

A close-up photograph of a person's hands and arms resting on an open book. The person is wearing a light blue denim shirt. The book is open to a page with dense text, and a hand is visible pointing at the bottom of the page. The background is a wooden surface.

ONE LORD ONE VOICE ONE VISION

ONE magazine

Passing the
FAITH

**Through
Stormy Waters**

*Pitching Our Tents
Toward Discipleship*

**College Admission...
Ministry?**

Stirring Potential

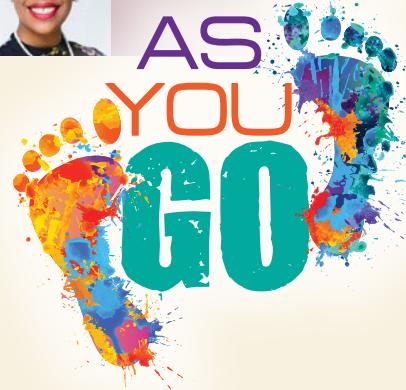
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The Gift

BY ERIC K. THOMSEN

"Eric, do you know what you want for Christmas this year?"

My answer came without hesitation: "Yes, ma'am! Let me show you."

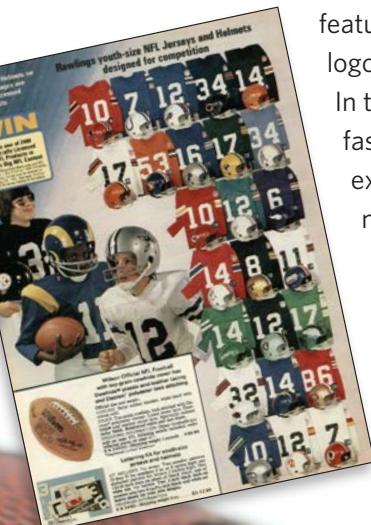
I darted off to the living room and returned with a well-worn Sears *Christmas Wish Book*. Flipping through the dog-eared pages, I found the one I wanted and laid it out before my aunt with a proud flourish.

"There...I want that!" I exclaimed, pointing to an "authentic, NFL-styled football uniform, complete with pants, pads, and helmet." The equipment splashed garishly across

the spread, prominently featuring professional logos and personalities.

In typical six-year-old fashion, I chattered excitedly about how much I loved football, and how great I would look in a Miami Dolphins uniform. Like a real pro.

Suddenly, in mid-sentence,
from the



corner of my eye, I glimpsed my mother's face. She had *that* look. The Mom look. You know the one: Cookie Monster's angry face, Carol Brady's raised eyebrow, and Superman's™ burning eye lasers, all wrapped up in one. The look carried one simple message: stop talking. Now!

I hushed. But I didn't understand. My aunt had asked a question. I answered truthfully. Where had I gone wrong? Hurt and confused, I slipped away to my bedroom for the rest of the Thanksgiving family gathering.

After everyone left, Mom found me sulking behind my latest *Hardy Boys* book. She quietly shared some simple facts that weren't so obvious to a six-year-old. As a single lady, my Aunt Janie was on a tight income, struggling to make ends meet, and without the means to buy extravagant gifts. She was also generous, to a fault. "And so, I didn't want her to feel obligated to buy that expensive uniform," Mom concluded with a sigh. "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, but you would have made her feel guilty over something she can't afford to buy right now."

I thought I understood. But, somehow, I felt even worse.

A few weeks later, when we visited my aunt's home on Christmas afternoon, she met me at the door with a perfectly wrapped present and an enormous smile. Nervous, I

glanced cautiously at my mom, and she nodded approval. I tore into the wrapping paper with enthusiasm and found, to my delight, a genuine leather Spalding football, official NFL size and weight. A treasure! Better than any old uniform. I threw my arms around Aunt Janie, thanked her, and pulled my dad outside to play catch until dinner.

I learned an important lesson that Christmas: the true worth of any gift is found in what it cost the giver, not the value of the gift. As strange as it sounds, that sacrificial gift from my aunt helps me understand the depth of meaning when I read "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). The ultimate Gift cost the Giver everything.

Today, that football holds a place of honor in my memory. And, though she passed many years ago, I will always be grateful to Aunt Janie for teaching me the true value of a gift.

