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*Recalibrate:
The 2019
D6 Conference*

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To communicate to Free Will Baptists a unifying vision of our role in the extension of God's Kingdom



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Finding Grant

BY ERIC K. THOMSEN



I found Grant lying flat on his back in a shadowy hallway between Ancient Egypt and the dinosaur exhibits. As usual, I had lagged far behind the rest of the energetic third-grade field trippers as I stopped to read every placard in the natural history museum. (My wife would say some things never change.)

When I spotted the fifty, I froze. After a quick glance around, I darted over, picked up the worn bill, and shoved it deep into my pocket. I had never held a fifty, much less owned one. My heart raced as I took another furtive look up and down the hallway, with the old playground chant echoing in my head: “Finders keepers; losers weepers.” Seeing no one watching, I scampered to catch up with the rest of my class.

Where, moments earlier, I could hardly wait to see the brontosaurus, T-rex, and triceratops sculptures, suddenly my mind was filled with images of all the wonderful things I could buy with my newfound wealth. My heart raced and palms sweated as remote-controlled helicopters, Hot Wheels™ cars, Pop-Rocks™ candy (my favorite), and a thousand other images flitted across my imagination.

“It’s not yours.”

The thought hit me like a lightning bolt. I immediately pushed it away... hard. “Of course, it’s mine. I found it.”

“It’s not yours.”

The thought followed me into the Jurassic exhibit and through the rest of the museum. My heart-pounding elation slowed gradually into feet-dragging agony. Young as I was, I knew that still, small voice. And, I knew what He wanted me to do.

When the tour reached its end, and my noisy classmates flooded the gift shop with excitement, I walked slowly to the information desk and looked up sadly at the museum receptionist. “Can I help you?” she asked.

I slowly pulled Grant from my pocket and handed him over. “I found this.”

A big smile quickly replaced the surprised look on her face. “I am so glad you found this,” she gushed. “An elderly man lost this while visiting the museum with his grandkids earlier today. Thank you for being honest.”

I gave her a half-hearted smile and turned dejectedly to walk away.

“Young man.”

At her call, I turned back. The still-smiling lady was extending a five-dollar-bill over the counter.

“This is for you! The gentleman wanted to reward anyone who might turn in his lost money.”

Woo-hoo! Five minutes later, I bought enough Pop-Rocks to share with my entire class!

That day taught some simple lessons about money that I have never forgotten:

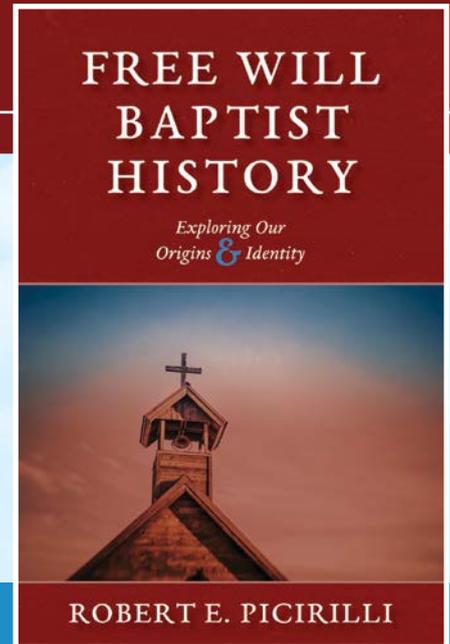
- Money can master you if you let it (Matthew 6:24).
- Obeying God’s money mandates doesn’t always make sense, at least by human standards (Matthew 19:21).
- It’s hard, but necessary, to be content with what you “don’t have” (Philippians 4:11-13).
- God may have bigger plans for your money than you do (1 Timothy 6:17-19).
- Managing money God’s way always has its reward...even if you don’t see it until eternity (1 John 2:15-17). **ONE**

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

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A Little Steward Follows Me

BY JOSHUA EIDSON

Does your child know what a steward is? Does he know he is a steward? How do you go about teaching a child to be a good steward? The same way we teach them all the other important life lessons—little by little, day by day. Most teaching is done without words, but rather by our children observing how we parents act as stewards. Am I showing my children a good example of stewardship?

Stewardship is one of those areas not often considered in everyday life, at least not often enough in mine. Yet, it is a great honor and responsibility to which God has called us. We enjoy His blessings and partner with Him in blessing others with those blessings. He expects what He entrusts to us to be used in a God-honoring way. This is the heart of stewardship—glorifying Him by the way we handle the resources He grants us. So, I ask myself and you again, how are we doing as role models in this area of worship?

Children take many cues and lessons from the way we interact with the world around us. Do they see us taking care of our physical possessions? Do they know why we want to make wise decisions on how we handle our finances? Yes, it takes some conversation to explain the

areas that aren't as readily observed. Do they know we save money so that when income may be tight in the future, we have funds set aside to help us through? Or when an opportunity comes up to help someone else in need, we have money available to serve them? Being a good steward is not just about handling financial resources wisely; it is also about handling our physical possessions and time wisely.

Here are some simple questions to help evaluate how well we are living out stewardship before the next generation:

THEY WILL MODEL MORE WHAT I DO THAN WHAT I SAY, SO I MUST BE INTENTIONAL TO ALIGN MY WORDS AND ACTIONS.

- **Do we use our time wisely?** Do we take care of our responsibilities and chores before we take time to relax?
- **Do we have a financial plan?** Are we using a budget and planning for future needs or emergencies?
- **Do we respect our possessions by taking care of them and not wasting them?**
- **Do we have a spirit of gratitude for how we've been blessed?**

Living out wise stewardship and explaining my reasons for doing so provides the primary example my children will follow. They will model more what I do than what I say, so I must be intentional to align my words and actions. The last question gets to the heart of why a person wants to be a good steward. If we are thankful people, we will have a desire to steward our blessings as an act of worship.

The short poem “A Little Fellow Follows Me” by Claude Wisdom White, Sr. hangs above my desk at home.

It reads:

I cannot once escape his eyes,
 Whatever he sees me do, he tries.
 Like me, he says, he's going to be,
 The little chap who follows me.

Do my children see in me a good example of a wise steward? My prayer for us all is that we live as wise stewards and, by doing so, honor our Lord and set a faithful example for those who follow us. **ONE**

About the Writer: Joshua Eidson is accounting administrator for the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement. He graduated in 2007 with a B.S. in business administration from Welch College. He has over 13 years of experience in finance and accounting.



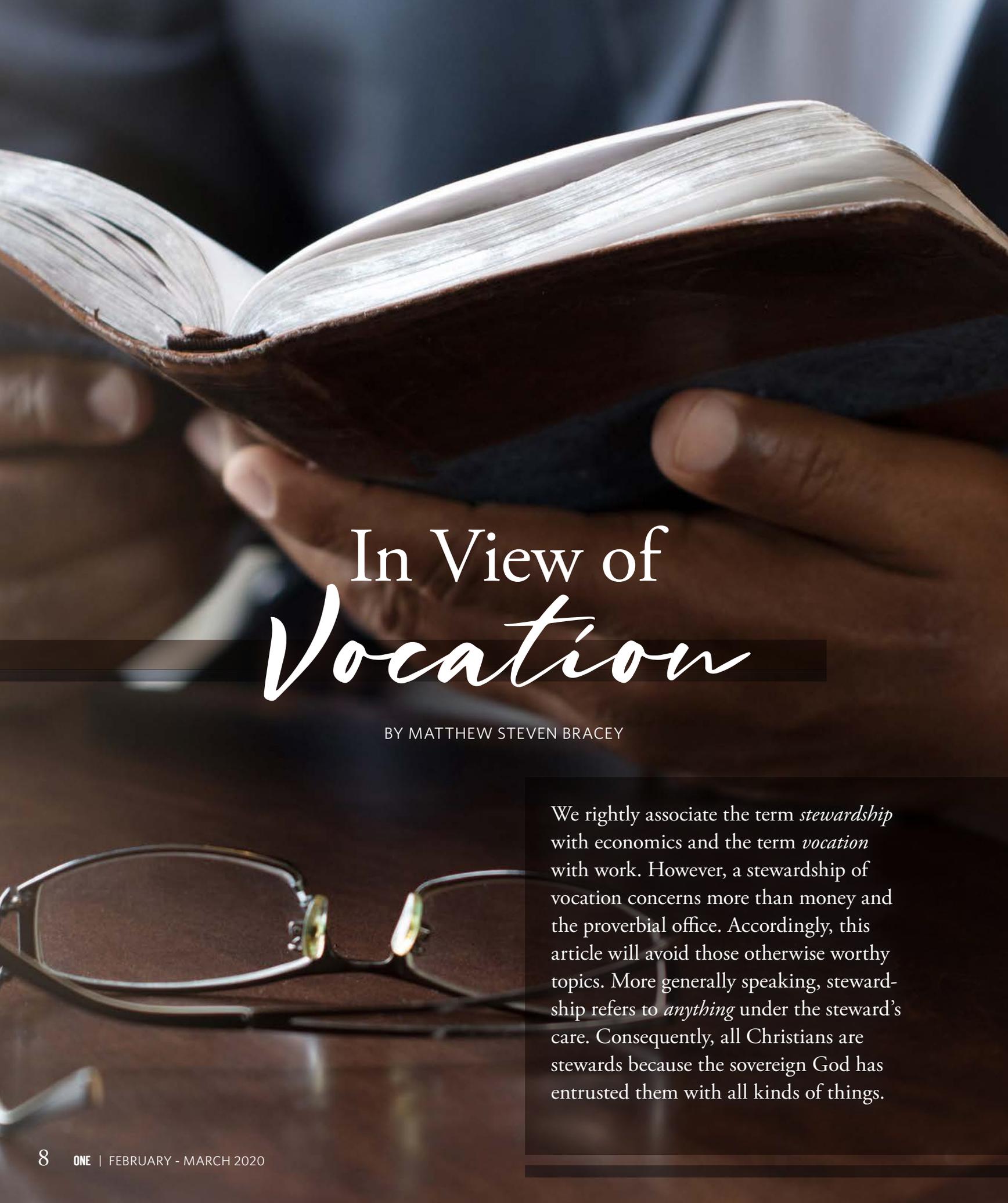
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In View of *Vocation*

BY MATTHEW STEVEN BRACEY

We rightly associate the term *stewardship* with economics and the term *vocation* with work. However, a stewardship of vocation concerns more than money and the proverbial office. Accordingly, this article will avoid those otherwise worthy topics. More generally speaking, stewardship refers to *anything* under the steward's care. Consequently, all Christians are stewards because the sovereign God has entrusted them with all kinds of things.

From the dawn of creation, God entrusted man with many responsibilities: Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, and cultivate the ground (Genesis 1:28; 2:15). Commentators often refer to these instructions as the creation mandate. Some alternatively use cultural mandate or even the political mandate because cultures and communities arise invariably from man's obedient stewardship of God's instructions.

Man's obedience to God's commands describes man's vocation, fundamentally, *anything* to which God calls him. Thus we might speak more precisely about man's *vocations* (plural) rather than simply his *vocation* (singular). This article will review four of these vocations: God, family, church, and society, with special focus on the last one. At its basis, though, vocational thinking recognizes the call of God in *all* of life.

1. GOD. The first vocation to which God calls all people is a personal relationship with Him. "For God so loved the world," says John 3:16 (cf. 2 Peter 3:9). The Christian's relationship with God is the foundational vocation he or she stewards, giving shape to all other vocations. Jesus explains the greatest commandment is to love God with our whole being (Matthew 22:37-38; cf. Deuteronomy 6:5).

The Christian builds all other vocations upon this solid foundation so when the rain and wind and storms blow, these structures will stand (Matthew 7:24-27). The brick and mortar of the Christian who stewards this vocation includes daily spiritual disciplines such as Bible intake and prayer. In addition, he or she incorporates consistent church attendance, singing, and observing the ordinances.

2. FAMILY. A second vocation God calls man to steward is family, which emerges from man obeying the creation mandate. Within the vocation of family, the sovereign God calls us to steward callings we have not necessarily chosen. While we may choose our spouses (according to God's will), we don't choose our parents, siblings, or children—not to mention our extended families. Yet God calls us to *honor* our fathers and mothers, to *keep* our brothers and sisters, and to *care* for our sons and daughters, whether biological, adoptive, or spiritual (Exodus 20:12; Genesis 4:9; Deuteronomy 6:7).

A central ethic for properly stewarding this vocation (as

well as the subsequent two) comes from Jesus Himself: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39). Love of God is the spring from which flows love of neighbor. In the family, the neighbor is not some abstract "other" but rather your concrete relationships: mom and dad, brother and sister, son and daughter, and so forth. Thus, the vocation of family has a local—even preferential—quality.

Precisely how neighbor-love manifests itself in this context depends upon the nature of the relationship itself. For example, loving a parent differs from loving your child. Passages such as Ephesians 5-6, Colossians 3-4, and Titus 2 explore the implications of these differences. But the underlying point is that God calls on us to view our families as vocations. They are not inconsequential in His order of priority, and we should never disregard them or take them for granted.

Instead, we must think seriously about what loving parents, children, or siblings entails. Admittedly, unique family situations result in special circumstances and, accordingly, we must pursue this vocation carefully. But generally, the family is key in the development of our sanctification. In addition, family gives opportunity for witness, since it requires we love people with whom we might not otherwise associate.

3. CHURCH. Third, God calls Christians to steward the vocation of church. Specifically, He calls people into a local branch of the universal body that stretches across space and time. Again, proper stewardship of this vocation is downstream from that first vocation: love of God propels us toward love of neighbor.

Just as family brings us into contact with people and circumstances that test our sanctification, the same is true of the church. However frustrating these relationships, we are not excused from forsaking the assembling of the brethren (Hebrews 10:25). Instead, God calls people into the vocation of the church, and He calls its members—pastors, teachers, deacons, music ministers, and laypersons—to love one another. Passages like Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 6, as well as the pastoral epistles more generally, detail what stewardship of this vocation looks like.

4. SOCIETY. A fourth (and often overlooked) vocation is society. As with the vocation of family, society results

from man's stewardship of the creation mandate: Man propagates and lives together in community and in society. The societies in which we find ourselves are not accidental. Within them we see families, churches, workplaces, civic institutions, and governing structures (local, state, and federal).

Some Christians resist certain aspects of this vocation on their lives, particularly those related to governing and political bodies, because they associate them with historic and contemporary sins. But the same holds true for family and church. Indeed, evil men will abuse *anything* in a world captive to total depravity. The problems we relate to society are incidental and not inherent because, fundamentally, society results from the stewardship of the creation mandate—or, as Jonathan Leeman has described it in *Political Church*, the political mandate.

Every community is different. And, our communities may change at different stages of our lives, depending on life circumstances, schooling, and our work/ministry. Yet God calls us to stewardship in each community. Just as God calls us to the vocation of family by placing us within them, He does the same with respect to community. The Christian recognizes that society, and all it contains, is a vocation from God, not to ignore or avoid, but rather to steward.

