown is director of Free Will Baptist Foundation. Learn more: www.FWBGifts.org. Article adapted by permission from a report delivered at the 2015 National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Legacy of Stewardship

Originally called the Board of Superannuation, The constitution and by-laws of the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement were approved in 1943. Participation grew slowly but steadily through the following decade, reaching 57 participants in the “Endowment at Age 70” plan by 1954. A year later, K.V. Shutes became the first full-time director. Although Shutes’ tenure was short-lived and he returned to pastoring after only two years, his wife Lora continued as chief administrator for an additional 14 years, long after her husband’s death in 1962.

Today, as a result of Lora Shutes’ Legacy of Stewardship, the Board of Retirement continues to minister to pastors and workers across the denomination, with \$56 million in contributions and 2,700 participants.

Why not create your own lasting legacy of stewardship by making a gift to the Labor of Love endowment to support retired pastors.



877-336-7575 + www.fwbgifts.org + gifts@nafwb.org

WNAC >>

Shine! Conferences Tackle Cultural Challenges for Teen Girls

WNAC recently hosted two conferences for girls between the ages of 12-18. The first was held October 24, at Fairview FWB Church, Spartanburg, South Carolina. The second met November 21, at First FWB Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

The conference answered tough questions faced by today's teen girls with biblical truth and practical plans for making good decisions in a difficult world. A separate track for moms and youth leaders examined issues that confront teens today, providing helpful resources for meeting the needs of the young ladies they influence.

The conference featured four speakers. Beth Bryant is a pastor's wife from Olive Branch, Mississippi, who teaches teen girls at Cross Creek Christian Academy. Ana Batts is a full-time mother expecting her sixth child. She serves alongside her husband Craig, senior pastor at Cross Timbers FWB Church in Nashville, Tennessee. Rachel Bryant is a registered nurse in a busy OB/GYN practice in Memphis, Tennessee. She also works with teen girls at Cross Creek FWB in Southaven, Mississippi. Sarah Sargent is the youngest WAC state president and WNAC Board member. She has served 11 years as a mentor and camp counselor for tweens and teen girls.

Attendees shared their thoughts on anonymous conference evaluations:

"I was reminded of my worth and learned a lot about my body."

"I value myself more because I'm God's girl."

"As a Mom raising two girls, 11 and eight, this conference provided guidance on where and how to start talking about sexuality."

"[Shine] gave me some tools to use to connect with the girls in my life and a renewed urgency to pray for and with them."

"I had no idea of all the things they face and temptations they try to endure."

"I would love to see this information taken into local churches to inform them of these real but scary facts."

"It's great to see WNAC is just as concerned about our girls as they are about foreign missions. Thank you!"

"I learned that my body is a temple and I need to be more respectful of what I do with it."

Host Pastor Tim Hackett expressed his thoughts about the *Shine!* conference in an email:

I just wanted to let you and the Shine Conference Committee know how much I appreciated the conference being held at our church. I listened to Beth and Rachel talk to the girls from the hall and was very impressed with the caliber of discussions these ladies had with the young ladies. They were informative, instructional, and inspirational. I am very thankful that our church was the first church to host the conference.

For more information about the *Shine!* conferences, visit www.WNAC.org. ■



FOUND

Faithful

...BY DEXTER GUIN...

As I considered writing an article on stewardship, my mind went to several obvious areas where we all should be good stewards—time, talent, and money. Certainly, no pastor would downgrade or downplay the need for faithfulness in any of these areas. Yet, being a good steward shouldn't be limited to a few areas of our lives, but rather, it should be in every area of our Christian walk.



As a teenager, I remember hearing my pastor, M.H. (Hank) Hollis, saying again and again in his sermons, “You may not be able to do some things, but one thing everyone can be is faithful.” He was so right. The Bible says, “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2). Faithfulness is a requirement in every area of the Christian life if we are to have a positive impact on the world. It really doesn’t matter what area of stewardship we are discussing; if we are not faithful, we are ineffective in the larger scope of life.

Being good stewards of time certainly requires faithfulness to attend church in a timely and consistent manner. When families are not faithful to church, it will, in time, come back to bite them as they watch their children grow with no desire to go to church at all. So many people have destroyed their influence with family, friends, and acquaintances because they were not good stewards of time. They were not faithful regarding spiritual matters.

We certainly can’t think of stewardship without money coming to mind. Good stewardship of our money requires that we manage income wisely and budget well. I do not recall a time in my ministry when so many families were on the brink of financial disaster. The economy may not be strong, but in my experience it is not the economy that has put them in jeopardy but personal debt resulting from buying things they don’t need or can’t afford. As a result of improper budgeting, they struggle just to stay afloat financially. Of course, one of the first things cut (or even considered at this point) is their tith-

ing to church and giving to missions. Again, good financial stewardship is required—mandated if you please—with the blessings God gives us. We must budget personal finances in a way that we not only provide for our families but the work of God as well.

A final thought on stewardship regards our talents. I am convinced there is much hidden talent among God’s people. Talented and gifted people attend our churches, and sadly, many people never use their talents for building the Kingdom of God. How many pastors and churches would not bear unnecessary burdens or try to make square pegs fit round holes if these talented church members would just step up to the plate and make themselves available.

I was overwhelmed with joy one Sunday when one of our ladies volunteered for a certain job. As it turned out, she had done that very job in another church for more than 30 years. She had the talent, the experience, and the know-how all the time; they just needed to be put to use. I wonder how many jobs go undone in our churches because Christians are not good stewards of their talents and do not find their place of service.

Again, Scripture commands us, “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” Let’s be good, faithful stewards in every area of our lives, so nothing will be lacking in the Kingdom work of God. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dexter Guin is a Free Will Baptist church planter serving in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For more information about North American Ministries, visit www.FWBNAM.com.

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SORAYA'S STORY

I was raised in a Roman Catholic family. We were financially well off, so whatever I wanted, I got. While growing up, I never read or saw a Bible in my home. By the time I was 18, I was a full-blown alcoholic and already had three DWI's. My dad wrote a check for all of them, and I got into no trouble with the legal system.

I went on to college at a small school in Georgia. Cocaine became my best friend. My parents came to visit me and saw that I weighed 90 pounds and was seriously addicted to cocaine. They took me home. I fooled my parents and began to smoke crack. I remember that, one night, I smoked so much, I saw an angel flying around me. That was the same night my dad busted into the crack house with a .357 magnum, put me over his shoulder, and dared anyone to move, or he would shoot.

My parents nursed me back to health using the alcohol detox method. I moved to Birmingham, Alabama, for a fresh start. I met a man named Mark. He was a good man. He lived a fun lifestyle like I did. We got married and had two kids. I quit drinking. Mark and I were married for six years before he passed away. I was left with four-year-old and two-year-old children. Prince Charming came along and told me everything I wanted to hear. We had an awful marriage and fought daily.