ONE

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

On page three of the August-September 2020 issue of *ONE Magazine*, the United States flag is presented inappropriately. Whether presented horizontally or vertically, the field of white stars on the blue background (the union) should always be in the upper left-hand corner. Your image incorrectly presents the stars in the upper right-hand corner. As the only child of a career military father, this common mistake is, well, distressing.

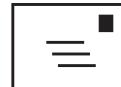
—Scott, via email

The article "The Ten Hats of a Pastor" by Dr. Gary McIntosh, in the August-

September issue aptly detailed the many roles pastors function in churches today. Pastors need to be on guard regarding where their energy is expended. Acts 6 is often cited about the origin of deacons. However, Acts 6:4, which says, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" says just as much about the priorities of the preacher. Learn to delegate, mentor the gifts in other brethren, concentrate on the message and prayer and everything will fall into place. In 47 years as a Free Will Baptist and 20 as a deacon, I have seen a lot of good

preacher pastors but many were not good administrators.

—Doug Spillman, Flatwoods, Kentucky



Have something to say? Say it!

Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are appreciated.

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Through STORMY WATERS

BY
TODD
PARRISH

It was September 1942, and the entire world was ablaze from the fires of another World War. In the islands of the South Pacific, 18-year-old American boys were storming the beaches of Guadalcanal; while in England, General Eisenhower huddled with generals to discuss plans to invade North Africa. Soon, college-age young men would begin the effort to free the African continent from Hitler's grip and start the long, northward march toward Berlin and liberation.

At the same time, in Nashville, Tennessee, a young preacher from Southern Illinois sat waiting on the steps of 3609 Richland Avenue. A brand-new Bible college was opening, and its new president was arriving from Georgia to oversee its beginning. Paul Ketteman would soon be joined by other students who, along with Rev. and Mrs. L.C. Johnson, would usher in the start of Free Will Baptist Bible College, now Welch College.

Starting a college in the middle of a world war was a

daunting task. The fact the college survived beyond the first semester of operation boggles the mind when one considers the sponsoring denomination was only seven years old, and the first class numbered only ten students. Hailing from small towns such as Beulahville, North Carolina; Glennville, Georgia; Macedonia, Illinois; and Monett, Missouri; these young men and women, along with a handful of dedicated faculty members, ushered in a school whose worldwide influence and gospel impact continues 78 years later.

What was the secret to their success? How did Welch College navigate that first year with a handful of students, limited resources, and a world in chaos? What lessons can we learn, given our own challenging circumstances during a worldwide pandemic, political unrest, limited opportunities to gather for church services, and college students' concern about the future? When considering the answers to these questions, three explanations come to mind.

THEY WERE CONFIDENT IN THEIR CALLING. Those first students were convinced Welch College was the place for them. These men and women came to college despite the possibility of being drafted into military service. One student, future missionary Dan Cronk from Michigan, left the college during the second semester to serve in the U. S. Army. The class minutes from March 4, 1943, read, "This class meeting was held in honor of Dan Cronk, who had been drafted into the army. We are sorry to lose one of our students but feel that the Lord will use Dan to spread His gospel in the armed services of our country." Even when losing a classmate sent to fight for our freedom, these students felt this provided another opportunity to serve the Lord.

That student who arrived before everyone else, Paul Kettelman, answered the call to ministry while still a teenage boy on his parents' Illinois farm. Reflecting on his father's testimony, Greg Kettelman remembered, "Dad came to Bible College knowing God had called him to preach. Even though a lot was going on in the world, Dad never doubted what God wanted him to do with his life, and that's why he was determined to be the first in his family to go to college, and a Bible college at that."

Other early accounts testify these first students were assured serving Christ was their chief duty in life, despite circumstances, world events, and overwhelming obstacles. Their confidence in what God had called them to do sustained them in those early days; and in doing so, the foundling college persevered through its infancy.

THEY CARED ABOUT THEIR COMPANIONS. Many large colleges and universities boast of thousands of students. Professors at these large institutions rarely take time to get acquainted with their students personally or to invest in their personal lives. During the war years, care and com-

passion for one another was evident on campus. "They were a family," Greg Kettelman recalled his father saying about the early days. Even though the handful of students came from various backgrounds, their love for each other and the faculty's concern for them was evident. The college existed in one building during those first years. According to Robert Picirilli, "one of the floors of Davidson Hall [the sole building owned by the college] was the Johnson family apartment [the president's family]; another floor served as the dormitory for the girls and two women staff members; the lower floor had the only classroom, the chapel, offices, and dining hall. The garage out back was the boys' dormitory."