Once again, this stewardship begins with neighbor-love. “Neighbors” in society are those with whom we practice community at home, church, work, the marketplace, and even the voting booth. Numerous implications of these principles follow. Seemingly ordinary acts, properly understood, are not insignificant but acts of neighbor-love. Something as simple as obeying your society's road rules is an act of love. In this case, obedience to relevant laws is not simply a matter of obeying the state but also of maintaining order rather than creating chaos. Simple obedience decreases the prospect of accident, harm, and even fatality to your neighbors.

A second example is more political: voting for a preferred candidate or party is not partisanship *per se*. Instead, it's the prudent stewardship of the vocation of society. Elections have consequences because office holders work to enact policies that affect the entire society. At times, these policies evidence neighbor-love; at other times they don't.

Christians must recognize the election of this candidate or that party has real-world implications. An example is the right of Christian adoption agencies, churches, schools, and other ecclesial organizations to exercise their God-given religious liberty in how they conduct their business—to say nothing about issues of life, marriage, and so forth. From the perspective of vocation, God calls Christians to steward their votes in a manner most likely to promote neighbor-love.

Controversial political realities undoubtedly make decisions about voting difficult. But these principles of vocation demonstrate the need for Christians to give sober consideration to the consequences that follow their decisions *and* their indecisions. Faithful witness to families and churches also present challenges, owing to the reality of sin, but we don't forsake them simply because engagement presents difficulties. Neither should we abandon the state. The doctrine of vocation reminds us we occupy these spaces, seeking the welfare of the city (Jeremiah 29:7) because God has called us to them.

In this article, I've resisted the temptation to review vocation narrowly in terms of career and work. That is not because vocation does not concern that sphere (it does!), but because it has been my goal to demonstrate vocation is broader than we often realize. The doctrine of vocation is a wonderfully helpful tool for seeing the sovereign oversight and providence of a purposeful God in the ordinary—and often taken for granted—spheres of life. This includes God's call of people into personal relationship with Him, which overflows into our families, churches, and societies. God desires we steward these vocations in a way pleasing to Him and according to the love of God and love of neighbor. 

About the Writer: Matthew Bracey and his wife Sarah live in Mount Juliet, Tennessee. They attend Sylvan Park FWB Church. Matthew works at Welch College, where he serves as vice provost and as a faculty member, teaching courses in history, law, theology, and interdisciplinary studies. Matthew holds degrees from Cumberland School of Law (J.D.), Beeson Divinity School (M.T.S.), and Welch College (B.A., History, Biblical Studies). He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics Public Policy at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

REFRESH

BY BRAD RANSOM

"Talk is cheap."

"Put your money where your mouth is."

"Actions speak louder than words."

These are common phrases we have heard and probably said ourselves. Many Free Will Baptists have been discussing the need in our denomination for resources, training, and ideas for churches. Several state associations, local churches, and even national departments have developed various resources. ReFresh is the joint effort behind all of these ideas and a way to get important help and resources out to our churches.

According to research by ministries and research groups, as many as 85% of churches in America are in decline. Of the 15% not in decline, most are plateaued (meaning in a short amount of time, they also will decline). As few as 4% of American churches are growing as a result of evangelistic outreach.

As a denomination experiencing these statistics, we know it is time to engage in this battle and address this problem among Free Will Baptist churches. We are excited to officially launch a joint initiative between the Free Will Baptist Executive Office and North American Ministries to offer help to churches at every stage of life and health.

ReFresh combines many things, including this new, recurring *ONE Magazine* column, Fresh Wind Resources from North American Ministries, training and seminars, ReKindle from the Executive Office, the new *Better Together Podcast*, and much more. Our focus is to provide resources and training for pastors, leaders, and churches to help all churches experience health and growth.

Free Will Baptists have a great heritage and a bright future if we are willing to confront some tough

topics. We all realize culture and society have changed. We face battles and situations few ever anticipated. How should the church respond? How do churches grow and reach people in today's society? How do we reach a generation with little knowledge of God or respect for Christianity? These and many other subjects will be among the topics in upcoming ReFresh columns.

Each issue will provide specific targeted instruction to help churches become healthy and reach people with the gospel message. From articles and book reviews to ministry ideas, interviews, and resources—find it all in upcoming issues! **ONE**

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



MACEDONIA

Is Still Calling

BY DON MATCHETT

Someone said, “The hardest thing about finishing a project is starting it.” To be honest, I do not find this to be the case. Starting projects is easy. The hardest thing about a project is actually finishing it—with excellence.

Have you started a project you didn’t finish? Perhaps your upstairs bathroom still needs baseboards and fixtures installed. Maybe a book sits on your nightstand with a forgotten bookmark holding the last page you read. I think we all have projects that slide to the back burner because something else claimed priority.

A few years ago, we began a huge remodeling project of our home in Arkansas. We worked tirelessly to finish the nine-month project. And we did. Well, almost. We left a few things to finish later. Almost two years later, to be precise. These unfinished projects occupied my thoughts daily. Actually, the thought of leaving them undone made me anxious. I couldn’t stop thinking about “the unfinished” until I marked the last task off.

Free Will Baptists have worked with tireless determination to open new fields around the world. Through the years, not only have these fields been opened, they have matured. Now, national leaders plan and lead their works in several countries. However, this does not mean our task has been completed. Much work remains. Our friends and fellow Free Will Baptists rely on us to help them evangelize, disciple, send medical assistance, and build churches. The work is not finished.

I love the story of Paul’s Macedonian vision in Acts 16. The Holy Spirit closed doors for Paul to continue evangelizing Asia. Finally, Paul received a vision of a Macedo-

nian man who beckoned, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” Paul responded, and met Lydia of Thyatira. A seller of purple, she became the first European convert and a great herald of the gospel. I like to think she continued in her prosperous business and became a huge financial supporter of those early missionary endeavors.

After opening Macedonia to the gospel, Paul continued visiting until he was jailed. Even from his jail cell, he wrote to and about the Macedonians. Why? He knew his work was incomplete. The Macedonians still needed him. The work was still unfinished.

Today, real people, in real conversations, call, “Come over and help us.” People like **Pastor Kouassi N’Guetia** who pastors two churches in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, West Africa. One of the churches he pastors desperately needs an expansion of their unfinished church building.





Brother Sie Noufé serves as both pastor of a local church and president of the Association of Free Will Baptists in Côte d'Ivoire. He believes God has appointed him to be a pastor to pastors. In his words, "There is so much work to be done, and we cannot do it alone."

And what about **Veronica Reyes Solano**? She leads a teen camp in Cuba with few resources. How many more teenagers could the camp reach with the Good News of Jesus Christ if she had adequate resources?

We can't forget **Pastor Clovis Leandro** and his wife **Cristina**. They work alone in the state of Alagoas, Brazil. Far from their Free Will Baptist family, they diligently labor to plant a church in a village with no other evangelistic witness. As I write this article, they are planning a children's event, preaching services, and a baptism for this weekend.

By the time you read this article, I believe new believers will be baptized and discipled in a church with no building. It doesn't get much more "Great Commission" than that. After all, fulfilling the Great Commission is what we are talking about.

Many regions in our partnership countries are still unreached. What greater action could we take to fulfill the Great Commission than to help our friends and partners in countries we already serve? Many doors are open to preach the gospel right now. How long will they stay open? We have a duty to Christ and humanity to provide as many resources for the gospel to spread as possible.

I want to ask a personal question. How much do we really care about finishing this unfinished task? Is it something we think about often, occasionally, or not at all?

I think we should elevate the Great Commission to our highest priority for two reasons. First, we should consider our international associations, churches, pastors, and church leaders in the same way we think of our local churches in

our district or state associations. We should pray for them like we pray for our local churches. We should come to their aid as much as possible. We should hurt with them, rejoice in their victories, and seek to help them achieve their goals, just as we do the churches within our own circles. Why? **Because they are our brothers and sisters in Christ.** They sacrificially serve their local bodies. Their ambition is to see the gospel spread within their Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. They are in the Free Will Baptist family—just like you and me. And, Free Will Baptists support each other.

Second, we cannot afford to ignore the command to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. Every day yields the ultimate consequence for those who haven't heard the gospel. We can't waste a single minute. We must do *everything* in our power to reach as many as we can for the Kingdom of Christ, for the sake of the One we serve, and for those who need to hear His good news.

In October, I walked my daughter down the aisle and gave her away to her soon-to-be husband. The walk from the back of the auditorium to the stage of Union Grove Church is probably no more than 70 feet. Yet, in that short walk, a flood of memories came rushing back. We had come so far together. When we first brought her home, she could not survive on her own. When she became a teenager, though she probably could have survived, she would not have thrived on her own. But in this moment, she was a beautiful young bride, ready to start making a home of her own. I am glad to say this task is unfinished. She still asks for advice, and she needs our support and encouragement from time to time.

On our mission fields, the Bride of Christ is maturing. She is beautiful, and the Kingdom is expanding at an amazing pace, but Macedonia is still calling: "Help us. The work is unfinished, and we cannot do it alone." **ONE**

About the Writer: Don Matchett is director of church relations and development for IM, Inc. Learn more about how you can get involved in the work of Free Will Baptists around the world: IMinc.org.



Where Is Your Garden?

BY CAROL WIEDNER



The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden,
Than anywhere else on earth.



Nearly 30 years ago, I unearthed a sign at a local garden shop. It was simply a black metal pole made to push into the ground. Atop was a medallion with the words above inscribed in silver. It was the perfect Mother's Day gift for my mother's small flower bed. Not much of a garden to some, but it brought her much pleasure as she enjoyed flowers bursting forth in colorful bloom. Her eyes sparkled as she added the sign to her little patch of beauty.

Today my mother is with the Lord. Her sign is now mine. Yearly, I place it in my own little patch of flowers. Each spring when the sun kisses the breeze with warmth, and trees turn green with the promise of rebirth, I get spring fever. Spring fever is a deep yearning to participate in the amazing cycle of rebirth and growth. It's a desire to get down in the dry dirt and bring forth something new and beautiful. It's a time when God speaks to my soul in a most basic way.

He reminds me of how I felt as a new Christian. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). I remember the joy and peace resulting from being right with God. I remember feeling humbled as I realized God had taken my dry, worn self, and turned it into something new and beautiful. I remember eagerly wanting to do God's work, building His Kingdom however I could.

Eagerly, I venture into my yard laden with flowers and

fertilizer. I choose the perfect home for the plants, some needing sun, others shade. I begin digging in that old, dry dirt, carefully adding fertilizer, placing each plant at the correct depth, generously watering, and ending with a thick layer of mulch. Finally, I relax, knowing I have given my plants a healthy foundation for growth.

As I reflect on my plants' foundation, I am reminded my spiritual life needs a solid foundation for growth also. To sustain the joy and peace I felt as a new Christian, I need to root my soul in the things of God. Instead of plants and fertilizer, I immerse myself in Scripture each morning, reflecting upon it as I tend my heart. I spend time praying, enjoying the sweet communion between God and myself, building and strengthening our relationship.

Yet more is needed. Membership in a local church, in the fellowship of Christians, teaches me much, encourages me often, and fosters worship. As the fullness of Christ fills my soul, I look for ways to serve others, striving to do His work on earth. The accumulation of these efforts works in me daily so I might fulfill the command of Romans 12:1, in view of God's mercy, to offer my body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, as a spiritual act of worship.

Continuing to provide my garden with water and fertilizer, all seems to be going well until I notice weeds sprouting among my prized plants! I'm somewhat surprised. I'd carefully removed existing weeds before planting and

laid a heavy cover of mulch to prohibit their growth. Despite my efforts, they seem to be thriving. To protect the plants I had devotedly cultivated, I now spend hours removing weeds. It's not enough simply to pluck the tops from sight. I must carefully uproot them to keep them at bay. Even when I manage to eradicate the root, it's not long before new weeds appear.

How weeds are like sin in my life! As a new Christian, my sins were washed away. I started with a clean slate. In spite of the strengthening foundations I regularly apply to my spiritual life, I find sin creeping in—wrong thoughts, hurtful words, unwanted actions, or even inaction. I'm often taken by surprise when I realize that despite my good intentions, I'm much like Paul: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate to do I do" (Romans 7:15). I realize Proverbs 20:9 is speaking directly to me: "Who can say, 'I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?'" The answer, of course, is no one. Just as I add hours to my gardening pulling up weeds, I spend time with God confessing my sin and repenting. Yet, even this is not enough. To remove it completely, I can't simply conceal it. I need to be certain to uproot and eradicate sin from my life. Having done that, I find new unwanted thoughts or actions have a way of creeping in. So, I daily rely on God for the cleansing and cultivation I need, thanking Him for His forgiveness and mercy.

Eventually, spring becomes summer. I'm in a good routine of watering, fertilizing, and weeding. With summer comes heat, humidity, and often drought-like conditions. Just when I need to be diligent, the rigors of the weather weaken my resolve. I become negligent and my garden suffers. Seeing the garden languish, I strengthen my resolve and return to my routine. With renewed effort, it flourishes again.

The rough summer weather mirrors the storms in my life. My storms arise primarily from my own health. When my health declines, my resolve to read Scripture daily and attend church weakens. Pouring out my heart to God, I find no relief. If I continue on this path, my spiritual health and my physical health languishes. It's in these times encouragement from fellow believers and the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit strengthens my resolve to draw close to God. He unfailingly fortifies me to continue reading His Word and meeting with His people as my

health allows. Then I say with the psalmist, "I am confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:13-14). Despite my health constraints, I flourish.

In due time, the growing season ends. I derive joy from sharing the harvest God has provided. Slowly fading blooms fill me with praise for the Creator of such beauty and splendor. Ultimately, I'm filled with hopeful expectation that next year's growing season will offer new opportunities for God to speak to my soul.

Just as I share my garden harvest, I seek ways to share God's work in me with others in my life. I need the power of the Holy Spirit to do so effectively, and while I often fail, I persevere. What joy it is to see others realize their need for a Savior! Praise to God for the beauty of His creation is in my heart, and hopefully on my lips. Above all is praise for who He is, His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ for all who believe in His name and the hope He offers daily. Finally, I praise Him for speaking to the depths of my eternal soul as I piddle in the dirt.

Where is your garden? It doesn't have to be an actual garden. It can be anywhere God especially reminds you of His truth. Perhaps it's with a Bible in your lap in a comfortable chair. Perhaps it's in your church sanctuary surrounded by Christian brothers and sisters. Perhaps it's the company of a trusted believer in a coffee shop. Wherever it is, be confident God still speaks today if we only pause and hear His voice.

Thank you, God, for speaking to me! Thank you for causing me to remember. Thank you for your grace and forgiveness. Thank you for the hope you give me each day. Thank you for my garden. ONE

About the Writer: Carol Wiedner is a retired pediatric oncology nurse and is currently the program coordinator for the women's ministry at Grace FWB Church in Arnold, Missouri. She and her husband Terry have three sons and five grandchildren. She enjoys gardening, writing, sewing, and especially, visiting her children and grandchildren.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding an open Bible. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt with a white quote that reads: "I have not love, I am not all I possess to the poor love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love does not envy, it does not keep no record of wrongs." The background is softly blurred, showing other people in a church setting.

The Missing Elements of Worship

BY W. JACKSON WATTS

It's Sunday. You walk across the parking lot, enter your church, and then the sanctuary. It's service time. What do you expect to see? What do you expect to hear? Now ask yourself, "What's biblically essential for a worship service to exalt God and edify believers?"