One day, a little red truck came up the driveway. A redheaded man got out of the truck and introduced himself as Pastor Tim Riggs. He told us about Jesus and invited us to church. We went to church but not regularly.

Pastor Riggs wouldn't stop visiting and sharing Jesus with us. On Labor Day 2009, my husband left me. My world stopped. I remember lying on the kitchen floor and screaming for this man named Jesus to help me. Nothing magically happened, but I promise you I felt a warm feeling all over, as if Jesus had picked me up and held me. I called my pastor and his wife and they showed me biblically what to do next. My life was turned upside down, but now I had hope. I prayed for reconciliation in my marriage for three years until God finally released me with the knowl-

edge that he had committed adultery. My pastor and his wife counseled me and gave me no leeway for missing church. Needless to say, they have earned the title of being my spiritual mom and dad.

My life has drastically changed in five years. God has taken a lot from me that I was holding onto tightly, including my children. My children are my heart.

Dillon is 16 and is an amazing son. Satan attacks and attacks him, but I pray for his salvation. My daughter Elizabeth is 14, and she is a beautiful child! She gets knocked down, grabs Jesus' hand, and gets back up. My kids and I are truly loved by this church. My life isn't easy and I stumble financially, but I have the best husband and daddy for my kids and that is Jesus. **ONE**

This testimony was originally shared at a North American Missions picnic at Bay City Free Will Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama, on September 1, 2014. I am happy to report that Soraya is still faithful to church and a blessing to others. She now helps others find Christ and regularly encourages those who are saved. I am also thrilled to report that on Wednesday, August 12, 2015, around the altar at our church, her son prayed and accepted Jesus as Savior. Stories like this, lives changed and souls saved, make all the challenges of church planting well worth it.

—Tim Riggs, church planter, Mobile, Alabama



Across the Nation >>

Hispanic Ministry Shining in the Star City

Star City, Arkansas—First Free Will Baptist Church, Star City, is pleased to announce a new Hispanic mission work according to Rick Bowling, director of Hispanic ministries. Micael Gonzalez from Bartlesville, Oklahoma, will serve the new congregation. He is a graduate of Earl and Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Bible Institute and is excited to begin this ministry.

The work started with a revival in August 2015. Alfredo and Ruth Botello brought a team from Micael's home church in Oklahoma to advertise in the community, going door-to-door to promote the new church. The revival began with special music and testimonies from the church in Oklahoma before Micael shared a message. After the service, the congregation was treated to an authentic Mexican meal hosted by the members of the Oklahoma church.

Since August, Micael has been busy visiting homes, forming relationships with the Hispanic community in Star City, and sharing God's Word, distributing Bibles to those who do not have one of their own. Building a church is a slow but rewarding process. The church, named Faith in Action, has begun holding services each Sunday evening in the fellowship hall of First FWB Church, with five regular attenders.

The church recently purchased church signs (in Spanish) to be placed at the church and highway entrances, a statement that they are serious about this mission work and seeing lives changed.

Faith in Action Church hosted a second revival November 8-9, with help from Oklahoma and North Carolina churches. On November 8, Micael was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister.

"The congregation at First FWB Church is excited that God has chosen them to "mother" this church," said Director Bowling. "They have surrounded Micael with love, prayers, and support, and their church has already been blessed as they carry out their role in fulfilling the Great Commission. They ask you to pray faithfully for Micael Gonzalez as he reaches out to the Hispanic population in Star City." ■



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Intersect >>

Dealing With Discouragement

BY BARRY RAPER

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16

Tom Carson was an ordinary pastor, and often a discouraged one. In his book, *Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor*, His son Don (D.A.) Carson devotes an entire chapter to his father's ongoing struggle. He shares glimpses of Tom Carson's private journals, including entries like this one:

Sunday, March 5, 1961

Rose 6:50 a.m. Prayer and study. Preached (poorly) from 2 Cor. 2. Twenty-four present....rested. Studied. Evening 19 present. Preached from Rom 1:1-17 (poorly).

Tom Carson didn't write this for anyone else. He had no idea his journal entry would one day be published. Obviously, he was discouraged. His son writes, "*The reasons for such discouragements are many, but some of them, at least, overlap with Tom's self-doubt, guilty conscience, sense of failure, long hours, and growing frustration with apparent fruitlessness.*"

We all relate. We know what discouragement feels like. How would you define it? (It is often easier to feel than to define.) I think you would be hard pressed to find a better way of describing it than what is said in 2 Corinthians 4:16, "so we do not lose heart." "Losing heart" is the essence of discouragement.

Encountering discouragement is not a matter of *if* but *when*. How do you deal with it? Some deal with discouragement by shopping, others by eating, still others by alcohol or substance

abuse. None of these are helpful. They may serve as diversions, but they are only temporary and only make matters worse. How did the Apostle Paul deal with discouragement? How did he keep from losing heart?

By keeping the right perspective (verses 8-9). Paul did not recommend that we ignore the harsh realities of life—quite the opposite. Paul spelled out of a number of difficulties he had encountered. Some were simply the result of living in a fallen world and some were a direct result of his faith. "We are troubled on every side...perplexed...persecuted...cast down," Paul wrote. It is obvious he was fighting the difficult fight of faith, but he realized his struggles were not the only reality. He understood the bigger picture. That is why Paul could say, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Then, in verse 10, Paul shared the keystone of his faith: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body."

When Paul suffered and experienced discouragement, he was able to take a step back and observe, by faith, that God was ultimately working for his good (Romans 8:28). Paul's faith helped him keep the right perspective. He understood that the suffering of this life was only temporary. "For our light affliction, which is

but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (verse 17). We can deal with discouragement with the right perspective.

By experiencing the resurrection power (verses 11-17). It takes power—real power—to guide us through times of discouragement. And, for the believer, that comes through the power of the Holy Spirit. According to verses 11-17, the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is at work in you. Paul spoke of his identity with the death of Christ, but he also reveled in the power of His resurrection: “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you (verse 14)...For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (verse 16).

The inward man is where the Holy Spirit does His work. He is not some outside impersonal force, but a living Person who abides within, giving believers power for abundant living. Not trouble-free living but abundant living in the face of difficulty.

If you want to deal with your discouragement, you must keep the right perspective and experience the resurrection power of Jesus. Let me offer some practical suggestions to help you:

Identify the source of your discouragement. First,

About the Writer: Barry Raper chairs the Pastoral Ministry program at Welch College: www.welch.edu.