The close quarters promoted the family atmosphere and fostered some good-hearted fun. Picirilli recounted the following story at the college's 25th anniversary celebration. "One evening, college president Dr. L.C. Johnson stopped by the garage-dormitory that housed the male students. Unknown to him, the young men had altered the supports in one of the bunks as 'payback' to a prankster-roommate. When it became evident Dr. Johnson was going to seat himself on the rigged bunk in order to visit the young men, Paul Kettelman immediately jumped up from his chair to offer it to the president, who humbly refused and said, 'No, thanks, I'll just sit here on the bed.'" Picirilli went on, "You can imagine the color of Dr. Johnson's face when he crawled up from the floor between the bedsteads. He mumbled something about having spoiled somebody's fun and left."

In spite of all the inconveniences of attending a fledgling college with limited facilities, these first students were focused on caring for each other in a fun and loving way.

THEY WERE COMMITTED TO THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Many who came that first year were the first in their families to attend college. During that era, preachers and those devoting themselves to vocational ministry were not encouraged to obtain a college degree. Recalling that first class, veteran Free Will Baptist pastor George C. Lee recalled, "I knew many of them personally, and what stood out to me was the fact that they were committed to the gospel. In that first class were future Free Will Baptist pastors and missionaries who would make a lasting impact for the Kingdom and the denomination."

When asked what motivated Paul Ketteman to attend an upstart Bible college while all his friends were being drafted into a wartime military, his son Greg recalled his dad's commitment to serve the Lord while in high school, before ever coming to Nashville and Welch College. His father knew the possibility of being called to go and serve in World War II, but he never wavered from the *higher call* on his life to serve as a *good soldier of Christ*. This commitment to the gospel motivated those first students to carry the gospel from the rural communities of America to the villages of North India.

Currently, we find ourselves in situations somewhat similar to those encountered by the first college students who began their education *within these halls* of Welch College. Trying to navigate the stress of furthering one's education during a worldwide pandemic bears some similarity to attending college in the midst of a world war. But these students who experienced their college years within the confines of that single building on Richland Avenue forever impacted the Kingdom. They came to Tennessee confident in their calling and the One who called. These student-pioneers, along with a handful of godly leaders,

truly cared for one another and forged relationships that would last for the rest of their lives. And, in spite of all the various tasks God called them to perform, they remained resolute that wherever Christ placed them, it would be a place of service, sacrifice, and sharing the gospel of Jesus with lost souls.

The things that enabled them to chart their course for Christ successfully are just as beneficial for us today. Being confident in our calling, caring for our companions, and staying committed to the Great Commission will allow us to sail through the stormy waters of this current time with the same success as those Welch men and women of '42. **ONE**

About the Writer: Todd Parrish is director of church relations at Welch College. Learn more about the history of Welch College in *Light and Truth: a 75-Year Anniversary Pictorial History of Welch College* by J. Matthew Pinson and Phillip Morgan: welch.edu/welchpress.



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DISCIPLESHIP:

TEACHING THE YOUNG TO ADULT

BY SARAH BRACEY

It was a beautiful, spring day. I was driving home from a friend's house when my car started to jerk and sputter, eventually rolling to a stop on the roadside. Sitting there, I did what I had always done when a car decided to give up on life: I called my dad. "Hey, Dad, it's me! Well, it's happened again. Do you think you can come down and look at my car?"

I had always leaned on my father when it came to car troubles. When I was first learning to drive, I had some real lemons, so getting stuck on the side of the road became a regular, frustrating occurrence. Fortunately, I was usually not too far from home when the clunker reached its final destination, and I could always count on my dad to come to my rescue.

This time, though, was different. I wasn't just down the road. Two months earlier, I had exerted some of my first-born independence and moved to Nashville (two states away). I was hoping to make a new start in my young, adult life.

On the phone, my dad let out a heavy sigh followed by a long pause. Then he finally handed me a bitter pill to swallow: "Not this time. Look, you're going to have to figure this one out on your own. It's time for you to learn how to take care of yourself."

My mind began to race. Take care of myself? How could he do this to me? Didn't he love me? The first of many tears began to sting my eyes as I yelled into the phone something incomprehensible before hanging up and slumping down into the gravel. I was on my own.