Comparing our expectations with the actual teaching of Scripture is revealing. We've come to expect certain sights and sounds that seem indispensable to an authentic worship experience. We need the guitar's chords. We need the countdown timer to build anticipation. Or, we need an organ prelude to quiet us and nudge us to our pews. What happens musically before, during, and after the service matters. However, is it possible we've so reduced worship to music that we've now minimized two essential ingredients of Christian worship? I'm referring to Scripture reading and public prayer.

Putting the Word Into Worship

I doubt any Free Will Baptist denies Scripture should shape and direct our worship. The logic is airtight: God's Word best tells us how He desires to be worshiped. However, the next time you participate in a service ask yourself, "When is the first time Scripture shows up? Is it used to call the church to worship? Does it direct people's praying? Does half the service pass before the Word is explicitly mentioned or read?"

Not only is it historically odd for Scripture not to be prominent in worship, it is strange from a biblical perspective. The Apostle Paul wrote two letters to Timothy that deal extensively with how God saves, structures, and

sustains His Church. His emphasis on rightly teaching the Word, sound church leadership, and enduring the last days leaps off the pages. Situated in these letters we find the practical command: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:13).

Absent the presence of an apostle, the early church had the words of Old Testament Scripture and the emerging New Testament documents (the earliest being letters). These Scriptures bore witness to the risen Christ and showed His followers how to approach God and follow Him. Approaching God in worship involved a few core elements: preaching and teaching, praying, singing, giving, testimony, and observing the ordinances. What these elements have in common is that Scripture supplies their rationale, their content, and even some guidance on how they are to be done.

We find all of these elements, to varying degrees, in the modern church. However, the public reading of Scripture has fallen on hard times. Often, it doesn't happen at all, except simply to set-up the sermon immediately before it is preached. Other times, it almost seems to have an ornamental purpose. But make no mistake: reading and hearing the Word were central to early Christian worship, and they are still essential for worship today.

Scripture can permeate a service in multiple ways. Take something as familiar as singing. For many Christians, worship and singing are synonymous. However, the purest worship is to honor God as God for who He is and what He does. What better way to do that than to let Scripture drive singing, too? As my Lutheran friends put it, the point of singing in the church is to put the Word of God on the lips of the people.

This doesn't mean songs must quote Scripture verbatim. However, the truths of Scripture can be interwoven and accentuated in many ways. This is right on target with what Colossians 3:16-17 says, to let the Word of God dwell richly in us through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. However, if Scripture is rarely read in worship, then it's doubtful it will shape much else in the service.

Scripture reading is one way—an overlooked way to be sure—we saturate our hearts and minds with God's truth. It also can be accomplished through preaching and teaching, singing, and even watching the Word come alive through the visible ordinances of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and feet washing. Just as the returning exiles in Nehemiah's day gathered to listen to the Word for hours, we should cultivate a reverent, joyful, and attentive appetite for God's Word in worship.

Praying Ourselves Close to God

Scripture-driven worship should also be reflected through prayer. The church enjoys closeness and intimacy with God when it prays. This is true privately but also true publicly. Just as we see scriptural scenes where the entire assembly listened to Scripture read, they also assembled to pray. We find this in Acts 2 when those early disciples devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and prayer.

First Timothy 2:1-2a says, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority..." Imagine the scene. The early church gathers. A brother stands, lifting holy hands to Heaven, and prays for the emperor waging a brutal campaign against the Christian church. That's worship! When this brother stands to pray, the whole church listens and amens this radical prayer of humble confidence. They

don't understand his prayer to be an individual performance. No, he prays, "God, we ask You to help us to know and do your will. We ask You to make us holy, obedient, mature disciples."

At times, prayers may be more expressive: "God, I worship you." But sometimes, such praying misses the obvious fact that when we approach God biblically and sincerely, we're already worshiping (even if we don't use the words *praise*, *worship*, or *I*). Moreover, public praying is just that: it's public. It's corporate. It is the whole body praying in obedience to the Word of God, whether through petition, lament and confession, or praise and thanksgiving.

Not only do we need to read Scripture as God's living, active Word, we really need to ask ourselves, "How much praying is actually going on in our services? Why do we get so shifty in our seats if a person's prayer exceeds 90 seconds? Are we bringing a "worship problem" to the service? A commitment to public prayer means prayer itself becomes an event in the service, not just time for people to transition to different stage positions or slip out to the restroom.

Putting It All Together

My main concern for us modern worshipers is that we know 2 Timothy 3:16-17 really well (all Scripture is inspired), but not to the detriment of Scripture in church. We emphasize the doctrines of inspiration and inerrancy, but it's far too easy to have a high formal commitment to Scripture, yet a low functional commitment to Scripture. We can learn about scriptural authority in Sunday School or small groups, but then if we used the worship service's content to determine our church's actual view of Scripture, would we see God's authoritative Word shaping everything?

Laymen can help foster and encourage Word-centeredness and a renewed emphasis on prayer in many ways. Let me offer a few suggestions:

- 1) If you are asked to share special music, select a Bible passage to read before singing that reinforces or illuminates the theme of the song.

- 2) If you work with smaller kids, they likely learn a monthly memory verse. Ask your pastor or other service leaders to let the children recite these verses.
- 3) If you select material for the church bulletin or marquee, incorporate Scripture. You'll never have to wonder if it's true, helpful, or timely.
- 4) If you're called on to pray, take a moment to gather yourself. Then lead the prayer, keeping the entire congregation in view. Consider its current needs and concerns. Consider how what is being taught on Sunday mornings presently might direct what you ask God for on behalf of the body. And stick to plural pronouns: "We," "us," and "ourselves." After all, it's corporate prayer, not private prayer.
- 5) Spend some time with good books on these subjects. Jonathan Leeman's *Word-Centered Church*, for example, is a helpful book on this topic you might convince a few other church members to read with you, considering how Scripture could more effectively shape the life of the congregation.

- 6) Finally, value patient listening over hurried experience. We tend to value efficiency and speed in most of life. This is problematic when we try to hurry through worship, too. It's also why we don't pray or read Scripture more: it just takes more time! Instead, patiently value longer prayers, listening to longer Scripture readings, and services that linger on the Word. Monday will come soon enough. If worship is about exalting God and edifying others, it's worth taking time for.

For more helpful resources on incorporating Scripture and prayer into your worship services, visit www.onemag.org/missing_element.htm. 

About the Writer: W. Jackson Watts has served as pastor of Grace FWB Church in the greater St. Louis area since 2011. He also serves Free Will Baptists at the district, state, and national levels, particularly as a member of the Commission for Theological Integrity.

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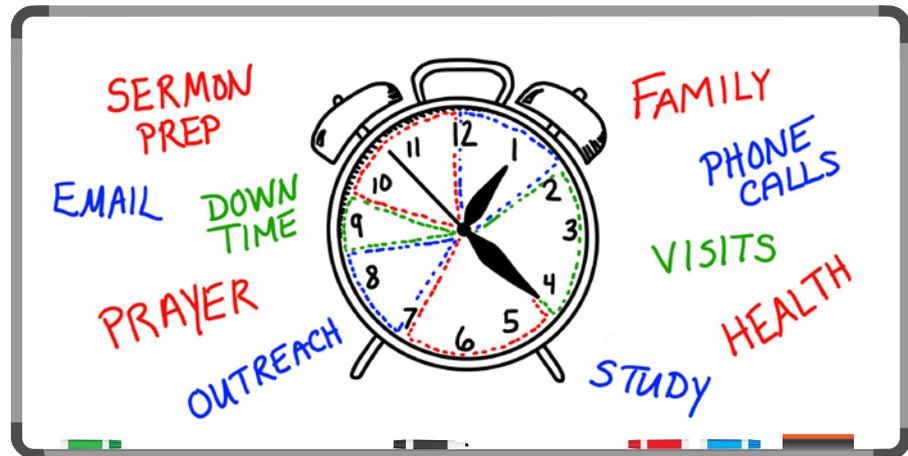
Multi-Tasking and Time Management, Part 2

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

The column in the previous issue contrasted the difference between multi-tasking and the single project focus. I heard long ago that you can ask someone doing ten things to add one more task easier than giving the task to someone doing only one thing. This is because adding one item to the individual doing ten things increases his or her load by only 10%. But for the person focused on only one thing, it doubles the workload.

I realize not all tasks are equal, but a person skilled in time management can juggle more. If you are the boss, pastor, or supervisor, your responsibility for multiple people and programs requires a proficiency in time management. The benefits include less stress, more free time (or capacity to do more), and more tasks accomplished. Allow me to share two time management helps:

- Control the distractions within your power.** While you cannot plan for an unforeseen crisis, you can stop allowing the non-urgent to take you from the urgent. The



biggest rabbit holes are email, general online activity, social media, and lack of structure. You lose time when you allow new email alerts to sidetrack you rather than checking email periodically. Likewise, social media takes you, by design, from one item to the next endlessly, counting on your curiosity. Monitor online time you spend. Most devices provide a weekly report. If you are easily distracted, create a structure to stay focused.

- Carve out undistracted multiple blocks of time for specific tasks.** Avoid “chasing rabbits” during those dedicated time slots. Understand these undistracted blocks cannot fill your entire workday because interruptions will happen. Consider rewriting your to-do list daily to prioritize what must be done

in that day. Don’t avoid larger tasks, as this delay tactic is a poor habit. Instead, remember you “eat the elephant one bite at a time.” Likewise, big projects are accomplished one task at a time. Consider tackling a big task first, followed by a couple of easy ones, and then another hard one. Your calendar and to-do list form the structure, but *you* provide the discipline. **ONE**

About the Columnist: Ron Hunter Jr., has a Ph.D. in leadership and is CEO of Randall House Publications.

RECOMMENDED BOOK

**Do More Better:
A Practical Guide
to Productivity**

By Tim Challies



LEADERSHIP QUOTE

“Be careful to make a good improvement of precious time.”

—David Brainerd

Could God Use You?

BY BRAD RANSOM

Church planting takes the effort of preachers, musicians, laymen, men, women, children, and ultimately and importantly, God. But could God use you? To some pastors, planting a brand-new church seems like a dream: no traditions to deal with, no “sacred cows,” no disgruntled members or deacons. What could be better than that? Well, before you request an application, let me give you some things to consider:

Church planting is extremely necessary in fulfilling the Great Commission. Statistically, new churches reach exponentially more people with the gospel than older churches. Several reasons for this include focus on outreach and evangelism, excitement, and pure survival. We need to reach as many people as possible with the gospel, and starting new churches is a great way to help fulfill this scriptural mandate. But some hard truths go along with the glitz and glamor of church planting.

CHURCH PLANTERS MUST BE CALLED BY GOD. This is the first and foremost truth. I often tell new church planters during their initial training, if you don't feel called of God to do this, then don't. Ministry can be extremely fulfilling and rewarding when there is a calling from God. The same ministry can be overwhelming and brutal if it relies on human strength and power.

CHURCH PLANTING IS HARD. One book's title sums it up accurately, *Church Planting Isn't for Wimps*. In reality, planting a new church is perhaps the most difficult assignment in ministry. It's not easy to build something self-sustaining out of nothing. It's hard to raise sufficient support, move away from family and friends, and be “in charge” of literally everything. The church planting family often serve as greeters, ushers, singers, preacher, janitors, set up crew, host, and the list goes on and on. There's little glamor, especially in the early days. Church planters raise financial support while building structure and systems, selling vision, and creating something that no one has ever seen before (in their context).

CHURCH PLANTING ISN'T FOR EVERYONE. Not every preacher can plant a church. The Bible makes it clear many unique gifts are given to believers. Not every preacher or pastor is gifted to be a church planter. Unique qualities are necessary to be successful in church planting. I will share



just a few, but please understand there are many more. Some of the most important characteristics of a church planter include:

- **SELF-STARTER.** A church planter must be self-motivated and a natural go-getter. Often, no one is there to tell you what to do today or to check to see if you finished your to-do list. If you don't motivate yourself, you probably won't get motivated.
- **GOOD ORGANIZER.** Since you're starting with nothing, a church planter must be able to dream big dreams and see them fulfilled. There are many steps between the two, and a church planter must figure out the path to seeing that dream fulfilled.
- **EVANGELIST.** If you don't already actively share your faith and lead people to Christ, you won't do well as a church planter. Becoming a church planter doesn't magically make you a soul winner, vision caster, and people person. After you dream the big dreams, a church planter must be able to communicate the vision to others, recruit people to help fulfill the vision, and then carry it out to completion.

- **VISION CASTER.** A church planter must be able to cast vision exceptionally well and make people see what can't yet been seen.
- **TAKE-CHARGE PERSON.** With so many responsibilities, a church planter needs to be able to take charge and lead with a servant's heart.

The Great Commission to “go and make disciples” is a heavy and dutiful command to every believer. Not everyone is called to plant a church, but many are. North American Ministries is always looking for those individuals. If you feel God calling you to plant a church, and you have the qualities mentioned above, why don't you reach out and give us a call? It may be that God does want to use you in church planting.

Can God use *you*? [ONE](#)

About the Writer: Dr. Brad Ransom is director of church planting and chief training officer for North American Ministries. Learn more about becoming a church planter: fwbnam.com/path.

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Cuba: Past, Present & Future

BY BORIS SARLABOUS | TRANSLATED BY STEVE LYTLE

It has been more than 100 years since the first missionaries from the United States entered Cuba. They established Protestant churches in a responsible and continuous way, influencing theological thought and establishing influence in other areas.

The triumph of the 1959 Revolution not only changed the course of the nation of Cuba politically speaking, but also affected the religious life of the nation. Churches founded primarily by North American missionaries, and led up until that time by those American missionaries, saw a massive withdrawal—some sooner than others—from Cuba. This left the religious reins of each denomination in the hands of the few Cuban pastors remaining. Of necessity, the extension of the Kingdom of God on the island was left in the hands of the Cuban community.

The Cuban church began to experience what, in my judgment, was a challenge to survive, extend, and think like the church. In an openly communist society, it was necessary to face two realities. Develop a genuine theology—one that defended the interests of the Kingdom of God and offered to men, whether poor or rich, the opportunity for the salvation wrought through Christ on the cross and available to everyone who believes in Him (according to John 3:16). Or, conversely, submit to a system antagonistic to the biblical way, sacrificing the interests of the Kingdom of God and putting in its place the interests of a socialist idol.

The post-revolutionary Cuban church faced major challenges. *This period was characterized by a growing acceptance of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, with no space for religion other than an empty worship, conditioned toward the development of socialism.*

★ The Free Will Baptist Church in Cuba

As with all Christian churches in Cuba, the Free Will Baptist church began through the missionary efforts of North American Christians. Thomas H. Willey dedicated a large part of his life and efforts to preaching the gospel, planting churches, and instituting the theological education of future Cuban Free Will Baptist pastors and missionaries. In 1942, the Cuban Free Will Baptist Convention was inscribed in the register of Cuban (religious) associations, and thus officially inaugurated.