Satan is out to destroy you, and one of the chief ways is through discouragement. Second, other people can be a great source of encouragement and joy, but also great discouragement and disappointment. Finally, take a hard look at yourself. From physical challenges to unrealistic or unmet expectations, discouragement often rises from within.

Don't face discouragement alone. Seek accountability and encouragement from those who will confront you in love—kindly but honestly. Let them help you identify the drift of discouragement in your life and identify why you are discouraged.

Prayer. Use your discouragement as a powerful motivation toward God. In 1858, in the hymn, “*My God, I Thank Thee*,” Adelaide Proctor penned the following lyrics: “*I thank thee too that all our joy is touched with pain; that shadows fall on brightest hours; that thorns remain; so that earth's bliss may be my guide, not my chain.*”

Spend time in God's Word.

This is how you keep the right perspective. This is how you find daily renewal and strength in spite of difficulty. And as you fight to keep the right perspective, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” ONE



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At Welch College >>

Welch College to Offer Master's Degree in Theology and Ministry

Welch College will offer the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Theology and Ministry starting during the 2016 spring semester, according to President Matt Pinson. On December 6, the college received formal approval from its accrediting bodies for a level change that will allow the school to grant master's degrees.

The program officially began with convocation and orientation on January 5. The M.A. program consists of hybrid courses, in which a portion of coursework is done online and the other portion completed during one-week, on-campus intensive sessions.

Those wishing to complete the M.A. in 16 months can do so by taking both courses offered during each week-long intensive. (Those taking one course at a time will take twice as long to complete the degree.) The college offers free campus lodging during intensives and generous financial aid opportunities, including institutionally-funded scholarships and federally-guaranteed loans.

The first two courses will begin online February 15 and go through April 15, with on-campus intensives March 14-18. The first two courses will be Mission and Church Growth (taught by Barry Raper and Ron Callaway) and The Arminian Theological Tradition (taught by Kevin Hester and J. Matthew Pinson)

The course list for the program includes:

- *Mission and Church Growth*
- *The Arminian Theological Tradition*
- *Issues in Old Testament Studies*
- *Discovering and Communicating Biblical Truth*
- *Summative Experience*
- *Church and Culture*
- *Ministry and Leadership I*
- *Theological Foundations*
- *History of Doctrine*
- *Issues in New Testament Studies*
- *Ministry and Leadership II*
- *Summative Experience (Project/Thesis Due)*

"There's a lot of excitement about this new opportunity," President Pinson remarked. "Seats in each class are limited, so I encourage you to inquire right away, if you or someone you know is interested in this degree. Please be in prayer for us as we initiate this new program."

For more information, email Program Coordinator, Dr. Jeff Cockrell: jcockrell@welch.edu. ■





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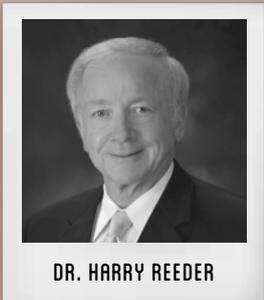
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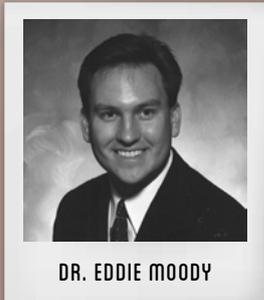
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Director, Global Family Formation Studies, Focus on the Family



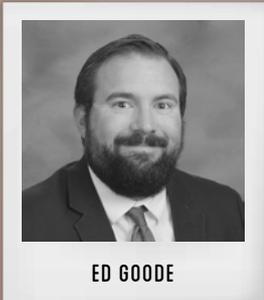
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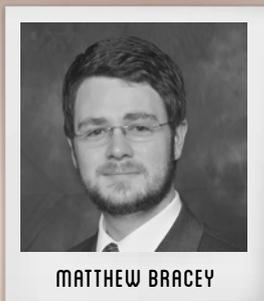
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ED GOODE

Associate Pastor of Student Ministries, Trinity FWB Church, Greenville, NC



MATTHEW BRACEY

Registrar and Professor, Welch College



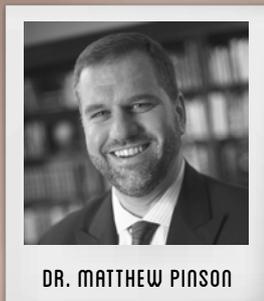
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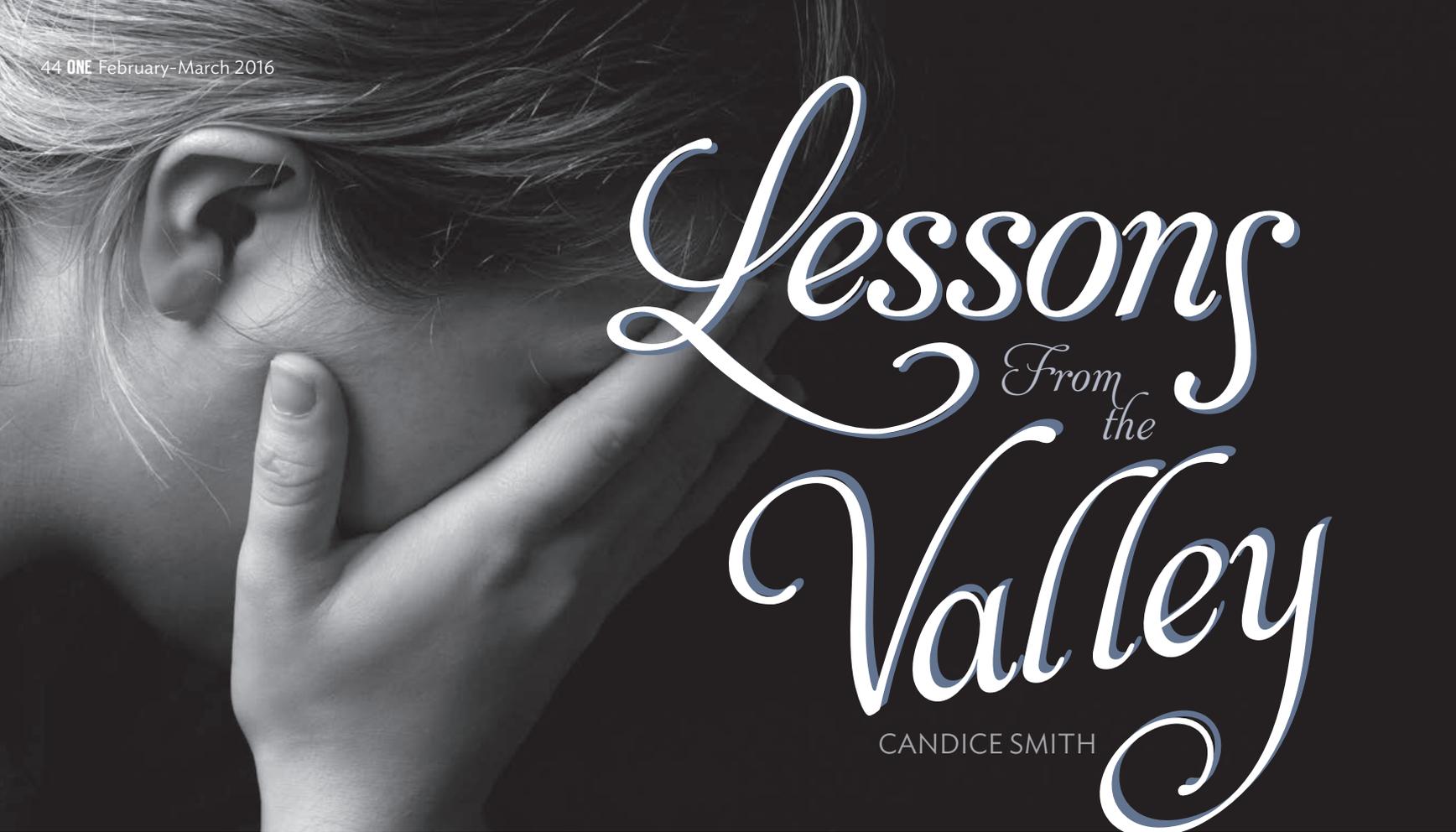
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Lessons From the Valley