While I was incredibly hurt and angry at my dad, I slowly began to appreciate this life lesson over the following months and years. As young people, we desire independence, but on our terms. I wanted rescue when my independence got me into trouble. How alike we are to the Children of Israel.

GODLY DISCIPLESHIP

In the book of Exodus, the people of Israel groaned during their enslavement, and it reached the ears of God (Exodus 2:23). God had assured them of their escape, but they became convinced Moses led them to the wilderness to die once they turned to see Pharaoh's army pursuing

them (Exodus 14:10-12). Often, we as humans desire freedom, but we question our leaders and mentors when the pursuit of freedom brings hardship, believing our discipline is cruel punishment.

As children, we may think of discipline as simply the response to wrongdoing or punishment. We have a disadvantage because our view is limited. We are incapable of seeing how discipline is the loving, temporary act of a patient parent who sees beyond the immediate circumstances. Our mentors see much further down the road we are traveling and, therefore, can provide course corrections where needed.

Paul's discipleship of Timothy is one of the greatest examples in the New Testament for how to guide and teach the young in faith. Paul gave Timothy encouragement and showed his appreciation for his work (2 Timothy 1), but he also gave Timothy some difficult instructions to follow (Acts 16:3). Interestingly, we never see Timothy complain of Paul's treatment. Paul knew how to be a good mentor, but Timothy was also an excellent mentee.

OFFERING HELP RATHER THAN RESCUE

Being a disciple also means allowing our mentors into our lives and places of struggle. The day after my car broke down, I was sharing the story with my Sunday School class. The teacher, who had two grown daughters of his own, spoke with his wife, and the two of them agreed to help me. They offered to give me a ride to work in the mornings while I was waiting for my car to be repaired, provided I could find a way home (back when Uber and Lyft were not available).

While a part of me (pride) did not want to share my struggles with others, I admitted I could use a little help. Parents and mentors take a risk in their discipleship.

Eating solid food (1 Corinthians 3:1-2) may cause you to believe you no longer depend on the provider. Independence can be the illusion of self-reliance, the misconception we don't need others, which perpetuates the lie we don't need God.

Many of us fall into the cultural trap that adulthood is about self-reliance. This concept cannot be further from the truth for believers. Rather, we should desire and

depend on God's discipline. The author of Hebrews describes the discipline we receive from our earthly fathers, and we respect them for it (Hebrews 12:9). However, when God disciplines His children, He does so that we may share in His holiness, even if it seems painful and unpleasant. "But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11b).

I was very appreciative of my teachers' help in picking me up and driving me into Nashville every morning. While it was well within their means to pay for car repairs or a taxi, they gave their time each day to disciple me further. They *helped* rather than *rescued*. If they had paid for the repairs, I would not have learned anything, and I would not have learned the responsibility that comes with owning a car. I would have been dependent on another couple to rescue me during breakdowns. Had I refused the help, I would have missed out on the opportunity of their discipleship.

The only true rescue we ever need is from sin, and no one can rescue us except Jesus Christ. Spiritual maturity, through discipleship, teaches us just how lost and dependent we are without Christ. The tow truck and consequent repairs did not come cheap. I lived on peanut butter sandwiches and Ramen™ noodles for awhile, but that harsh lesson at 24 years old shaped me into the more responsible adult I am today.

God's discipleship through the mentors in our lives may hurt sometimes, but it is similar to the loving hand of a parent disciplining his or her child. While discipleship may include the discipline of my father, it also includes the help of the Sunday School couple: two forms of discipleship, both needed in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). **ONE**

About the Writer: Sarah Bracey is the Psychology Program Coordinator and Campus Counselor at Welch College. She earned her PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of the Cumberlands and is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Tennessee. She attends Sylvan Park Church in Nashville and lives in Mount Juliet with her husband, Matthew, and their cat, Puzzles.

Southeastern Free Will Baptist College Granted Accreditation

Wendell, NC—President Nate Ange and the Board of Directors are pleased to announce Southeastern Free Will Baptist College has been granted Accreditation Status by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS).

The college was granted Candidate Status in April 2017 and given five years to become accredited. Application for accreditation was filed this past spring, and on October 26, President Nate Ange, College Dean Danny Baer, and Academic Dean Marc Holloman appeared before the TRACS Commission to complete

the final stage of the process.