In 18 years of labor, Brother Willey, along with several Cuban pastors, started some 50 churches in the western part of Cuba—from the province of Matanzas to Pinar del Río. This latter province had the largest number of Free Will Baptist churches. In 1945, the Cedars of Lebanon Theological Seminary opened its doors, and became the backbone for training pastors, missionaries, and leaders in the Cuban churches. By 1958, Free Will Baptists had 3,000 official church members.

The seminary closed temporarily in 1958 to prioritize repairs to deteriorating church buildings. However, the triumph of Cuba's communist revolution hindered the reopening of the seminary. It remained closed for 30 years—not reopening until 1988.

In 1960, circumstances in Cuba forced Mr. Willey to leave the country. His death a few years later prevented his return to the country and people he loved.

So it was, the Free Will Baptist church in Cuba was left in the hands of Cuban pastors. They suffered great difficulties, since the new government showed itself to be an enemy of the Christian faith and of the Church.

★ **The Present**

Thank God, in spite of all the difficulties, the Free Will Baptist church in Cuba has not abandoned its task and mission. In spite of the trials and restrictions imposed by the government at various times, today, *the Free Will Baptist church has lengthened its cords and strengthened its stakes, and has been able to plant new churches and missions in almost every province in the country, with the exception of Villa Clara and Guantanamo.*

The Cuban Free Will Baptist convention has:

- **60 churches**
- **56 missions**
- **63 pastors**
- **20 missionaries**

Approximately 5,000 people attend services on a weekly basis, including members and regular congregants.

The Cedars of Lebanon Seminary has a faculty of 18 full-time professors and 15 auxiliary professors. Eight groups of external students pursue associate's, bachelor's, and master's level degrees. In all, 282 seminary students gain insight into God's Word and growing His Church. In addition, the Cedars of Lebanon Seminary provides help to the FWB Bible Institute in Uruguay and the Panama FWB Seminary.

The Cuban Free Will Baptist church has sent a missionary couple to Uruguay, who work in the Free Will Baptist church in Montevideo (Malvin). Cuba also has sent a couple and a single missionary to Ivory Coast.

★ **Cuban Free Will Baptists Into the Future**

In the future, we plan to focus on planting new churches and missions, as well as continuing to send missionaries to other parts of the world. A couple is almost ready to go to Ecuador, lacking only sufficient funding.

We will continue to improve the work of the seminary by preparing professors through methodological and theological conferences, as well as promoting the recruitment of new students who sense the call to serve in any area of ministry.

We will strengthen the pastoral body in our churches. Courses in pastoral theology will be offered. We will endeavor to strengthen the work with each pastoral family, and assist in developing good personal and ministerial relationships.

★ **Importance of the WMO**

A fundamental element in the development of the Free Will Baptist Convention of Cuba has been, without doubt, the missionary offerings sent by IM, Inc. since the time of Thomas H. Willey. These offerings remain one of the primary financial supports for Cuba's Free Will Baptist work. The main uses of these offerings are purchasing houses for new mission works, providing financial support to pastors and missionaries, printing and distributing evangelistic material, and discipleship courses.

Another important use of WMO offerings has been the operation of the seminary. Much of the Cedars of Lebanon budget comes from the WMO. These funds help train teachers, feed students, print the necessary materials for classes, and promote the seminary.

Thank you for supporting the work in Cuba by giving to the World Missions Offering.

Cuba receives partnership funds from the WMO which strengthens their ability to proclaim the gospel both in Cuba and other countries, reach young people through camps and outreach, and train leaders. Your gift to the WMO extends the Kingdom in Cuba. ONE

About the Writer: Boris Sarlabous recently became the director of the seminary established by Pop Willey, Los Cedros de Libano Seminario in Pinar del Río, Cuba. In 2017, he expanded the ministry of the seminary by initiating extension classes on the eastern side of the island.

Snapshots Around the World



Japan: The Iriso Christ FWB Church in Tokyo, Japan, begun by Fred and Evelyn Hersey, celebrated its 50th anniversary in November. Pastor Ki-yoshi Kojima and his wife Miho lead this congregation.

Brazil: Three adults and a child were baptized Sunday, October 27, at Marincek FWB Church in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil.

Bulgaria: Jonathan and Amy Postlewaite secured a new meeting space in Pleven, Bulgaria, for services and other events. The space was dedicated November 24 with a good attendance. The crowd included several believers with no church home, one family from the village of Odarne, and at least seven not-yet-believers.

India: Carlisle Hanna reported many people were immersed in October and November.

Côte d'Ivoire: The Tiassalé congregation has a new roof on their building. Funds for the World Missions Offering provided the roofing after the congregation built the church.

Spain: THP workers in Southern Spain hosted a community Thanksgiving event on Wednesday, November 27. They fed many immigrant families.

France: Joel and Lydie Teague and David and Mimi Reeves hosted an English-speaking Thanksgiving party at their new church plant in La Haie Fouassière, France, on November 30. Forty-five people, most of them not-yet-believers, attended the outreach event.

Côte d'Ivoire: The women of Yopougon FWB Church in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, held a three-day retreat October 31 through November 2 to refresh, strengthen, and encourage believers.

Japan: A young lady was baptized at the Hope Alive church plant in the Tokorozawa area of Tokyo, Japan, December 1.

France: Jonathan and Michelle Chereau began a new children's ministry—English story time with activities—as a way to reach families in the community around the St. Sébastien church.

Japan: Mrs. Ouga, an elderly lady in the Abishiri church in Japan, hosts a monthly "Curry Club" in her home for neighbors. Nathan Snow conducts a Bible study during the time. One neighbor, a 93-year-old woman, has begun attending church as a result.



Kazakhstan: Kazakhs have a complete translation of the Bible in their heart language. IM played a small role in providing both the initial translation (2011) and this updated version. Some funding for this revision was provided through gifts to the World Missions Offering. Having Scripture in the language of the people means anyone has access to read it and understand.



Samburu: Eddy and Amanda Simmons returned to the States in December for a 10-month stateside assignment. In their absence, Jackson leads the ministry and disciples men. Frances and Leodip are leading four worship groups. Eunice continues discipling women and children.

Côte d'Ivoire: The Nassian Free Will Baptist congregation celebrated 50 years of faithful ministry in November 2019. The church, begun by Frank and Marie Cousineau, is pastored by Pastor Edmond Kouadja.

France: The St. Nazaire church hosted a Thanksgiving service and meal Sunday, December 1. Around 90 people, 15 more than the 75 they'd prayed for, stayed for the meal.

Profitable Year-End IM Board Meeting



Antioch, TN—The Board of IM, Inc. met in a year-end session December 11-12, 2019, in the Antioch, Tennessee, office.

Candidate shepherd Neil Gilliland brought five couples and two single adults to the board for interviews. “Praise the Lord,” IM Board Chairman Jeff Manning exulted. “He’s still calling people into His harvest, and humble servants are still answering that call.” Following interviews, the board:

- Appointed **David** (Kentucky) and **Myriam Reeves** (France) as career missionaries to France. David and Mimi recently completed their two-year internship and will continue working with the JPENSE team in France.
- Approved **Ken and Jayne Cash** (North Carolina) as two-year interns to Bulgaria.
- Approved **Adam and Carol Duncan** (Missouri) to work with our partner ministry, Jungle Kids for Christ in Ecuador. They will serve as short-term interns as a counselor and nurse, respectively.

- Approved **Walt Schorsack, Jr.** (Oklahoma) as a two-year intern to Japan.
- Approved **Sam and Lauren Riggs** (Tennessee) as two-year interns serving in Spain.
- Approved **Annabelle Ellis** (Tennessee) as a two-year intern to Tokyo, Japan.
- Approved **Joshua and Bethany** (Tennessee) as two-year interns with The Hanna Project in Spain.
- Extended **Victoria Little**’s internship status for one year. Victoria recently completed her internship in Kenya and will use the next year to assist IM’s mobilization department with College Missions Programs (CMP), developing discipleship programs, recruiting, and investing in the lives of college students interested in missions.

“I am truly thankful,” General Director Clint Morgan expressed, “for an amazing board that comprehends the urgency of the task and the necessity of sending out qualified missionaries.”

The board approved a budget of \$10.5 million for 2020 including operational ministries, IMpact projects, The Hanna Project trips and projects, and potential new candidates.

All board members (Jeff Manning, chairman, NC; Jeff Nichols, vice-chairman, TN; Mark Price, secretary, OH; Janice Banks, TX; Casey Cariker, OK; Will Harmon, AR; Cameron Lane, AR; Darren Walker, NC; and Rodney Yerby, AL) participated in the meeting. 

Deficit Missionary Accounts

Antioch, TN—As of November 30, 2019, only one missionary account remained in the red. Carlisle Hanna is the only IM missionary remaining in India. His account helps fund this extensive ministry.

India Ministry/Carlisle Hanna
-\$190,117.57

One veteran couple populates the dangerously low list:

Chris and Tori Sargent
\$12,920.52

Donations may be made via mail (IM, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002) or at iminc.org/give 



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In Their Own Words

Part 1

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS

What is the sum and substance of a man whose children call him preacher, teacher, poet, sailor, storyteller, tinkerer, dabbler, and Dad? For six hours last fall, we talked with Marilyn, David, Paul, and Jeff—Harrold David Harrison’s four children. Brother Harrold, at age 94, had recently died. He had spent more than 70 years in devoted love and service to his Lord, his family, and his denomination. Below are excerpts from those conversations:

EVANS: Your dad was born in 1925 in Henryetta, Oklahoma, one of 11 children in the middle of the Depression. What did he tell you about those early years?

PAUL: They bought chicken and ham bones to boil in water to make soup, or day-old bread for six cents a loaf. Sometimes, they got a few free groceries from the county.

DAVID: It was hard, but Dad was no complainer about that or anything else. He did tell us stories though, especially later in life.

PAUL: He said he wore threadbare shirts and pants, and the soles of his shoes wore out and broke loose. He’d cut off a piece of old bicycle inner tube and tie it on. Sometimes, the inner tube would break loose, too, and make a flapping noise on the sidewalk. Mr. McFall, his Methodist Sunday School teacher, heard Dad’s shoes making a racket one day, and said, “Harrold, go down to the store on Main Street and tell them to give you a pair of shoes and put it on my bill.” Dad said that every quiet step he took after that reminded him just how powerful kindness can be. Not much later, Mr. McFall died. Dad said, “I thought God had died.”

MARILYN: He never forgot what it was like to be poor and hungry. I live in Nashville and he did, too, so I was with him a lot. I’d open his refrigerator and start to throw something out because of its expiration date. He’d say, “We can use it!” He never wanted to be wasteful.

DAVID: He told me he walked 16 blocks to school until one of his teachers gave him a weekend job. He bought a used bicycle and rode after that. He paid the seller \$1 a week until he paid it off.

JEFF: He always loved bicycles. Long after



he retired, he would buy old ones, fix broken parts, oil the chain, spruce them up, and sell them. When he was 88, he fixed up an 18-speed to sell. But when he road-tested it, he



*Harrold & Lari Harrison
60th Wedding Anniversary*

took a tumble as he pulled back into his driveway. He was scraped up and bleeding, so he went to the after-hours clinic down the street. He told me that he witnessed to the nurse in the examining room. She prayed and accepted Christ right there and came to church the next Sunday. Dad told everybody, “When I walked into that clinic, this preacher needed a nurse, and the nurse needed a preacher.”

EVANS: At age 17, just before his senior year in high school and before he came to know the Lord, Harrold left Oklahoma for California. Why?

PAUL: I don’t remember that he ever said why, but I figure it was the promise of \$1.26 an hour at the West Coast shipyards. It was 1942. He went to Richmond, near San Francisco, where cargo ships were being built—Liberty ships they were called. He worked from midnight to seven at the shipyards and then hustled to class from eight to one to finish up his senior year in high school.

DAVID: I don’t know, but I’ve always thought he hitchhiked there. Maybe because that’s what I did in my rebellious days in the 1970s. But I never asked. He roomed with an older lady and her daughter. During Dad’s last years, we talked every day. He was in Nashville, of course, and I was in Michigan. I’d come home from teaching all day, slug down a cup of coffee, and dial his number.

Sometimes, we’d talk for an hour, especially about his earlier days. For a long time, he never told his Navy war

stories—too hard, too emotional. He said Leroy Forlines encouraged him to start. He and Johnny Carter, history professor at Welch College, were close. Johnny asked Dad to talk to his classes about his experiences in WWII. So, the stories began to come out.

PAUL: In 1943, right after he graduated from high school in Richmond, he was drafted and soon shipped out to Pearl Harbor aboard the *USS California*. A little later he was transferred to the *USS Maryland*.

DAVID: Amazingly, Dad had only two and a half weeks of basic training. His first job on the *Maryland* was six decks down—in the powder room. They locked him in, he said, and he handled 55-pound silk bags of gun powder pellets and cranked them through to the sailors loading the *Maryland’s* 16-inch guns.

PAUL: It took a lot of bags—five for each projectile they fired.

EVANS: The *Maryland* was a pretty famous ship, one of the seven battleships lined up in Battleship Row at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941. It received minor damage, but her sailors engaged all their antiaircraft batteries and also rescued a lot of sailors from the sinking *Oklahoma* moored alongside her. By 1943, when your dad was sent to Pearl Harbor, the *Maryland* was back in full action. From what your dad said, *Maryland’s* crew called her “Fighting Mary” for good reason.

PAUL: Yes, at Saipan in 1944, Dad was sleeping on deck with his sailor cap as a pillow when a torpedo ripped through the bow, blowing off 18 feet of it. Other times, they were struck by torpedoes or kamikazes and once had to abandon ship by a breeches buoy—like a saddled zipline to another battleship.

DAVID: Dad said there were 18 kamikaze attacks, and two were successful.

EVANS: Those two were at Okinawa and Leyte, weren’t they, where the *Maryland* was doing bombardment? Both times she went through quick repairs and right back into service.

PAUL: Dad told me he had a piece of one of those kamikazes at his house.

MARILYN: If he did, I didn't find it. Because I live in Nashville, I'm the one to go through things. It's emotional, like going through their lives. Mom and Dad never threw *anything* away: photos, papers, receipts, cancelled checks. But I found nothing that looked like a piece of a kamikaze.

DAVID: Dad said when he finally got out of the powder room, it was because he could type.

MARILYN: And he was good at it, even in later years. Fast and accurate!

DAVID: He typed logs and reports, four levels *above* deck on the bridge. Finally, not locked in six decks below.

EVANS: The *Maryland* was the flagship for the fleet at one point, wasn't it, so an admiral was on board.

DAVID: Yes, and Dad was typing for him at a table brought up from the kitchen when a kamikaze was sighted. The admiral said, "Harrison, we better crawl under your table." They did. That was one of the unsuccessful attacks. But he was on deck once when several died. That

was hard to talk about. He said he never forgot the smell of burning gas and flesh, and that they buried 31 at sea. Dad's brother Charles was on board the *Maryland* with him for a brief time. He was a marine, and his unit was preparing to launch a land assault on an island.

MARILYN: He talked about those war days in the Navy, but I think the hard Depression years and his travels all those years for Randall House shaped his life more than the war years did.

EVANS: Okay, then. Let's talk about those years.