CANDICE SMITH

When facing tragedy, it is natural to ask why and to look for something of great significance to give meaning to the experience. If you are like me, you want the lesson to be quick and simple like, “Joseph was sold by his brothers into slavery so he could later save his family and preserve the Israelite nation” (see Genesis chapters 37, 39-50).

There are just a couple of problems with that kind of perspective. In the first place, Joseph’s ordeal was neither quick nor simple. It was many years before he found himself in the position to accomplish this great task, and it involved many twists and turns. Furthermore, while the salvation of the Israelites answers the *why?* in the big picture, God was also working in all the “little pictures” of Joseph’s life and his family. Do we sometimes focus so much on the big miracles that we miss the little ones along the way?

Consider Judah. The brother who suggested selling Joseph into slavery later offered himself as a slave to save another brother. Obviously, he had allowed God to do some character building within him. Each of Joseph’s other family members has a story as well; we just haven’t been given their information. My point is that every individual was affected. More important, though, their response was their own responsibility. I wonder if we have heard the refrain “It’s not all about me” so much that we forget or ignore the fact that some of it is about us. Every event, situation,

and experience is an opportunity for growth when we submit to God. There’s the rub—we must submit ourselves.

In the December-January issue of *ONE*, I shared my experiences with grief: friendships lost; an unhealthy marriage, abandonment, and divorce; the terminal diagnosis and death of a granddaughter; and more. As much as I wanted to understand *Why?* I realized that a more important question was *What?*

What does God want me to learn? And in what ways can I glorify Him through this experience? Turns out, a lot. By no means do I claim to have this worked out flawlessly or completely, but here are some lessons I learned in the valley:

I am not perfect. I know. I can practically hear your gasps of disbelief. Seriously, though this is something I have always known, it didn’t prevent me from expecting it of myself. Even in recovery, I felt driven to “do it right.” It took a long time to extend grace to myself, which brings me to another lesson.

God’s grace is greater than I ever comprehended. At the risk of sounding trite, His grace truly is amazing. Through my involvement in a Christ-centered recovery program, I have witnessed and experienced so much of His grace in other believers. I suspect it was there all along if I had been willing and able, in other words, humble enough to see and receive it. “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble’” (James 4:6).

We have all heard that when you think you've got humility, you've lost it. So while I can't say I've attained it, I've had plenty of lessons in this area. Pride is at the heart of my perfectionism and the low self-worth that drives it. A low self-image is pride in disguise. **Humility is seeing myself as God sees me**, His precious creation with whom He desires to have a relationship, but who is helplessly lost and broken without Him.

These lessons in grace and humility have taught me something else—**compassion**. Anyone remember the spiritual gifts surveys popular in the '90s? While I scored fairly high in a couple of areas, the gift of mercy barely registered. I recognized its value and made attempts to cultivate it, but suffering is a more effective teacher. A big part of the problem was the wall I built around my heart. Trying to protect myself from continual hurt only made me hard. Public humiliation and a fresh perspective on grace has torn down that wall and softened my heart. Although mercy still isn't my spiritual gift, I see definite progress.

There is a difference between being strong and being hard. I will be the first to admit I had confused one for the other. More and more, I am learning the truth of 2 Corinthians 12:9: His strength is perfected in my weakness.

Emotional needs are as valid as physical needs. This simple truth may be obvious to most of you, but it was not part of my philosophy. This misbelief hindered my capacity for compassion and is why I needed the wall. Grief deconstructed many of the presuppositions I had in this area, and I have been working to build a balanced, biblical philosophy.

Reality can be an unpleasant place to live sometimes, but living in denial or fantasy brings bondage and pain in the long run. You can't heal a wound by pretending it isn't there. "You will know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Before I could forgive, **I had to learn what forgiveness is not.** It is not being a scapegoat or doormat. It is not pretending you are not being hurt. It is not making excuses for (or ignoring) willful sin. It is not an absence of boundaries. And it is not easy. Frankly, many days I still struggle with this one, but God takes my willingness and makes me able. Recently, He has provided opportunities to see my progress. "Being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

Patience...one of the hardest lessons of all. Moving through grief (and working on these life lessons) takes longer than I want and longer than many others think it should, but it cannot be rushed. Closure is a nice concept, but I am not sure it is entirely realistic. Over and over I have been revisited by pain I thought I had put to rest. Each time I dealt with it, I thought, "That was the last time; I'm finally over it!" Thankfully, as time goes on, the episodes don't last as long. "But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lack-

ing nothing" (James 1:4).

Trying to be what others think I should be is a prison. God is the One who created me, and He is the One who determines my purpose. I have made peace with the fact that not everyone will like me or understand me. That's not my responsibility. "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10).

God can be absolutely, completely trusted. When you sense His presence, and when you feel forsaken. When the blessings

We often allow fear or pride to resist the deep spiritual work that must take place for us to become Christ-like.