A great deal of effort has gone into this achievement. Key players include former president Jim Marcum; President Nate Ange; the accreditation team consisting of Dr. Danny Baer, Marc Holloman, and Dr. Russ Moots; College Administration Assistant Lynnette Gaynor; Librarian Catherine Pendley; and many other members of the faculty and staff. All worked long hours to make this dream a reality.



The college is grateful to God, and our prayer is that He continue to bless us so we may fulfill our mission of “training men and women for the work of the ministry,” and Southeastern graduates continue to boldly follow our motto, “to know Him and to make Him known.”

Learn more: sfwbc.edu. **ONE**

Randall House Director of Events Announces Resignation

Nashville, TN—Reverend Tim Owen will leave Randall House at the end of 2020. Tim served on the Randall House Board of Directors 14 years (six as chairman) and three years as director of events, overseeing the D6 Conference and Vertical Three—a ministry that encompasses Truth & Peace, YET, and CTS. Tim helped move the D6 Conference to Orlando, Florida, and expanded CTS. As a result of COVID-19, he navigated the first online Vertical Three Conference with on-demand services for all age groups, in addition to an online

exhibition featuring the hard work of CTS competitors.

When selected as director of events, Tim agreed to serve Randall House three to five years. Randall House benefited from three years of Tim's leadership before he felt called to return to pastoring. Tim described it this way: “I wish everyone could experience the Randall House team up close—day by week by month. Exceptional products do not just happen but are the result of extraordinary people. While being a team member has exceeded my

expectations, I have profoundly missed pastoring and look forward to this next chapter.”



The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the need for Randall House to seek regular monthly supporters. Moving forward, Randall House will be looking to combine development and events. Please pray as the organization seeks a talented servant-leader to join the team. **ONE**

Tim Owen



A Friend, a Brother, an Answer to Prayer

BY JOSH PROVOW

I love hearing stories about God's grace. I love those remarkable stories demonstrating how the Holy Spirit does this amazing thing by breaking into our lives and giving us the opportunity to say yes to His life-changing power. I hope you like those kinds of stories, too. I have one I want to share.



Our family moved to Shumen, Bulgaria, after a two-year internship in the town of Svishtov with missionaries Tim and Lydia Awtrey. Our hearts were shattered two short months before the move when our Bulgarian teammate Radostin Tsvetkov experienced a massive heart attack and died at the age of only 30 while playing basketball with some teenage boys in the community. "Radi" was the first person I had the privilege of discipling in Bulgaria. He was planning to move to Shumen as part of our church-planting team. We feel his loss to this day. But despite our grief, we moved to Shumen with high hopes of starting a church and making disciples. As with almost everything in church planting, things did not develop nearly as fast as I would have liked. We met many people and had opportunities to share our faith. Yet, we did not have the one thing every missionary yearns for: at least one dedicated believer who always shows up. If you had told me then what God would do to change that fact, I would have thought you crazy!

It all started one morning when my wife Lydia came out of the bedroom and told me she'd been talking with a lady from Nebraska via Messenger. The woman knew a teenage boy named Sevdi who desperately needed help. Sevdi had grown up in orphanages across Bulgaria. She and her husband adopted Sevdi's best friend from one of the orphanages. They wanted to adopt Sevdi as well, but he had turned 16 and was legally too old for adoption. After Sevdi turned 18, he had to leave the orphanage so his bed could be given to someone else. He found a job, but the employer kept promising a paycheck that never came. With the last of his money, he bought a bus ticket to a city about an hour and a half from Shumen. Unable to find work, he began to sleep in the bus station. With a dying phone battery, he reached out to one of the only people who might be able to help: the mother in Nebraska who adopted his best friend. This mother posted in a

Facebook group for people adopting from Bulgaria. Missionary Amy Postlewaite saw the message and responded. She told the woman she knew a family living in a city called Shumen, and maybe they could help.

When Lydia came out of the bedroom with tears in her eyes and shared Sevdi's story, I would love to say my Spirit-filled response was, "Let's get in the car!" Instead, to my shame, I said, "This isn't our problem. Churches in that city can help him. If he were in Shumen, it would be different."

Shortly after, I left to teach English to a group of programmers. When I returned home a few hours later, Lydia excitedly told me she had found a church in the city where Sevdi was staying. "Praise God!" I replied.