(In the next edition of *ONE Magazine*, Harrold's children will recount his conversion, call to preach and teach, poetry, travels for Randall House, and his proposal of marriage to their mother Lari on their first date.) **ONE**

About the Writer: Bill and Brenda Evans live in Ashland, Kentucky. You may contact them at beejayevans@windstream.net.



Stewardship Legacy...

Laura Belle Barnard is (rightfully) remembered as the first missionary in the modern era. However, Ms. Barnard also was deeply concerned about stewardship. In 1956, she wrote: "Paul says 'present your bodies a living sacrifice.' That is the way we should give ourselves to God, devoted entirely to Him, to spend and be spent altogether at His disposal." Ms. Barnard modeled and promoted this principle throughout her lifetime. She once said, "Let us each stand face-to-face with ourselves and ask these searching questions: 'If all church members used their money just as I do, what would happen to the church? Would it prosper? Would the pastor be paid? Would it advance? Or, would the church have to disband, the missionaries return home, and the pastor suffer?' It is no more another member's duty to support the cause of Christ than it is my own."

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WRESTLING WITH

GOOD AND GRIEF

BY MARIE DRAKULIC

“Those who are wise will take all this to heart; they will see in our history the faithful love of the LORD”
(Psalm 107:43).

I have been angry at God. I have not wanted His will. And, I have been wrestling with Him for many years now. Through unexplained illness and unthinkable diagnosis, I fought the Lord. In the prodding of too many needles, bad test results, and needless suffering, I questioned

Him. I wondered where He was and what He was doing when the darkness lingered and grew unbearable. When I felt as though He was working against me or had abandoned me. I struggled to sing His promises. When nothing made sense and everything seemed wrong, I wrestled.

Sometimes, Christians grow uncomfortable with those wrestling with God. Maybe our own wrestling has left us doubting where we stand with the Lord. When questions are uttered that cannot be answered, too often we rush to a “pick-me-up.” “Let go and let God” or “He is working all things for good,” or any other cliché or often repeated Bible verse meant to bandage our wounds. It’s not that these things aren’t true. It is just that when taken out of context, or not spoken with compassion, they often aren’t helpful or even hurtful.

We love to quote the Apostle Paul. He offers so much insight and comfort. His words of praise echo in prison cells. And yet, we tend to gloss over his deep pain. In Second Corinthians 1, a few short verses after describing “the God of all comforts,” he says, “we were completely overwhelmed—beyond our strength—*so that* [one of my favorite phrases in all the Bible] we even despaired of life itself” (2 Corinthians 1:8). In chapter four of 2 Corinthians, Paul writes, “For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, *so that* [the phrase again] Jesus’ life may also be displayed in our mortal flesh” (2 Corinthians 4:11). Paul held both affliction and comfort in his hands. I’m not sure he ever talked of glory without including suffering. He surely wrestled.

Wrestling can be holy. For when we wrestle, we grab the Lord and refuse to let go. After Paul wrote about affliction and death, he proclaimed: “Therefore we do not give up” (2 Corinthians 4:16). Wrestling with God through our grief isn’t walking away from Him, it is drawing *closer* to Him. Read the book of Job. It is one of the most painfully beautiful stories of suffering in the Bible. In the face of unimaginable grief, after his wife gave up, Job wrestled.

In Genesis, we find story after story of brokenness and sorrow. Jacob wrestled with the Lord. Through the long night he held on, until the dawn finally broke through the darkness. He called the place where he wrestled *Peniel* meaning “face of God,” for he said, “I have seen God face to face” (Genesis 32:30). Jacob walked away with a limp, forever changed by his wrestling and pain.

I, too, am being changed. My wrestling is not over. Sometimes, grief is so engulfing, I don’t know how to survive another day. God can and has done good. He has brought beauty from ashes, and I believe His glory will continue to shine. Still, I would have written the story differently. Watching my son, my child, suffer and die will never be okay with me. Not here in this world! I do not understand the ways in which the Lord works. And, I wish He didn’t feel so far away sometimes. But even when I don’t understand, even when the lies scream louder than the truth, I still trust Him. I *choose* to trust Him. For God is *always* good. He has been and will continue to be faithful.

I never have been more grateful for the Word hidden in my heart, for the unshakeable relationship I have with my Heavenly Father. It is the very presence of God living in me that keeps me going when I want to quit. I could not grieve *and* hope without Him. He is not afraid of my mess. My anger and confusion do not shock Him. Although I am commanded to obey Him, He does not need me to agree with His ways. He is God, and I am not.

He is present in the darkness, even when I feel alone. God is near, and He is good. I will trust Him when I do not see, and I will stay when I want to run. Not because of anything good in me, but because *His steadfast love endures forever* and nothing in all of creation can ever separate me from His love (Lamentations 3:22; Romans 8:38-39).

*And all my life You have been faithful
And all my life You have been so, so good
With every breath that I am able
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God*

—“Goodness of God” by Bethel Music 

About the Writer: Marie Drakulic and her husband Tony are team members with Darryl Grimes, planting Flagship FWB Church in Erie, Pennsylvania. In 2019, Marie and Tony’s son Austin lost a lengthy battle with cancer. Continue to pray with the Drakulics and the Flagship Church as they adjust to life without Austin.

Sidocar Savings

BY JOHN BRUMMITT

What is the most important priority when setting up your finances? Budgeting, an emergency fund, debt reduction, and retirement savings usually top of the list. Since budgeting incorporates all of these things, it would be first and necessary to accomplish the others. After that, your priorities tend to get pushed to whatever causes the most stress. Beware, it may likely cause you to neglect the others.

Most Americans stress over debt more than anything else. Money is ranked as the top worry for most Americans, ranking higher than health, family, and work, according to BlackRock's Global Investor Pulse. Fifty-eight percent of people ages 18 to 34 say they are too focused on their current financial situation to save for the future. You simply can't dig out of a hole unless you tunnel an upward path back to the surface. Otherwise, you will be dig the hole deeper and deeper.

More than 57% of Americans have less than \$1,000 in savings that could be used in case of an emergency according to a Bankrate survey. When emergencies arise, the car breaks down, the water heater goes out, or someone takes an unexpected visit to the ER, the only option most Americans can turn to is debt.

What to do? Prioritize! Budget first, then focus on emergency funds and retirement savings, followed by debt reduction. This order works because it keeps you from adding additional debt and digging a deeper hole. Diverting money to an emergency fund and retirement savings before attacking debt seems counter productive. But, putting those foundational blocks in place gives you something to stand on to help you climb out of the financial hole.

In 2018, a bipartisan senate bill introduced the idea of "sidocar savings" accounts to

increase access to workplace savings while avoiding retirement account leakage. The bill has not passed the Senate, but since its announcement, some retirement programs have been implementing after-tax approaches to increase emergency savings.

The basic idea works as follows: you make after-tax contributions to your retirement account, upon which you can draw if an emergency



arises. This type of plan increases funds into your retirement account. Those funds add compounding interest to your retirement balance, while at the same time, participants are building emergency funds to be accessed in a pinch.

At the Board of Retirement, for example, participants can contribute after-tax dollars into their retirement accounts that will earn interest on a pre-tax basis. Since the after-tax contribution is accounted for separately than the earnings, an emergency withdrawal of contributions doesn't trigger a taxable event. And, the retirement account isn't completely wiped out, requiring the participant to rebuild the account entirely. Keeping participants from having to start "from scratch" gives them a step up to get back to the surface level again.

FIFTY-EIGHT PERCENT OF MILLENNIALS SAY THEY ARE TOO FOCUSED ON THEIR CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION TO SAVE FOR THEIR FUTURE.

Fifty-eight percent of millennials say they are too focused on their current financial situation to save for their future. Creating the ability to have a "two birds, one stone" scenario helps take some of the burdens off when setting up your financial plan. By using sidecar savings, you not only protect yourself from falling further into debt when emergencies arise but also build a bridge toward saving for the future.

With these foundational blocks in place, you can get out of your financial hole and get back on top. **ONE**

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



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Eternal Dividends

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

It is estimated 68% of the U.S. economy is consumer driven. That is, people purchase items consumed over a short period of time. Many of the items that make up this portion of the economy are one-time-use items. Even bigger ticket items such

as automobiles, computers, televisions, and furniture do not last a long time. Perhaps the only asset we buy that lasts a long time—even beyond our lifetimes—is a house. Pretty much everything else wears out and is replaced. This means we spend a great deal of money on things that are temporary.

Through advertising, we are often convinced if we just have a certain type of car, we will be happy. If not a car, perhaps the latest smart phone is what we need to make our lives complete. We have all spent money on things we thought would bring contentment or satisfaction, only to learn that none of the things of this world will satisfy our longing or bring real meaning to our lives.

Really, there is only one thing on which we can spend our money that gives us real satisfaction. That is what we give back to the Lord through gifts to ministry. Knowing the money we give is helping to educate students at Welch College and other Free Will Baptist schools to make a difference in the world brings real satisfaction. Supporting a missionary sharing the gospel with those who have never heard, whether here in America or on an international field, helps us feel we

are playing a part in the Great Commission. Giving to the local church to teach children and adults to follow Christ through Sunday School or Life Groups is another good investment. Knowing our gifts to the local church are used for outreach and the preaching of the gospel gives us satisfaction.

However, giving to the Lord does not have to stop when we die. Remembering ministries as a part of our estate settlement is a wonderful way to continue giving long after you have passed on to your eternal reward. We all should, at a minimum, leave a tithe of our estate to support God's Kingdom.

We find no greater satisfaction than to know, as you walk the streets of gold, that a portion of your gold is still be spreading the gospel here on earth. Free Will Baptist Foundation offers estate planning to help make this possible. Endowing a portion of your estate will make it possible to leave eternal dividends to continue the Lord's work till Jesus returns. **ONE**

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



Faith in Transition

BY COL TERRY AUSTIN (RET)



Transition affects us all. It causes change in our lives, our families' lives, and our friends' lives. Whether we leave a church, a job, move to another town or base, transition causes us to refocus and reevaluate how we live and serve each day.

I knew it was coming. Like Job of old when he proclaimed, "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me" (Job 3:25). After serving 36-plus years in the military, I hit the MRD (Mandatory Removal Date). That is when the military says it is time for you to take off the uniform and become a civilian.

My transition from military to civilian life is ongoing, and I suspect it will be for a long time. Some things will be decided quickly—like what I should wear, or what I should do today. But many decisions will have long-term impact on me and my family—where we will live or attend church, how we will serve in the community, and how we will serve our Lord.

These life-altering decisions are not limited to one particular phase of life; they are present throughout life. Yet, there are times when these decisions are more demanding, and maybe the stakes are higher. For example, I may want to make a change in my life, but it is not a good time for my spouse or children to make that change. So, I must recognize that now simply may not be the right time. Your desire can be completely right, just with wrong timing.

Throughout life, you will encounter transitions. Some transitions you *have* to do, and others you *choose* to do. Regardless of all the preparation and conversations with and advice from family and friends, we will still exercise our faith when we choose to do what we believe is the will of God for our lives.

Although I knew I was getting out of the military, I still was not quite ready for it. It took faith to make this transition and continued faith as I seek God's will in my future service to Him. Perhaps Ecclesiastes 3:1 says it best, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Just because we are Christians, we are not exempt from these uncertain phases of life. Just know it is coming and keep the faith. He will lead you...us...through. 

About the Writer: Colonel Terry Austin (RET) recently retired after more than 30 years in the U.S. Army. He is currently chaplain support officer for North American Ministries.

Celebrating 200 Years

BY KENNETH AKERS

As many of you already know, Master's Men began restoring the old Ridge Church in 2007. Since that time, we have painted the outside three times, replaced the roof, painted the inside, and reinforced the foundation. You may also be aware that First FWB Church of New Durham, New Hampshire, in 2019 deeded the church and property to North American Ministries to ensure the historic building will forever be part of the Free Will Baptist legacy.

Since the beginning of the restoration project, we have been patching the bell tower structure. While we were able to stop the water intrusion that had been occurring for decades, we were only able to put a band-aid on the damaged posts. Due to the sheer size of the beams and the extent of needed equipment, this was beyond our ability. At this point, we can no longer wait to do something. The structure is beginning to lean ever so slightly (pictured).

We have contracted a local construction company in New Hampshire to complete the restoration. The total cost for the repair is \$131,000. Thanks to a grant from Free Will Baptist Foundation, a gift from the Church Extension Loan Fund, along with several private gifts, we currently have \$68,000 toward this project. We must now raise the balance. The project is set to be finished May 2020, just in time for the bicentennial celebration of the building.

Construction on the church began in 1818 and was completed in 1819. Due to the need for repair of the bell tower, we chose to celebrate the bicentennial celebration in 2020. On June 20-21, 2020, we will join Pastor Jim Nason and the congregation of First FWB Church of New Durham for their homecoming celebration. More details will be forthcoming throughout the year, and Free Will Baptists across the denomination are invited to attend. Visit www.fwbmastersmen.org for more details. **ONE**

About the Writer: Kenneth Akers is director of Free Will Baptist Master's Men and CFO for North American Ministries. Visit www.fwbnam.com.



It's Hard to Be a Woman

A CANDID LOOK AT BIBLICAL COMPLEMENTARIANISM

BY CHRISTA THORNSBURY

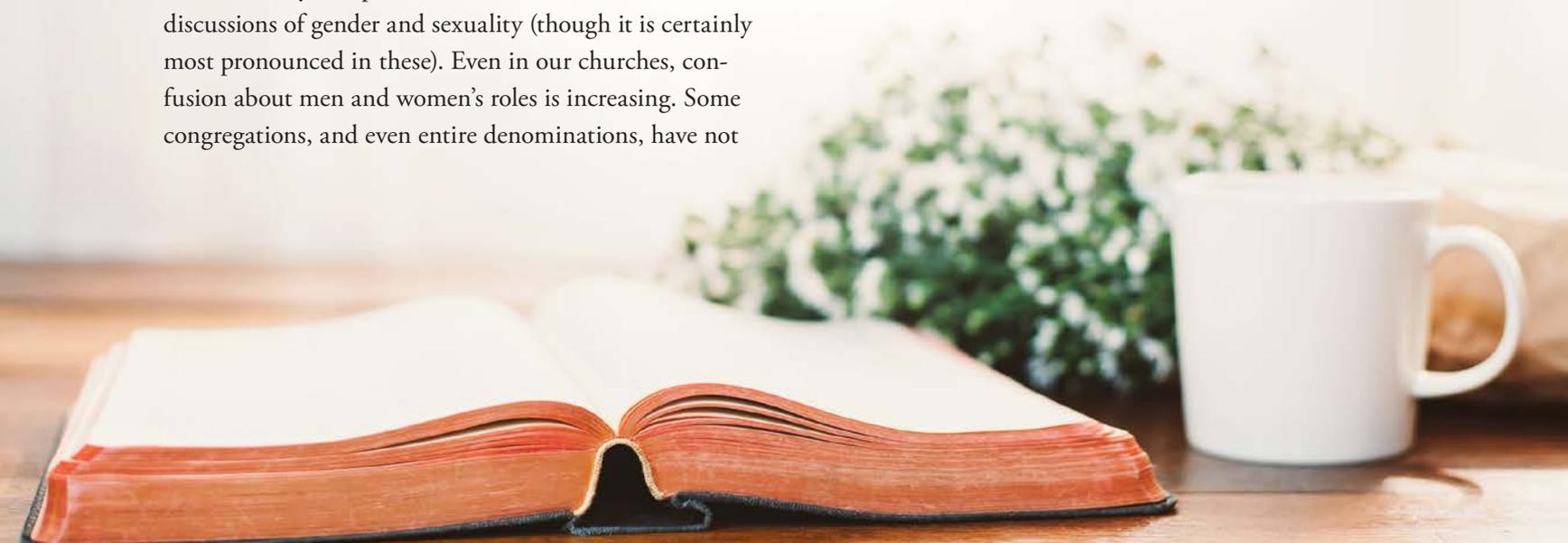
Such a simple statement as the title is probably as controversial as it is ambiguous. Does it mean it is hard to be a woman because men marginalize and oppress women? Does it mean it is hard to be a woman because of the constant possibility of sexual assault? Does it mean that, in order to have a fulfilling life, women must be successful career women, perfect mothers, and ideal wives all at the same time?