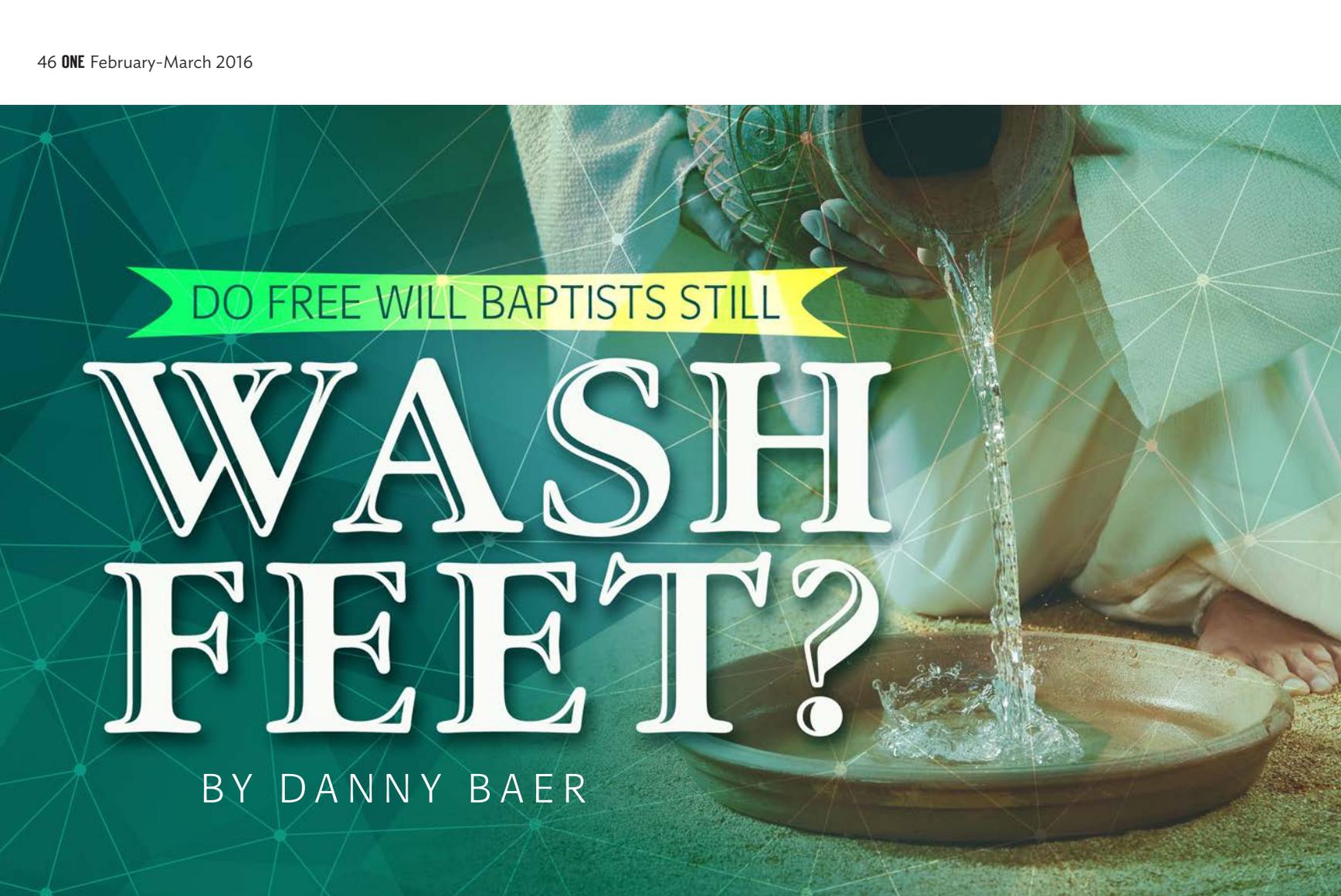
are pouring down and when your world is falling to pieces. When you're feeling strong and victorious, and when you're curled into a ball praying for the end to come quickly. My grief really tested my faith and exposed areas where it was weak, and ultimately led to the revelation of some deep issues God continues to heal. He proves Himself faithful every time I fail.

Some joys lie only on the path of suffering. When we received the news that my unborn granddaughter was terminal, we were devastated. As the shock wore off and we were forced to live in a state of constant dread, others often suggested the sooner it was over, the better. Some even went so far as to say, "Too bad the doctors didn't 'take' her." To that I say: we are grateful for every moment we had with her before and after her birth. She was worth every tear. My life is richer, and I am better for having known and loved Elaina. As I look at other painful circumstances, I can identify something to be thankful for in each one.

Please understand that I do not believe or mean to imply that any of these lessons were the reason for my valley experiences. I choose to leave the why question in God's hands; maybe I will never know. These lessons are simply illustrations of how He works in the darkest of circumstances to bring blessing and good. I have learned things and grown in ways that perhaps were not possible otherwise.

This is my account from my vantage point. Each person involved has his/her own account, and it is different from mine. It is up to each one to ask God, "What do you want to teach me?" Often, we allow fear or pride to resist the deep spiritual work that must take place for us to become Christ-like. Difficult things are inevitable, but the real tragedy is to go through them without growing or learning lessons in the valley. **ONE**

About the Writer: Candice Smith is a 2014 Welch College graduate. After several months of employment at North American Ministries and International Missions, she returned to New Brunswick, Canada, in the fall of 2015. She currently serves as Treasurer for the Atlantic Canada Association of FWB, co-leads two recovery groups, attends University of Maine in Presque Isle, and is Nana to three awesome superheroes: Parker, Strider, and Callum.



DO FREE WILL BAPTISTS STILL

WASH FEET?

BY DANNY BAER

*Although I have known *The Washing of the Saints' Feet* is listed as one of our ordinances, I have also been aware that not all of us follow the practice. If you're like me, you've wondered if feet washing—foot washing, for some—is dying in our ranks.*

To find the answer, I sent a survey invitation to the approximately 760 pastors whose email addresses are listed in the Free Will Baptist Church Directory. Of those who received the email, 366 completed the survey. This means that based on over 2,200 churches in our denomination, the survey has a margin of error of less than 5%.

Churches That Practice Feet Washing

The first question was simple and straightforward: “Does the church you now pastor practice feet washing?” Over 84% of the pastors responded yes. This means approximately 1,800 Free Will Baptist churches have feet washing services at least once a year. I must admit I was pleasantly surprised.

To learn the frequency of those services, I asked, “How many times a year does your church practice feet washing?” The results (Figure 1) show that almost half of the churches that practice feet washing do so once a year, about a fourth practice it twice a year and roughly a fourth, four times a year. The average is two

How many times a year does your church practice feet washing?