"And the pastor went to the bus station to find Sevdi."

"Praise God!" I said again.

"And the pastor bought him a bus ticket to Shumen."

"What?! Why would he do that?"

"You said if he were in Shumen, it would be a different story; so now, he's coming to Shumen! He should be on the bus by now."

And *that* is how we met Sevdi. After Sevdi enjoyed a good night's sleep and a hot shower, we asked him what he wanted to do. I told him, "We are new in this city and don't know many people. If you want to stay, we can try and help you figure it out. If you want to try starting over in a new city, we'll buy you a ticket."

He replied, "I am searching for a new life, and I think maybe I can find it in Shumen."

Those first weeks, so many things changed in Sevdi's life. He quickly found an apartment and a job working at a café near our home. With his outgoing personality, he made friends with such ease it was hard for me not to be jealous. One thing did not change, however: his firm belief that *if* God exists, He messed things up pretty badly.

Even though his heart was far from God, it was amazing watching Christ draw Sevdi to Himself. Sevdi regularly participated in our *Catan: Resources for Life* Bible studies*. When he came to our house for dinner, apologetics was a common theme of conversation. When our church met for the first time in April 2019, Sevdi was there. Even though he was not yet a believer, God granted our prayer to have a dependable person on whom we could rely.

With the passing months, we began to see the Holy Spirit lower Sevdi's wall of skepticism and replace it with hope that all this "Bible stuff" might be true. At this point, it was clear his coming to Christ was no longer a question of *if* but *when*.

One Sunday evening, our new church took communion together for the first time. Before inviting people to come forward and partake, I explained the Lord's Supper is only for followers of Christ. When Sevdi was the first one to stand up and come forward, my immediate thought was he misunderstood the purpose of the Lord's Supper. Later, I went to him privately, to ask him why he had taken communion. His simple reply: "Isn't it obvious? I decided to follow Jesus!"

A few months later, Sevdi followed the Lord's command to be baptized. Shortly thereafter, he began a six-month discipleship course involving weekly one-on-one meetings, an in-depth Bible study, and memorizing over 50 verses of Scripture. Since completing this formal discipleship process, he began preaching in our church. In addition, he helped launch our first Alpha Group** in the fall of 2019. During the winter, he helped us start a Bible study in the village of Vehtovo.

I don't know what the future holds for my dear friend Sevdi. Right now, he is prayerfully considering being part of the first group to begin a two-year internship program to train future leaders in the fledgling church-planting movement in Bulgaria. If he feels the Lord's leading in this direction, he will become Shumen's first participant in the Radostin Tsvetkov Internship Program.

**He replied,
"I am
searching
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life, and I
think maybe
I can find it
in Shumen."**

In a year where almost every aspect of life and ministry has been topsy-turvy, it is comforting for me to look back and remind myself of the amazing thing God did in bringing Sevdi to us and to Himself. If anything, my role in this story is a fleshing out of 2 Corinthians 12:9 where Paul spoke of his thorn in the flesh and said the Lord's strength was made perfect in his weakness. Scholars debate what Paul's thorn was, but mine is hardheartedness. Even though I did my best to make sure Sevdi never came to Shumen, God gave us a friend and a brother and an answer to our most earnest prayer.

If I could offer you some encouragement, please be a "Lydia" and not a "Josh." As you go about your day, may your eyes and heart be open, actively seeking those people to whom God can show His love through you. Take a risk and invite someone over for dinner. Let them taste the love of God and the family of God in your home. Share the reason for the hope that lies within you.

While Sevdi went through an official discipleship course, the bulk of "discipling" happens around the dinner table, on a long walk, while playing a board game, or when grieving over the death of a loved one. Pouring your life into someone can be incredibly risky: they will see the cobwebs and warts you hide from everyone else. But, if you will be faithful to Christ's command to go and make disciples by teaching them all the things He has commanded, you may well discover God has a Sevdi for your family and your church. **ONE**

**Catan: Resources for Life* weekly gatherings allow participants to bond while playing a strategy board game followed by a Bible study. The original format, an eight-lesson series written by Josh Provow and Jonathan Postlewaite, looked for connections between in-game concepts and the life of Christ. Once the group finished the introductory course, they proceeded to studies on other topics.

**Alpha Course is a 16-lesson crash course in Christian doctrine, the history and rationality of the Christian faith, importance of being involved in a local church, understanding the role of the Holy Spirit, and sharing the gospel with others.