Being a woman in modern America is challenging indeed. The questions listed above are, in many ways, the wrong questions to ask, but they illustrate why being a woman in an increasingly post-Judeo-Christian world is so difficult. It's hard to be a woman because we don't even know what it actually *means* to be a woman. Our society has tried to create new definitions through several waves of feminism, each eroding traditional definitions of womanhood more and more.

This endless search for new knowledge has, paradoxically, left us with little knowledge of true womanhood. Unfortunately, the problem is not confined to secular discussions of gender and sexuality (though it is certainly most pronounced in these). Even in our churches, confusion about men and women's roles is increasing. Some congregations, and even entire denominations, have not

taken time to consider the implications of God's creating human beings as male and female after His image and according to His likeness. Others tend toward one of two extremes. On one hand, some adopt the egalitarian position there are virtually no differences between men and women, that gender roles are, at best, mere social constructs and, at worst, oppressive. On the other hand, some overemphasize male headship to the point that women are, consciously or not, regarded as slightly inferior.

Scripture offers us a much more compelling vision of manhood and womanhood than either of these ten-



dencies. In recent years, faithful expositors of God’s Word have fleshed out and defended a strong doctrine of biblical complementarianism. I would like to refer to this position as “small-‘f’” or “lower-case” feminism, which essentially means “woman-ism.”¹ By this term, I mean the Judeo-Christian position on gender roles as they ought to be understood according to Scripture. This position is much older than “capital-‘F’” or “uppercase” Feminism (which I will discuss below). Small-“f” feminism asserts women are not inferior to men, women ought to be educated, women have valuable contributions to make to society as women, but women assume different roles than men do. While this view stands in contrast to modern Feminism, it also stands in contrast to some older incorrect assumptions about a woman’s place in society. That is, small-“f” feminism is not a call to return to the age in which women could not vote or own property or fully participate in the public square. It is the view espoused by Jane Austen and Anne Bradstreet, women who gloried in God’s design for femininity and also made significant contributions to the English canon of great literature.²

1 I have stolen this term from Dr. Darrell Holley who used it in his literature courses at Welch College. When I spoke to him about this essay, he said he likely stole the term from Francis Schaeffer’s distinction between “upper-case” Truth and “lower-case” truth.

2 Space does not permit a fuller description of the works of Austen and Bradstreet; nevertheless, they ought to be mentioned in this conversation.

However, lest I be mistaken for a closet egalitarian, I use the term “biblical complementarianism” to describe the correct Christian understanding of women in society. Below are two basic concepts that must be grasped to adopt Scripture’s vision for women (and men).

BIBLICAL COMPLEMENTARIANISM RECOGNIZES THE ROLES OF WOMEN AND MEN ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE.

Modern Feminism has much to answer for, not the least of which is our society’s considerable confusion about the differences between men and women. What began as the incorrect belief women can do (or even *ought* to do) anything men can do has developed into the belief that women are inherently better than men. Increasingly, we see a societal push, with talk of so-called “toxic masculinity,” for example, to make men more like women.

While the egalitarian position within the church might not be as extreme as the modern Feminist view, it certainly would agree that women and men have no distinct roles, pointing to Paul’s words in Galatians 3:28, “there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” to defend their position. This is most clearly seen in egalitarian views on the family and women in ministry. Essentially, egalitarians contend either a man or a woman can be the leader of the home, or that the husband and wife can share leadership equally. In the church, women can serve in any and all leadership positions, even as pastor.

Perhaps the most significant problem with the egalitarian position, particularly in relation to the home, is that it encourages the worst tendencies in men and women. Women usurp leadership and greedily take charge while men abdicate the God-given responsibility to lead and fall into apathy.

Biblical complementarianism, on the other hand, asserts men and women each fill unique roles in God’s plan. Those who hold this view point to Paul’s teaching about marriage in Ephesians, which delineates clearly the roles of men and women. Men are to be servant-leaders of the home, while women are to submit to the husband’s leadership. This seemingly antiquated position brings us to a major misconception about biblical complementarianism that must be addressed.



BIBLICAL COMPLEMENTARIANISM DOES NOT CONTEND THAT MEN ARE BETTER THAN WOMEN.

Because the complementarian position takes seriously the idea of male headship, opponents assert the position devalues women and elevates men. Indeed, the current cultural mood assumes the inequality of role necessarily entails inequality of essence. In reality, this is simply not the case. In any office, for example, if everyone had the exact same working role, nothing could be accomplished. Different roles are required, and each role is absolutely needed.

So, too, are the roles God gives to men and to women. Both men and women are equal in worth and in dignity. Both are made in the image of God. Both will be held accountable for carrying out the roles God has assigned them, no matter their stations in life.

In the end, both men and women are called to submit to God's design. Yes, men are called to leadership, but this is a high calling and serious responsibility. And, it is not accompanied by the right to take advantage of women. On the contrary, men are called to love their wives as Christ loved the Church and laid down His life for her. This is certainly not a bullish attitude through which a man views his wife as an inferior! A husband who loves his wife in the way Paul prescribes will trust her and value her opinion, and yet will not demand total obeisance to his totalitarian rule.

The complementarian position does indeed assert that men can do things that women cannot do. On the other hand, it also contends women can do things that men cannot do! Both men and women are essential to the functioning of human society, and human society flourishes only when men and women assume the roles they are given. Mary Kassian and Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, founders of the True Woman Movement, often remind readers that men and women reflect God's glory in unique ways. And, together, they fully reflect God's image—puzzle pieces, each unique but each necessary to complete the puzzle. This image is compelling and beautiful, not oppressive or outdated.³

Biblical complementarianism is lived out beyond the marriage relationship, too. In Titus 2, Paul gives exten-

³ Kassian and Wolgemuth have two excellent studies on Biblical womanhood: *True Woman 101* and *True Woman 201*.

sive instruction for older women to teach younger women how to be godly women, and for older men to teach younger men how to be godly men. The character traits in this instruction overlap, but we find gender-specific traits emphasized by Paul. These apply to all people within the Body of Christ, whether they are married or not. As we practice this kind of discipleship within the Body of Christ, *together*, we reflect together the glory of God.

THE CONCLUSION (FOR NOW)

I realize I am not treading new ground in this article, but I hope this simple explanation of the biblical complementarian position for Free Will Baptists is helpful in our current cultural moment. So much more can be said and must be said about these issues. For the most part, Free Will Baptists have gravitated toward biblical gender roles. However, in an age increasingly hostile toward true womanhood and biblical complementarianism, Free Will Baptists need to be prepared to define more clearly our position and to correct unbiblical practices we may have adopted. Our young women face a culture that sends them conflicting and confusing messages about womanhood. If the beauty of God's plan has never been explained to them in a clear and compelling way, they are susceptible to unbiblical views that promise power and pleasure.

Furthermore, the watching world needs to see women and men live out the beauty of God's design. We can't very well contend for biblical positions on the sanctity of marriage or the meaning of being born male or female if we live as though gender roles don't matter. Worse, we risk presenting only a partial view of God's character if we only reflect a few of His traits. Finally, as with all of God's plans, following His design for manhood and womanhood is ultimately for our own good. His plan brings the most joy and fulfillment. Let us develop our doctrine, teach it well, and live it to the fullest. **ONE**

About the Writer: Christa Thornsby is the librarian at Welch College in Gallatin, Tennessee. She holds an MLIS from the University of Alabama (2016) and a BA in English and Biblical Studies from Welch College (2011). This article originally appeared in the Helwys Society Forum: TheHSF.com. Used by permission.



Welch College Announces \$10,000 Scholarships for Preachers

Beginning in 2020, Welch College will begin offering significant scholarship packages of \$10,000 per year for new students called to preaching ministries, according to Dr. Barry Raper, coordinator of ministry programs at Welch.

“At Welch, we are looking for new ways to engage young men sensing a divine call to preaching ministry in a local church context,” Raper said. “Often significant financial impediments prevent these students from immersing themselves in educational preparation for ministry. These scholarships are intended to identify high school students who have noted potential for leadership and service to the church and give them the resources they need to fulfill God’s calling.”

The scholarships—\$10,000 per year or \$40,000 toward a four year bachelor’s degree program—will be limited to new and transfer students, beginning in 2020, who are members in good standing of a Free Will Baptist church, and who intend to live on campus, major in Pastoral Ministry or Youth and Family Ministry, and move toward eventual ordination. Scholarship applications will require an essay on the student’s vocational ministry goals and a recommendation from an ordained Free Will Baptist minister.



“With demographic changes in our secularizing society, fewer young men are answering the call to gospel ministry,” said Welch president Matt Pinson. “Often those who answer the call to ministry attend lower-cost community colleges and eventually fail to fulfill their goal of ministry education, or they are dissuaded completely from a ministerial vocation.”

“Welch features a tremendous program of ministry preparation that receives high marks from students and recent graduates,” Pinson continued. “Our aim is to find creative ways to open up conversations with young men about ministry formation and how they can affordably

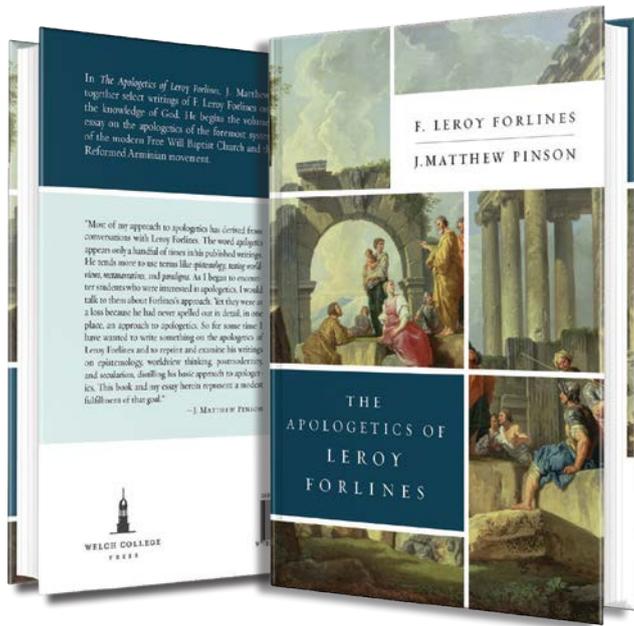
realize their dream of training for the ministry of the Word.”

“We’re renewing our efforts to reach out to pastors, youth pastors and leaders, and laypeople who can tell us about young men in their congregations who are gifted and qualified for ministry or sensing a divine call to preach,” Raper said. “We would love to hear from prospective students interested in more information about Welch and these new scholarships, or people interested in recommending a potential student.”

For more information, or to refer a prospective student, please contact enrollment services director Daniel Webster at dwebster@welch.edu. 



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Donald McGavran and the Church Growth Movement, *Part 2*

BY MATTHEW MCAFFEE AND BARRY RAPER

In the previous issue, *Intersect* highlighted *numerical accountability* as the first of three principles central to Donald McGavran, whose teachings gave rise to the modern church growth movement. In this column, we examine two other core principles, *receptivity* and *homogeneity*, and consider the theological fidelity of each.

Receptivity

The principle of receptivity was important to McGavran. The principle identified elements of the population more or most open to the gospel. For McGavran, the mandate for ascertaining the receptive population groups is a matter of stewardship: “We study receptivity not as an exercise in anthropology but for its application to the complex process of church growth. We want to be good stewards of the opportunities that God has given us for the extension of the Church.”¹ The missional imperative is to discern through analysis which segments of the population are more responsive to the gospel.²

This sociological principle becomes a hermeneutical one, analyzing early church narratives in the book of Acts through the lens of receptivity. In what historical/sociological settings were people most responsive to the gospel? Can these signs be observable in other contexts? Understanding receptivity afforded a unique opportunity to maximize the gospel’s effectiveness, according to Mc-

Gavran. He emphasized that “today’s paramount task, opportunity, and imperative is to multiply churches in the increasing numbers of receptive peoples of all six continents.”³

Again, the principle holds a degree of biblical warrant. For example, Jesus instructed His disciples to leave the unreceptive town and shake the dust from their feet as a testimony against it (Mark 5:11). Similar patterns also can be seen in Paul’s ministry (Acts 14:19-20). Yet, the gospel usually faces opposition. This is one of the major themes of the book of Acts: the gospel advanced *despite* opposition. An overemphasis on receptivity short circuits the confrontational nature of the gospel.

Homogeneity

Perhaps the hallmark principle associated with McGavran is *homogeneity*. McGavran observed, “people become Christian fastest when least change of race or clan is involved.”⁴ This sociological insight became known as the homogeneous unit principle, and it has been highly influential in church growth and missiology. In a later study, McGavran applied this principle more directly to the local church, noting people prefer to join churches whose members look, talk, and act like themselves.⁵

In the increasingly diverse North American context, this principle requires tens of thousands of new churches be planted. But according

to McGavran, without them, diverse groups “are not going to become members of these English-speaking congregations, no matter how much evangelizing we do.”⁶ Instead, McGavran envisions “new Arabic churches, new Mandarin-speaking Chinese churches, new churches to fit the hundred thousand Jamaican and Trinidadian blacks who have recently come to the United States, new churches to fit the tens of thousands of recent immigrants from Italy now found in most Canadian cities.”⁷ In other words, church planting must fall along ethnic, even socio-economic lines to be successful.

To be fair, McGavran was not necessarily stating the homogeneous principle is the way things *should* be, but rather acknowledging the way things are. This fits his overall concern for numerical growth and the maximization of the mandate to make disciples. The problem is that the New Testament never accepts the way things are, but pursues the way things ought to be. To state it differently, the gospel transforms societal norms by unifying ethnically and socio-economically distinct people into the single Body of Christ.

Each local congregation is a composite representation of the gospel’s ability to unify people. If we are not careful, the homogeneous unit principle may hinder our ability to follow Paul’s example of becoming “all things to all men” (1 Corinthians

9:22). It can overlook Paul's admonition for the Colossian church to put on a new self in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free men, but one in which Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:11).

Conclusions: We agree with McGavran that it is crucial to understand the complexities of the contexts into which we are called. And no one can deny North American evangelicalism has been greatly impacted by McGavran's work. Yet, perhaps the greatest aspect of his legacy is also one of its greatest downfalls. His noble desire to foster numerical church growth led to an overly pragmatic and methodologically driven view of ministry.