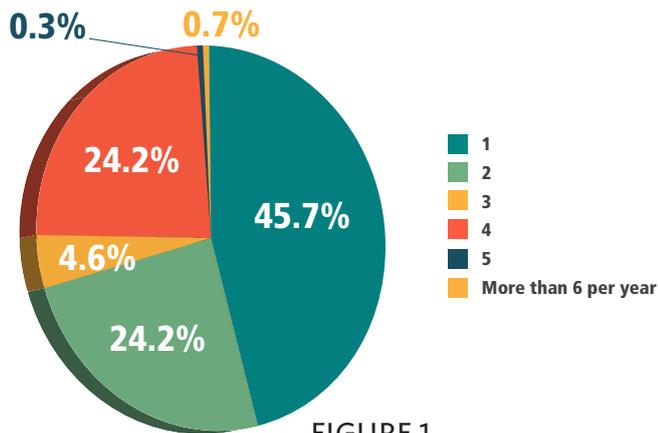


FIGURE 1

times per year. In my next question, I discovered that churches practice the Lord's Supper an average of three times per year. By the way, over half of churches that conduct feet washing do so each time they have the Lord's Supper.

Next I asked, "What percentage of the adults who attend your church (for Sunday morning worship) participate in a typical feet washing service." Because the responses were in ranges, the results (Figure 2) are hard to average. However, you can see that in the majority of our churches, only a minority of adults participate. In fact, taking into account that 16% of Free Will Baptist churches do not practice feet washing at all, it appears that less than 30% of all Free Will Baptist adults practice this ordinance.

What percentage of adults who attend your church (Sunday morning) participate?

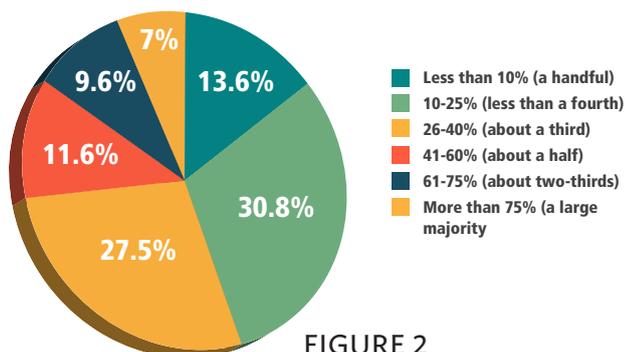


FIGURE 2

Churches That Do Not Practice Feet Washing

I asked this group if their church ever practiced feet washing and, if so, how long ago they dropped the practice. The results were interesting. More than half of the churches that do not practice feet washing did so at one time (It could be more since 22% of the pastors were not sure). Of the churches that have stopped the practice, over 60% of them have dropped it in the past 15 years.

Is the Washing of the Saints' Feet an Ordinance?

While over 84% of Free Will Baptist churches practice feet washing, only 75% of FWB pastors feel it should be an ordinance. The comment section of the survey seems to indicate many of them believe feet washing should be practiced, but it does not rise to the level of an ordinance. Some felt feet washing is part of The Lord's Supper and not a separate ordinance.

Concluding Thoughts

The practice of feet washing is alive. Some pastors took objection to the survey, thinking it was part of some effort to remove feet washing as an ordinance. To you, I say first of all, I had no such intention. Second, you can breathe easy. With 84% of Free Will Baptist churches practicing feet washing, and 75% of our pastors believing it is indeed an ordinance, The Washing of the Saints' Feet is firmly established in our ranks. Still, the practice of feet washing is not well. Fewer than 30% of Free Will Baptist adults participate in the ordinance.

What about the future? The survey results indicate a decline in the practice, but only a slight one since the practice of Feet Washing has dropped by only about 5% in the last 15 years.

A final thought. The ordinance of The Washing of the Saints' Feet is a practice that is clearly established in our *Treatise* and tradition. However, based on this survey, it would behoove us as Free Will Baptists to revisit John 13, and, with an honest and receptive heart, ask God to teach us again what Jesus taught His disciples the night before He gave His life for us all. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dr. Danny Baer has been an ordained Free Will Baptist minister for over 40 years. He is academic dean at Southeastern FWB College and serves on the Board of Directors for the FWB Board of Retirement. His message on feet washing, "Following the Example of Christ," which was presented at the National Association in July, can be read on his blog, <http://drdannybaer.blogspot.com> and heard at www.nafwb.org/media/2015-convention.

Leader Profile >> BY RON HUNTER JR.

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

Steve Trail

Pastoring is not an easy journey; it requires a blending of skills unlike any other profession.

No one would claim to have everything needed for the task, but much can be learned from reading how others tackle the role. Steve Trail pastors First FWB Church in Dothan, Alabama, and for eight years has seen growth in people and campus size. He grew up in a military family (Navy), and lived in seven states before graduating from high school and settling in Arkansas.

Steve and his wife Judy found Free Will Baptists at this stage of their journey. Their pastor and Steve's first mentor, J. W. Blanks, asked Steve to teach a teen Sunday School class, and some time later, he spoke at a church men's day event. God used these and other opportunities to cultivate Steve's communication ability. Steve's goal was to coach high school football, but God transformed him into a pastor who coaches people in much deeper ways.

Over the past 40 years, Steve and Judy have poured themselves into congregations. Steve is known for his work ethic, goal setting, and a desire for excellence. He has been a church planter, led multiple building programs, and experienced success in many people's eyes.

When asked about his biggest failure, however, Steve's recalled, "During my third year of ministry, while pastoring a church with an annual call (annual vote on the pastor), I let my feelings get hurt. The first two years, we had tripled in size. A new building was built without debt, and I had received 100% vote each of those two years. So, in the third year, when I only got 85%, I took it too personally and resigned. I really loved those folks, and they deserved better. I have always regretted how I responded as a leader."

Steve, You are a great leader! 



Do you have kids?

Michael (age 43 and wife Lynnette)—live in Rector, Arkansas, with two boys

Christi (age 39 and husband Toby)—live in Hoxie, Arkansas, with three boys

Tell me about your quiet time. I am an early riser, and between 4:30 and 5:00 a.m., I read, pray, and meditate in Scripture. Because of the convenience of my Bible apps, I find myself reading while sitting with families during surgeries at the hospital. And I take seriously the 'pray without ceasing' admonition for my drive times, running the names of prayers requests people have shared.

What do people misunderstand about you? Even though I love people dearly, I have been told that I seem distant at times. Not sure if it is my emphasis on professionalism and my drive for excellence in ministry, or my habit of trying to give 100% of my attention and focus to each task.