About the Writer: Josh Provow, his wife Lydia, and their five children are planting a church in Shumen, Bulgaria. Learn more about their work by visiting iminc.org/missionaries.



No Program, No Process— *Just Discipleship*

BY JOSH BENNETT

In today's church culture, we often think about discipleship as a program or a process churches can move people through to achieve discipleship. However, discipleship is so much more. It is a journey—a personal journey of becoming more like Christ. My discipleship story began in eighth grade, with a boy named B.J. Singletary. B.J., a dedicated Christian, made it his goal to share the gospel relentlessly with his classmates. I was one of those classmates. Every day, in some way or another, B.J. would share the gospel with my friends and me.

On January 22, 1997, I gave my life to Jesus. B.J. was not there that night, but he had more impact on my decision to follow Christ than any other person in my life. He was also the first person I told about my commitment. It was in those early days as a new believer B.J. taught me the importance of church attendance, how to read the Bible, have a quiet time, and so much more. No program, no process—just one friend showing another how to follow Jesus.

A few years later, I was attending a church in Lakeland, Georgia. The pastor came to me and asked me to attend a leadership conference. I was surprised he would even consider taking a teenager to a John Maxwell conference, but it was another step in my discipleship. Austin, that pastor, began to show me what leadership in the Body of Christ should look like. I will never forget how his actions taught me the most important principle: *humility*. A servant leader must be defined by humility. No program, no process—just a faithful pastor showing a teenager how to follow Jesus.

A short time later, I met Jeff Goodman. Jeff became a pastor in my hometown, and I visited Homerville Free Will Baptist Church. During our first conversation, I

asked Jeff for a *Treatise*. In full disclosure, I had no idea what that was, or what it was called, but I was looking for a church that matched my belief system. Jeff soon became a friend, a mentor, a pastor, and a youth pastor, all rolled into one. He discipled me in every way.

Over the next 18 years, Jeff taught me the Scriptures, how to follow Jesus even more deeply, how to pastor, how to plant a church, how to love God, and how to love people. Some days, discipleship looked like a Bible study. Other days, it looked like a Sonoran-style hotdog and two friends laughing a lot. No program or process—just one friend pouring his life into another to teach him everything he knew about loving God and loving people.

Sure, I think discipleship programs can be helpful. In fact, our church is currently looking into discipleship groups for our church. However, discipleship is so much more. It's about relationships. It's about time. It's about love. It takes place in churches, Sunday School rooms, cars, living rooms, woods, ball fields, and boats. Discipleship occurs *anywhere* a believer in Jesus takes the time and energy to pour into another believer. Nothing fancy! No program or process—just effective discipleship.

Who are you discipling today? **ONE**



About the Writer: Josh Bennett is lead church planter at Awaken FWB Church in Tifton, Georgia. Learn more: awakenyourfaith.church.



Is Your Church Netflix or Blockbuster?

By Ron Hunter

Disclaimer: The following article was written prior to the ongoing Netflix controversy. I acknowledge Netflix's misstep into extreme depravity with the release of the movie Cuties. However, the principles of the article still hold true, and we can learn from the two different mindsets of adaptive leadership.

When your kids interrupt a conversation, you teach them about patience and manners. Culture, on the other hand, displays little restraint in disrupting our norms. Disruptions produce changes in our culture. Seemingly overnight, a disruption changes habits and makes previous items of value nearly useless.

A classic example is the invention of the iPhone. Can you count how many devices the iPhone replaced? Other notable disruptors include Redbox, Netflix, and Uber. History offers countless examples of disrupting events that shape how we think and act today: the Protestant Reformation, Gutenberg Press, Internet, 9/11, and yes, for sure, coronavirus.

Each of these events, almost overnight, changed people, policies, and practices. Although you may dislike and avoid such changes, recall how much you loved rewinding your VHS tapes before driving back to Blockbuster to pay your late fees. Try as you may to avoid it, some disruption sweeps through, and you must find ways to keep sound principles alive even when methods change. It is said a crisis is an accelerant that speeds up negative trends or exposes structural cracks. We can see how accelerating trends have affected our churches. You can't control people's behavior, but you can help them think differently about how to respond.