We are called to the proclamation of truth, not the promulgation of methods. It seems Paul's warning to the Corinthians against their desire for flowery rhetoric should caution us as

well: "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). After all, the gospel—not its methodological presentation—is the power of God for salvation to those who believe (Romans 1:16).

As David Wells puts it, "Gospel truth, biblically speaking, is not a formula, not simply a relationship, not just about spirituality. It is about the triune God acting in this world redemptively, in the course of time, in the fabric of history, and bringing all of this to its climax in Christ."⁸

This triune God has "broken into" our world with His plan for reconciling humanity to Himself, and this plan involves new creation. As new creatures, we are united in Christ as one new man and the dividing walls of our own homogeneity have been broken down (Ephesians 2:14-16). **ONE**

1 Wayne Weld and McGavran. *Principles of Church Growth*, 2d ed. (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1974), ch. 10, p. 11.

2 McGavran. *Understanding Church Growth*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Wagner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 40.

3 Ibid.

4 McGavran. *The Bridges of God* (New York: Friendship Press, 1955), 23.

5 Ibid. *Understanding Church Growth*.

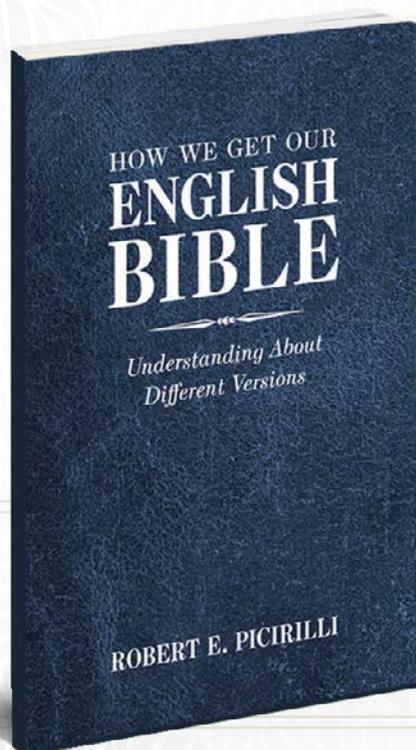
6 McGavran and George G. Hunter III. *Church Growth: Strategies That Work* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 111.

7 Ibid. 113.

8 David F. Wells, *The Courage to Be Protestant* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 52.

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

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



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need; _____ With - out You we can do noth - ing, Help us, we

viv - al a - new. _____ May the oil of bless - ing flow to -
earnest - ly plead. _____

day, Ho - ly Spi - rit, cleanse and re - new; _____ Pour out Your

power, fill us we pray, that we may glor - i - fy You. _____



reCALIBRATE

THE 2019 D6 CONFERENCE

BY ERIC K. THOMSEN

I knelt by the stage at the D6 conference, armed with a brand-spanking new Nikon™ camera, ready to capture images of the fabulous line-up of speakers. As the first speaker walked onstage, I pulled the camera up and looked through the viewfinder. To my dismay, I discovered everything was out of focus. While moving equipment, I had unintentionally returned the camera to factory settings. White balance, focus settings, shutter speed, exposure, and depth of field—all the things I had worked so hard to perfect no longer worked. Ruefully, I returned quietly to the rear of the auditorium and pulled out my Nikon settings manual. It was time to recalibrate.

Throughout the conference, it dawned on me that I had experienced the perfect illustration of this year's theme. Sometimes, in spite of hard work, good motives, passion for ministry, and a heart for discipleship, things just don't work as expected, and church leaders and parents find themselves "out of focus." With this in mind, attendees to the 2019 D6 Conference, September 26-28, in Orlando, Florida, were challenged to **Recalibrate** their ministry—to assess, correct, change, shift, and ultimately, advance into more effective discipleship.

In his welcome to attendees, conference director Ron Hunter reminded 1,345 listeners from 37 states and five countries that it was a moment of recalibration that provided the catalyst for the D6 Conference. In 2004, Randall House "dismantled" the traditional approach to Sunday School and created a line of family curriculum that put every age on the same page. In time, the innovative new approach to Sunday School expanded into the D6 conference, an event designed to bring church and family together, partnering to reach the next generation. Over three days, through 62 speakers and 77 intense sessions, conference attendees did just that.

Main Stage

Russell Moore, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention,

kicked off main stage sessions by urging listeners to carve out family discipleship rooted in the Word of God, and more specifically, in the cross of Christ. He pointed to the crucifixion story recorded in John 19:16-36. Even as the lifeblood of Jesus likely fell on his mother's face, the Savior affirmed and celebrated the family as he honored the law and His mother, making plans for her care.

His words identified family as more than just a biological relationship. When Jesus handed off Mary's care to John, He relied upon a spiritual brother, a brother in the faith. This spiritual family relationship expanded in Acts 2, with the coming of the Holy Spirit. And today, family ministry starts by teaching families to relate to one another in the faith. Moore reminded listeners of two important truths. First, while family is important and significant, family does not come first; God is first. And, because God is first, we can pour out His love on our families, even when it hurts.

Perennial funnyman and student pastor **Jon D. Forrest** combined his unique humor with a serious message. Using the story of Mary and Martha, He challenged parents and church leaders not to fall into the "Martha trap," doing good things but missing the *best* thing. Instead, Forrest urged them to follow Mary's example of pouring out her best on the feet of Jesus. Why did Jesus let her do it? Because He is worthy! No sacrifice is an offering too good for the Savior.

Using Philippians 2:12-13, **Philip Nation**, vice-president and Bible publisher for the Thomas Nelson division of Harper Collins Publishing, identified habits as the “default settings” for our lives, including our spiritual lives. Sometimes, these habits can become destructive. In those moments, we must recalibrate, replacing destructive behaviors with four new habits of discipleship: 1) growth; 2) worship; 3) submission; and 4) mission. This is how we build, positive, helpful, Kingdom discipleship.

Tuesday morning, former missionary, author, and speaker **Pam Tebow** (perhaps better known as the mom of sports megastar Tim Tebow, “Timmy” to her), told listeners that Deuteronomy 6 changed ministry for her and her husband. She emphasized the profound impact God’s Word has to transform children into God’s image and challenged attendees to pass faith to the next generation by following two principles: 1) love them unconditionally as God loves us unconditionally; and 2) teach them to love God’s Word because you love God’s Word. Families and churches must remind children that no matter what they do in life, they can impact the world around them. Children are “arrows in the hands of the Lord,” Pam concluded, “Aim those arrows in the right direction and let them fly.”

Christopher Yuan, an author, professor, and acclaimed speaker, joined his parents, Leon and Angela, to offer a message of hope for a generation struggling with sexual identity. The trio shared their powerful testimony of how God brought them to Himself out of brokenness as a family and in spite of Christopher’s drug use, drug dealing, and openly homosexual lifestyle. The Yuans traced God’s hand of grace through Christopher’s arrest, incarceration, and eventual HIV diagnosis. Yet, only a few days after receiving the overwhelming diagnosis, Christopher first discovered Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you...”

Christopher found the Lord in prison and began grappling with his addictions. While released from drug addiction quickly, his struggle with sexuality continued. He eventually found victory after acknowledging sexuality was not the core of his identity but Christ alone. He began a ministry in prison that continues today. “It’s the story of how God brought us all back together in Him,” Christopher concluded. He offered encouragement to parents with prodigals: “You are not the cure; you can’t change your child. You are not the cause, and it’s not your fault. You are not God. Your goal is not to produce godly children but to be godly parents.”

Dr. Ron Hunter Jr., the CEO of Randall House, and director of the D6 Conference, challenged listeners to recalibrate their mindset by turning challenging area of conversation into an effective bridge to discipleship. He offered a simple plan (T.A.L.K.) to start conversations with kids of any age: 1) Talk, or start the conversation; 2) Ask the right questions; 3) Listen carefully to answers; and 4) Give them Kudos for things they have done right.

Hunter followed with a second acronym (A.B.E.) to lead to meaningful conversation: consider the *Approach* to your conversation, connecting rather than correcting; remember the *Brain*, and teach them the why, not just the what. Finally, understand the *Emotion* that can easily drive the decisions children make. Relationships are built on meaningful conversation, he concluded, making it the foundation of our influence.

Evangelist, statistician, viral YouTuber, and podcaster **Jefferson Bethke** identified two ways the church is not preparing families for life—rhythm and story. He pointed to the biblical view of time, which promotes a rhythmic way of living, based on rest and fellowship with God *before* productivity. Creation itself sets the example he noted, starting with evening (rest), then morning (productivity). It continued on the seventh day, when God set aside a full day for rest and fellowship with Himself—Adam’s first, full day of life. Again, rest and fellowship with God before productivity.

Bethke shared the importance of identity and ritual in Judaism, centered around the daily family table. The result? A clear identity and 95% retention rate of children to Judaism. With this example in mind, Bethke urged leaders to equip families to center their homes around 1) the “discipleship table” through daily rituals and habits that shape faith through countless repetition; 2) weekly observance of Sabbath, not as a day to collapse but a day to pause, rejuvenate, and celebrate God and his faithfulness; 3) yearly celebrations and holidays that give families an opportunity to recall the story of what God has done in the life of their family. Over time, these identity-shaping rituals ground children in the faith, establish healthy rhythms of living, and prepare them to disciple their own children.

Kandi Gallaty, a Tennessee mom with two energetic sons, reminded listeners that if we live our lives well before our children, they will learn to live out their own faith well. She urged daily engagement with Scripture, journaling, and accountability with other believers as keys to growing

in faith as parents. Referencing 2 Timothy 3:14-17, and the faith Timothy learned from his mother and grandmother, Kandi urged parents to invest their faith in their kids from an early age. “If we want our children to come to us with problems as they get older,” Kristi concluded, “we must invest in them early.”

D6 Minis

On Friday afternoon, four back-to-back speakers shared brief, single-themed messages designed for maximum impact.

Jim Wideman, family ministry pioneer, asked, “What if the church and the home had another partner?” He identified those partners as grandparents and noted churches offer a great deal of training for parents but rarely offer discipleship training for grandparents.

Lissy Rienow, a 20-year-old college student and oldest of seven children, urged attendees to follow the advice of Malachi 4:5-6 and turn the hearts of children toward parents through training, encouraging, and equipping young people for life at home. She shared the results of interviews with teens across the country, which revealed that teens desire deeper heart relationships with parents and more leadership in the areas of faith and discipleship.

Michayla White, executive director of the International Network of Children’s Ministry, debunked the popular negative caricatures of millennials. Instead, she described her millennial generation as hard-working young adults, many with young families. They hold high-paying jobs and soon will be the majority in the American workforce. Using feedback from recent surveys, Michayla explained millennials are people of faith who want their children to have a relationship with Jesus. However, only 29.6% read the Bible every day. They want their children to follow Jesus, but they don’t understand discipleship and have no idea how to do it at home. They value relationships, clear communication, and leadership that values personal connection. They crave a real and authentic community.

With these characteristics in mind, Michayla identified three factors that determine millennial commitment to church: 1) good first impressions; 2) ethos, or hospitality and inclusion; and 3) disclosure and discipleship relationships. “Millennial parents of faith will commit to a church that commits itself wholeheartedly to their children,” Michayla concluded. “And a church that regularly renews itself toward children will grab the hearts of millennials.”

Jim Putnam, cofounder and senior pastor of Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho, offered advice to help pastors and church leaders meet the discipleship needs of rising generations. He urged personal discipleship in small groups fueled by loving relationships and resulting in a congregation that becomes a spiritual family. These relationships flow from house to house, drawing families together in Christ. “How do we change kids,” he concluded? “We disciple their parents!”

Beyond the Main Stage

D6 always brings much more than training sessions and main-stage speakers. During breaks, attendees explored a record number of exhibits filled with important Christian resources. They renewed friendships, swapped ideas, and prayed together over shared ministry challenges. They enjoyed powerful worship led by the D6 Band, under the direction of Michigan Free Will Baptist worship leader **Don Myers**.

Now-familiar conference emcees **Tommy Swindol** and **Jeff Wallace** kept the crowd engaged with high-energy banter, videos, and interviews with speakers and ministry leaders. Jon Forrest kept everyone on their toes with crowd breakers, games, and crazy prizes for the ride home. For a second year, comedian **Jonnie W** brought his razor-sharp wit and off-the-wall musical comedy for a truly unique humor experience.

This year, the D6 Conference also marked a milestone achievement—the release of a book on the conference theme. The book, aptly titled *Recalibrate*, shares ground-breaking ideas from 15 innovative family ministry leaders on subjects that will help churches reevaluate effectiveness.

As the memorable conference reached its conclusion, Tommy Swindol asked attendees to pause and ask God two questions: “God, what is one thing I need to change in my life or ministry?” and “What one area do I need to change to benefit my family?”

Recalibrate.

About the Writer: Eric K. Thomsen is managing editor of *ONE Magazine* and worship leader at Bethel FWB Church near Ashland City, Tennessee.

ReFresh

BY EDDIE MOODY

REFRESH

We all love refreshment, especially in the afternoon or on a long trip. Scripture says much about refreshing (Acts 3:19-21; Psalm 16: 8-4; Psalm 23:3; Romans 13:11; John 16:13). Today, many (if not all) of our churches need to be refreshed. You probably know the bleak statistics: 85% of Bible believing churches are declining or have plateaued. On average, we lose 46 Free Will Baptist churches each year. Many other churches are presently closing or on the verge of closing, and on average, we lose 2,200 Free Will Baptist church members a year. Other churches are not as healthy as they probably believe. Most churches are declining in membership from one year to the next. And, even growing churches are unlikely to be on pace with the growth in population of the United States.

For these reasons, North American Ministries and the Executive Office have launched **ReFresh**. We are combining church revitalization efforts to more effectively help congregations by providing resources and support for churches everywhere.

We believe we can do more together to meet the needs of our churches. In 2020, we will train 30 regional coaches to work with churches in their region that need extensive help. We also will provide audio and video podcasts with brief and practical information to encourage and help church leaders and laypeople. These podcasts are designed for listening on the way to a hospital visit or during a daily commute.

We additionally will provide resources church leaders can use to help their churches minister more effectively. We will continue to offer seminars and “boot camps.” Additionally, we are looking for states to partner with us to provide training and networking opportunities for

pastors and churches in their region. The training information also will be available online, so any church in any location can use it.

Join us in praying for the success of **ReFresh** and do what you can to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. 

About the Writer: Eddie Moody is executive secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Learn more about ReFresh: nafwb.org/refresh.

From the North American Ministries Director

I'm excited to be part of the new cooperative effort for church revitalization between the Executive Office and North American Ministries. This joint effort will help our pastors, churches, and church leaders in the areas of church growth, health, and revitalization. We are unpacking a comprehensive program called ReFresh. Under the umbrella of **ReFresh** you will find ReKindle, directed Dr. Danny Dwyer, as well as informational and inspirational podcasts on a variety of subjects. In addition, the *Fresh Wind* guidebook for church revitalization from Dr. Brad Ransom can be used by the pastor to lead his people through a revitalization program at their own pace. ReFresh also will provide assessments for the pastor his staff, and church leadership. These are exciting times for Free Will Baptists! I'm thrilled to have a “ringside seat” to watch what God will do in and through this joint effort.