Paper or Plastic

Fiction or Nonfiction? Fiction

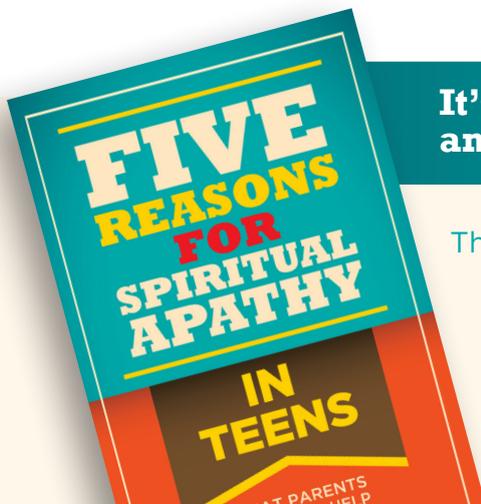
Music or talk radio? Talk radio

Sushi or Burger? Sushi

Facebook, Email, Pinterest, Twitter, or texting (don't pick FAX)? Facebook

Tie or No Tie? Tie

Mac or PC? PC



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NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

JULY 17-20
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 KANSAS CITY, MO

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ROMANS 12:2

BY VERTICAL THREE



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



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

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THE BUCK-A-WEEK MISSIONS offering provides opportunity to give now (two missionary projects) and later (endowment). You can give online or through the app by texting "Pushpay" to 77977.

SUNDAY AM



RYAN AKERS
Minister to students at Calvary Fellowship FWB Church.

SUNDAY PM



AARON PONTIOUS
Youth pastor at the Donelson Fellowship.

MONDAY PM



AXIS
Bridging the gap between generations and translating pop culture.

TUESDAY PM



ALLEN POINTER
Lead pastor at Cofer's Chapel FWB Church.

TUESDAY PM EVENT



I AM THEY

WWW.VERTICALTHREE.COM a ministry of  randall house

About the Denomination >>

2015 Leadership Conference Promotes Church Revitalization

Antioch, TN—One hundred sixty-six pastors and church leaders from 21 states, Canada, and France gathered December 7-8, at Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel for the 2015 Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference. The conference explored the theme Rekindle and the important subject of church revitalization.

Dr. Harry Reeder, senior pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama, was the keynote speaker. Author of *From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church*, Reeder is founder of Embers to a Flame conferences dedicated to church renewal. He presented five keynote messages during the conference: The Biblical Mandate for Church Revitalization, The Biblical Paradigm for Church Revitalization, Leadership and Church Revitalization, Obstacles to Church Revitalization, and Getting Started in Church Revitalization.

“Church vitality or revitalization is nothing more than following God’s prescription for church health,” Reeder noted. “Church health naturally leads to conversions and improved personal discipleship, for our good and God’s glory. If a body is healthy, it will grow appropriately. So our focus is on the spiritual vitality of the church, knowing that a healthy church will grow.”

The meeting featured more than keynote sessions, with plenty of time for renewing friendships during banquet-styled meals and free time. The Tuesday luncheon featured security specialist Sam Hodges, who addressed the important topic of church security. During Tuesday afternoon free time, many conference-goers attended a retirement reception for Ray Lewis, outgoing director of the Board of Retirement.

Services featured music provided by Welch College, and a number of national boards met in conjunction with the conference.

“This conference provided a great opportunity for pastors and leaders to be refreshed and renewed and also walk away with practical steps they can take to revitalize their churches,” said Ryan Lewis, conference director. “We were pleased to have Dr. Reeder as keynote speaker, and to learn from someone who has dedicated his entire life to revitalizing churches.”

For information about the 2016 Leadership Conference, visit www.nafwb.org. ■



Pre-Registration

2016 National Association of Free Will Baptists

NAFWB | NYC | Kansas City, Missouri | July 17-20, 2016

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

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

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

Voting Delegates

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

Non-Voting

- Attendee (All Ages, Including Infants and Toddlers)

Tickets

WNAC Laughter and LattéQty _____ x \$15 = _____
Monday, July 18, 8:30 p.m.

Welch College Alumni & Friends Luncheon
Qty _____ x \$TBD = _____
Wednesday, July 20, 12:00 noon

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

National Youth Conference

Preschool

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

Students: \$25

Any student or competitor* attending any NYC competition or event
MUST pay \$25 conference fee (\$35 on-site).

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

*Competitors must pay this \$25 NYC conference fee **in addition to**
NYC competition fees already paid to Randall House.

College Age | Adults: \$15

Adults attending any NYC competition or event MUST pay \$15.

- Adult Attendee

Tickets:

ENGAGE Student Ministry Luncheon
Qty _____ x \$15 = _____

Monday, July 18, 12:00 Noon
I Am They Concert.....Qty _____ x \$10 = _____

Tuesday, July 19, 9:00 pm (\$12 onsite/at the door)

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

Register April 1 – June 17, 2016 (postmarked) No Refunds After June 17

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

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

Card # _____

Card Holder _____ Exp ____/____

Signature _____

RETURN TO:

Convention Registration

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

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

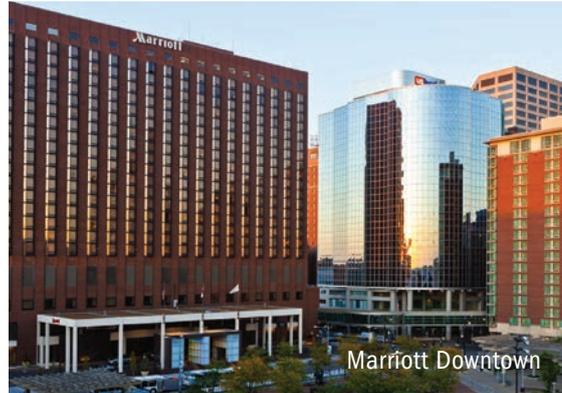
Office Use Only: Date _____ CK# _____ Amt \$ _____ From _____

Convention Housing

2016 National Association of Free Will Baptists

Kansas City Marriott Downtown (HQ)

200 West 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
877-303-0104
Rate: \$132*
Valet Parking: \$24 per night
Self Parking: \$9 per night



Crowne Plaza Kansas City Downtown

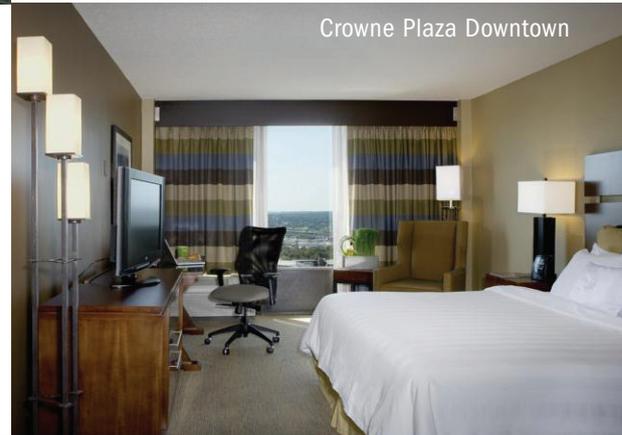
1301 Wyandotte Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
888-233-9527
Rate: \$122*
Valet Parking: \$20 per night
Self Parking: \$17 per night



The Aladdin Holiday Inn Hotel

1215 Wyandotte Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
877-224-2870
Rate: \$125*
Valet Parking: \$18 per night
Self Parking not available through the hotel.