—Dr. H. David Crowe

RHP Study Bible Update

Randall House is evaluating the possibility of publishing an Arminian Study Bible to assist pastors and teachers in their preparation of sermons and lessons. A significant number of Free Will Baptists responded to a recent survey, providing helpful information. Here is what we learned from the survey. Regarding printed versus digital/online tools, 91% use a printed study Bible, 8% use digital/online only, and 1% use neither. We asked about features referred to, and the top five (in this order) were study notes in

the margin or footer, introduction/background material leading into the 66 books of the Bible, cross reference material, timelines, and indexes to key themes, words, and characters. Further qualitative inquiries revealed that over 95% do not use their study Bible in the pulpit, but only for preparation. The key question asked if Randall House published an Arminian Study Bible, would respondents purchase one. Seventy-nine percent said yes with no qualifiers, and another 19% said

yes depending on price, features, scholarliness, and translation.

Randall House is seeking a license as translations cannot be published without permission. Pray for favor and guidance on the process. If Randall House proceeds to undertake such a large endeavor, the project will take two to four years. Thank you for taking the survey. Your time on any survey within Free Will Baptists is far more valuable than you know. It helps us know how best to serve you. **ONE**

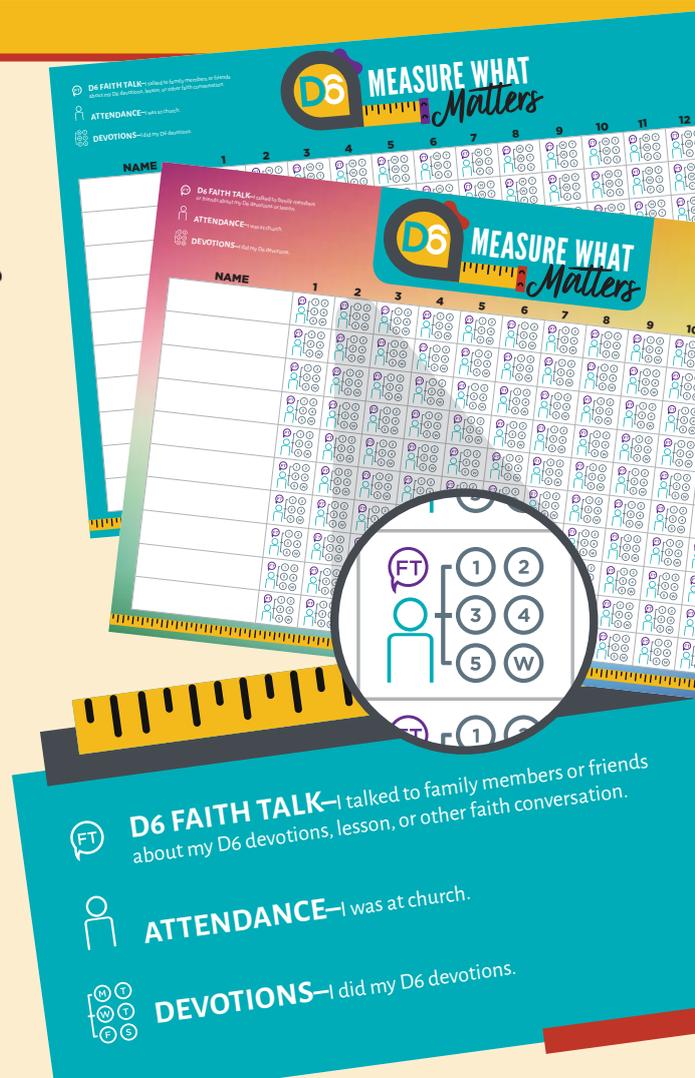


For years, churches have measured certain metrics that had little, if anything, to do with true discipleship. The Randall House *Measure What Matters* chart helps churches and small groups focus on encouraging behaviors that are intentional about discipleship. Attending Bible study—be it Sunday School or small groups—is important, but so is having a daily time with God and His Word and sharing with others what God is teaching us and how He is helping us grow.

That's the idea behind the new **Measure What Matters** chart included in every curriculum order.

Teachers can download extra copies at D6teacher.com. Parents can also download a version to track progress at home at D6home.com.

We hope this new tool can help you as you lead in making disciples!



-  **D6 FAITH TALK**—I talked to family members or friends about my D6 devotions, lesson, or other faith conversation.
-  **ATTENDANCE**—I was at church.
-  **DEVOTIONS**—I did my D6 devotions.

OVERCOME

EVIL WITH GOOD

2020 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION | JULY 19-22 | OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

Theme: Overcome Evil With Good

Romans 12:21 reminds us God has called all who follow Him not to be overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good. How? What has God called you to do? We all have different gifts, and we must use those gifts diligently and cheerfully. This year's convention theme calls us to action, turning our gifts and resources to God's work. With His help, we will see in our own families, churches, and community that good really does overcome evil!

Speakers & Services

Sunday School – Gary Curry (OK)

Sunday Morning – Melvin Moon (MO): *We Overcome Evil by Sowing Seed in Great Difficulty*

Sunday Afternoon – Washing of the Saints' Feet (3:00 p.m.)

Sunday Evening – Christian Powell (NC): *We Overcome Evil by Focusing on the Good Shepherd*; The Lord's Supper

Monday Evening – Keith Burden (OK): *We Overcome Evil by Working Together*

Tuesday Evening – Eddie Moody (TN): *We Overcome Evil by Being Good Stewards*

Wednesday Evening – John Weaver (OK): *We Overcome Evil by Reaching Out to All*

Around Town

July 19-22, thousands of Free Will Baptists will return to Oklahoma City for the 84th national convention. Attendees

will encounter many changes since the association last met in the city in 2010. Oklahoma City boasts a revitalized downtown with new restaurants, shopping, sports venues, and even boat rides on the city's unique canal system. Located at the crossroads of Interstates 35, 40, and 44 in the center of the state, Oklahoma City is easy to find and easier to navigate. "Stay tuned" for travel suggestions, housing information, and sightseeing highlights in the next issue.

Photo: A panorama of Oklahoma City's revitalized and expanding city center.



IMPACT OKC

Plans are coming together for IMPACT 2020, according to coordinator Ken Akers. On July 18, volunteers will complete painting and other light-duty renovations for a local church. Others will fill backpacks for students returning to school. Visit www.FWBMastersMen.org for more details.

Pre-Registration

2020 National Association of Free Will Baptists

NAFWB | V3 | OKLAHOMA CITY, OK | JULY 19-22

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

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

Voting Delegates

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- Ordained Minister
- Ordained Deacon
- State Delegate (Authorization Required)
- Local Church Delegate (Delegate Card Required)

Non-Voting

- Attendee (All Ages, Including Infants and Toddlers)

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Welch Alumni & Friends Luncheon..... Qty _____ x \$40 = _____
Wednesday, July 22, noon (\$50 onsite; no tickets will be sold between
pre-registration closing and convention; limited availability onsite)

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

Vertical Three 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 CTS competition or event
MUST pay \$25 V3 conference fee (\$35 onsite).

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

*Competitors must pay this V3 Conference Fee **in addition to**
CTS Competition Fees already paid.

College Age | Adults: \$20

Adults attending any competition or event MUST pay \$20 Conference Fee.
 V3 Adult Attendee

Tickets:

Student Ministry Luncheon.....Qty _____ x \$30 = _____
Monday, July 20, noon

V3 Event.....Qty _____ x \$13 = _____
(Featuring Jonnie W. | Joke Teller/Music Maker)
Tuesday, July 21, 9:00 pm (\$15 onsite/at the door)

V3 Information: 800-877-7030 | www.verticalthree.com

Register April 1- June 19 (postmarked) No Refunds After June 19

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

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

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Signature _____

RETURN TO:

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

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

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2019 Leadership Conference “Turns the Page”

Nashville, TN—More than 150 pastors, church leaders, and denominational leaders from 24 states, Canada, Spain, and West Africa gathered at Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel Monday and Tuesday, December 9-10, to explore the theme, “Turning the Page.”

On Monday evening, former Executive Secretary Keith Burden spoke from Joshua 3:1-6 and the moment when the nation of Israel “turned the page” into Joshua’s leadership following Moses’ death. He pointed out two important elements of leadership—perspective and priorities—before identifying three practical, biblical steps to turn the page: sanctify ourselves, step forward, and stand firm. “Free Will Baptists can no longer afford to live in the past,” Burden told listeners. “We must find the confidence and courage we need to step forward and realize our full potential.”

On Tuesday morning, Dr. Gordon Penfold presented three seminars to help struggling churches “turn the page” toward good health: *The State of the Church in America*, *Leading Change While Preventing Church Splits*, and *Vision Basics*. The director of Turnaround Pastor, an organization that encourages and equips struggling pastors, Dr. Penfold has served four churches and two interim pastorates over 37



years and recently stepped down as lead pastor of First Baptist Church, a multi-ethnic congregation in Holyoke, Colorado.

On Tuesday evening, Dr. Eddie Moody used the life of Hezekiah as an example, encouraging listeners to confront difficult times by working together to identify and seize the opportunities God gives us. “In these days when it may seem the denomination is facing impossible challenges,” Moody concluded, “it is important for us to remember we can do more together, to provide training and resources to equip our pastors and people, and to understand that Jesus Christ has promised to build His Church!”

In addition to excellent preaching and teaching, the two-day conference gave attendees time to renew

friendships during banquet-style meals and extended breaks. Welch College provided congregational and special music for evening services, featuring the 35-voice College Choir and the *Rejoice!* ministry team. Free time on Tuesday allowed for sight-seeing in Nashville and time for several national boards and committees to meet.

“As our denomination continues a transitional phase,” noted conference director Ryan Lewis, “we must be encouraged to remain unified, working together to equip strong pastors and churches that will push us forward in the work of the Kingdom. That is what the 2019 Leadership Conference was all about.”

For more information regarding the 2020 Leadership Conference, visit www.nafwb.org/leadership. 

Theological Symposium Meets at Welch College

Gallatin, TN—Free Will Baptists and friends gathered October 28-29, 2019, at Welch College for the Theological Symposium sponsored by the Commission for Theological Integrity. In his opening remarks, chairman Matthew Pinson explained, “Theology is a way to bring God’s account of reality to bear on all of life.” Pastors, teachers, and denominational leaders focused on the truth of Pinson’s statement in relation specifically to the symposium theme: *the church*. Presenters considered this topic from various perspectives, including biblical studies, cultural analysis, denominationalism, missiology, systematic theology, and more:

- Danny Dwyer, “Paul’s Address to the Ephesian Elders: The Ministry Ethos of the Apostle Paul as a Model for Pastoral Leadership.”
- Thomas L. Marberry, “The Eschatology of Luke”
- Jeffrey L. Cockrell, “Showing the Good God to Pagans: A Contextual Understanding of Paul’s Apologia in Acts 17”
- Edward E. Moody, Jr., “Denominations and Denominationalism: Is there a Future in a Changing Culture?”

- W. Jackson Watts, “Cultural Analysis and the Dynamics of Leading Change in the Church”
- Matthew Steven Bracey, “Conservatism and the Church”
- Robert E. Picirilli, “The Infinite, Immutable God, Creation, and the Real, Changing World”
- Christopher Talbot, “Toward a Confessional-Practical Theology”
- Ron Davis, “The Church as Embassy: An Ecclesiology for the Modern World”
- J. Matthew Pinson, “Do We Need to Keep Having Associations?”

Each presenter offered rich reflections on the roles of the pastor, the church, and believers.

The Commission is composed of Kevin Hester (secretary), Rodney Holloman, Thomas Marberry,

Matthew Pinson (chairman), and W. Jackson Watts. Regrettably, Mr. Holloman was unable to attend due to health challenges; the Commission encourages readers keep him in their prayers.

The Commission is grateful to all who attended the symposium or watched the livestream. Those who missed it may watch the presentations at the Commission’s Facebook page. In addition, those interested in the Symposium paper digest may order it by visiting <https://www.fwbtheology.com/shop>. The latest edition of *Integrity* is also now available through state promotional directors. The Commission has scheduled the next symposium for October 5-6, 2020, at Welch College. Email your ideas or questions about the Symposium or other Commission resources to fwbtheology@gmail.com. **ONE**



Why Better Together?

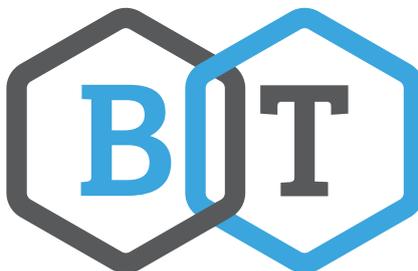
BY EDDIE MOODY

The Bible teaches us we are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God....built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

We are indebted to those who have gone before us, and we continue their ministry. God is working in and through us together. We are part of this "building fitly framed together growing in a holy temple of the Lord." We are being built *together* for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

In a 2019 survey, Free Will Baptist pastors indicated their number one request was more training and resources. (And many also noted they wanted it to be free!) Well, the *Better Together* column and podcast were born out of that request, with the conviction that we do everything well and to the glory of God.

These *Better Together* resources are not just for pastors. God has called all of us to follow Him, and *Better Together* will challenge you to answer His call upon your life wherever you find yourself. God wishes all of us to be involved in His ministry—at home, in the world, and in our local churches. Whatever your vocation, you are



BETTER TOGETHER

gifted by the Lord for His work, so let us be good stewards of those gifts. Let us come together to use those gifts with excellence.

The *Better Together Podcast* consists of short, practical interviews with people who share what they have learned by doing ministry. They speak "from the trenches" about what has—and what hasn't—worked for them. The podcasts are published weekly, and you can find them at www.nafwb.org as well as various social media outlets (Facebook and Twitter) or subscribe on iTunes. Podcasts often will be tied to a handout, this column, or some other resource for use in your ministry.

While much content will be for pastors and church leaders, any person interested in the work of the Lord will benefit from *Better Together*. For example, church leaders might be interested in

how to find, support, and keep a pastor. Pastors might be interested in how to assess, plan, and engage in activities to enhance your church. We will interview people of interest—missionaries, historical figures, professors, and church planters. *Better Together* has something for everyone. Listen, like, and share.

And that is where you come in. At a time when so much information is unhelpful and unhealthy, the *Better Together Podcast* is different. Subscribe and rate the podcast. Post and share podcasts you find interesting. Every little bit helps.

And, remember, we always can do far more together than we can apart. Let's come together and be *Better Together*.

Have a suggested topic or question? Email question@nafwb.org.

ONE



Eddie Moody

Executive Secretary,
National Association of
Free Will Baptists

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March 2020

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- Week 2 - Faithfully Share God's Message
- Week 3 - Patiently Trust God's Sovereignty
- Week 4 - Joyfully Hope in God's Promise
- Week 5 - Confidently Honor God's Word

April 2020

New Testament: Mark

The Risen King

- Week 1 - Suffering of Christ
- Week 2 - Resurrection of Christ
- Week 3 - Ascension of Christ
- Week 4 - Return of Christ



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