***Room rates do not include 16.85% tax and \$1.75 city occupancy fee.**



1. Prepare Personal Information

You will need the following:

- + Name(s)
- + Address, City, State, Zip
- + Phone/Email
- + Credit Card Information
- + Special Requests:
 - Wheelchair Accessibility
 - Rollaway Bed
 - Crib

2. Contact Your Hotel of Choice

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

- + **Group Reservations:** Groups making eight or more reservations should contact convention manager Ryan Lewis (877-767-7659) between February 1 and April 29 for more information regarding group reservations.

3. Things to Remember

- + Hotels have been instructed **NOT TO ACCEPT** reservations before opening day.
- + A non-refundable cancellation fee of the first night's room and tax will be charged for any cancelled reservation.
- + Hotel rates do not include 16.85% tax and \$1.75 city occupancy fee.
- + Available rooms may be posted at **www.nafwb.org** for transfer.

**Reservation Cut-off Date:
Friday, June 17, 2016**

**Visit www.NAFWB.org for
additional convention
information.**

Power for Parenting: D6 France Review

Every Christian parent and pastor in France lives with the fear of what will happen to their children when they enter their final year before university. If their faith has withstood the pervasive encroachment of 11 years of schooling with a godless worldview, the philosophy course in the 12th year is a frontal assault on their faith. Many young people abandon their faith and walk away; some never return.

Parents depend on the church to anchor their children in the faith, but weekly 30-45 minute Sunday School classes don't stand a chance against daily attacks at school. Even a vibrant youth group in the church is not a sufficient bulwark against the onslaught.

Because they want to reclaim their children for God, more than 300 parents, pastors, and church workers from across French-speaking Europe gathered September 2015, for the first D6 Conference in France. They examined God's solution to this problem—parents: parents who obey God by teaching their children, model a godly life, and place God at the center of the family. They heard speakers and attended workshops that gave them a strong biblical base for instilling God's truth within the family, along with practical tools to help them accomplish it.

Those who attended came away convinced that D6 teaching and training is indispensable in our churches. We're already making plans to hold a mini-D6 conference in the Nantes region in 2016. ■

About the Writer: Robert Bryan and his wife Judy are career missionaries serving at the St. Sébastien FWB Church in France. They are involved in local leadership training, and Robert leads the French Leadership Matters Course.



New Housing Process to Be Continued in 2016

After overwhelmingly positive response to the new convention reservations process in 2015, the changes will continue through the 2016 convention. Convention housing will open for online reservations only Monday, May 9, at 9:00 am CDT, with links to online reservations available at www.nafwb.org. Phone reservations can be made beginning Tuesday morning, May 10, at 9:00 CDT. Due to limitations imposed by some hotels on the number of reservations made by individuals, groups booking eight or more rooms can contact convention manager Ryan Lewis (877-767-7659) for information about group reservations.

The cancellation policy will also remain in effect for 2016, meaning that a non-refundable cancellation fee of the first night's room and tax will be charged for any canceled reservation. Rooms can be transferred between individuals, and available rooms can be posted at www.nafwb.org.

Convention hotel information is available in this magazine, as well as online at www.nafwb.org/convention. ■

Photo: Mark Cowart



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

ONE to ONE >> D. RAY

*Through the years, Free Will Baptists have known some capable servant-leaders. Among those is **RAY LEWIS**, who recently retired as director of the Board of Retirement. Reflecting on this man and his years of service, several admirable qualities come to mind:*

R*eliable.* Ray Lewis is one of the most dependable, steady persons I have ever known. You can almost set your watch by his routine. If he tells you he will do something, mark it down as good as done. A low-key, even temperament was perfectly suited for his job.

A*chievement.* Anyone who knows anything about Ray's background, especially his childhood years, recognizes and appreciates what he has been able to accomplish in spite of extraordinary challenges. He is a classic illustration of a "pull-yourself-up-by-the-boot-straps" story. Through persistence, self-discipline, and hard work he has managed to achieve success at a level few people ever experience given his circumstances.

Y*oke-fellow.* This word is used only once in Scripture, by the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:3. It can be translated comrade, colleague, or partner. These words describe my relationship with Ray. He has been a team player, willingly yoked together with me and other denominational leaders. We have always been able to count on him to pull his weight in any and every endeavor.



L*aughter.* Don't let the stoic, serious demeanor fool you. Behind that stern-looking exterior is a funny, light-hearted fellow! We have been travel partners for the better part of ten years. During those times, especially when delirious with fatigue, we managed to keep our sanity by laughing at and with one another.

E*ncourager.* That may be the single most significant contribution Ray made during his tenure as director of the Board of Retirement. His effort to maintain consistent, strong earnings for participants has kept spirits high, even during turbulent economic periods.

W*ise.* We came to trust and lean heavily upon Ray's years of experience. He has earned every gray hair on his head. His wisdom comes, not only as a result of his formal training, but also by virtue of the fact that he has an unusual amount of plain, common sense.

I*ntegrity.* During his tenure, the Board of Retirement didn't have a single scandal—not one! In fact, I'm not aware of one legitimate complaint of malfeasance at any level. That's quite an accomplishment in light of the many corporate and governmental financial disasters that occurred during that same time period.

S*ensitive.* This is an appropriate descriptor for Ray—sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. While he obviously hasn't been able to please everyone during his tenure as a director, I've never known him to run roughshod over the feelings of others intentionally. He has respected people's opinions, even those with whom he did not necessarily agree.

*Thank you, D. Ray, for being a good friend, confidant and Christian brother.
We're going to miss you...a lot! ONE*



Introducing Phase Two of the Welch Capital Campaign

Construction on the new Welch College campus is well underway. With this in mind, the college has entered the Gifts-in-Kind phase of the capital campaign. Help us raise \$2 million in materials and volunteer labor toward construction by identifying friends and business acquaintances who could donate or provide substantial discounts on building materials, equipment, and furnishings. Also, help us find individuals or groups to provide volunteer labor on a short- or long-term basis. We invite you to **join us with your support and prayers in this once-in-a-lifetime endeavor** to build a new campus for the glory of God and the extension of His kingdom.

Find a complete list of needed supplies and materials:
www.BuildingOnTheLegacy.com.



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30 YEARS

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Per Year

35 YEARS

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Per Year



Disclaimer: All amounts are estimates based on a constant earnings rate of 5%