Netflix changed how people view videos and television. It's important to remember disruption changes habits, but not the actual practice. People still watch movies, but they access that content differently. What does that mean to our changing church landscape?

If a large number of parents feel apprehensive about sending their kids back to school and opt for homeschooling or remote learning, those same decisions affect the church's ability to disciple families. Providing the Sunday adult worship service online is not enough for the family's other generations. Zoom LifeGroups peaked the first four weeks and fell off as fatigue and frustration set in.

Which do you want to be: Netflix or Blockbuster? Look around. Do you see any Blockbuster stores? The command to make disciples of all ages remains in effect, even during a pandemic. So how do you adopt a Netflix approach to discipleship?

1. The pandemic has caused many not to venture out to church for discipleship and worship. For many years,

we have emphasized the *building* isn't the church, *people* are the church.

2. The family is the original small group. Equip them to disciple within the safety and community of their homes. D6 At-Home Bundles provide everyday discipleship, a lesson Mom or Dad can teach to their family. The best way to learn is by teaching. At-Home Bundles make it fun and easy to disciple the family at any age.
3. Encourage and engage with other families by modeling this with your own family. Every age will be reading daily devotional books—part of the D6 At-Home Bundle—learning together. Conversations flow from individual reading, making the weekly lesson taught by Dad or Mom an interactive experience. No more Zoom meetings for adults only.

Blockbuster had a chance to buy Netflix. No one wants to be the CEO of an organization that stared opportunity in the face, only to let it slide by because habits mattered more than principles. It's time to accelerate your disciple-

ship experience with D6 At-Home Bundles. Bundles include an age-appropriate devotional magazine for daily use and one teaching guide with a weekly Bible lesson.

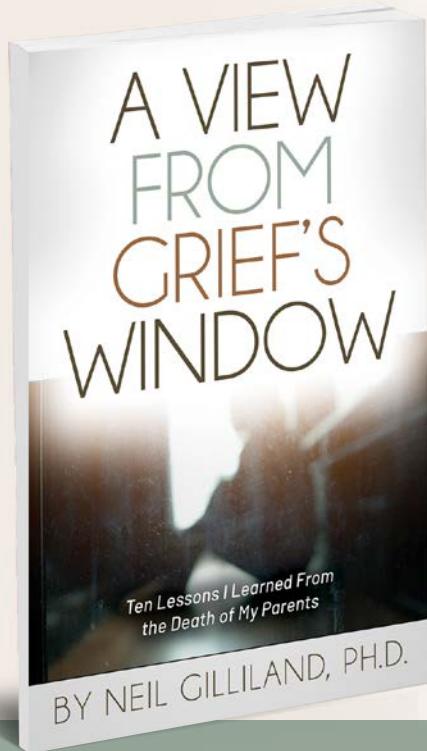
We recommend each family select a teaching guide closer to the age of the youngest or two youngest kids. Have fun with the materials as you engage the whole family in your new small-group experience. See what can erupt from this current disruption. Your families will never be the same. **ONE**



About the Writer: Ron Hunter Jr., Ph.D., has been director/CEO of Randall House since 2003. Learn more about D6 EveryDay curriculum: D6Family.com.

A VIEW FROM GRIEF'S WINDOW

Ten Lessons I Learned From the Death of My Parents
by Neil Gilliland, Ph.D.



Grief is real, painful, and often doesn't make sense. Although grief can take us by surprise, it can also help us focus on things that matter most, refining our perspective on life, death, and our worldview. In spite of the overwhelming darkness one may face in grief, the follower of Christ can maintain hope.

A View From Grief's Window offers a first-hand perspective on grief that offers encouragement, hope, and wise counsel from a trained counselor both practical and theologically-sound. Well-written stories communicate universal experiences.

Author **Neil Gilliland** studied Bible and Missions at Welch College and earned a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Tennessee State University. Neil and his wife of 42 years, Sheila, served as missionaries in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, as dorm parents at a boarding school for missionary children. Neil currently serves as the director of member care at IM, Inc. He and Sheila have one married daughter, and a seven-year-old grandson.

To order, visit store.randallhouse.com or call **800-877-7030**



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS... MINISTRY?

BY DANIEL WEBSTER

Many Christians have created an unnecessary and even dangerous separation between the spiritual and the secular. Perhaps nowhere is this more prevalent than in the area of vocation. Whether it be engineering, business, the arts, journalism, social services, education, politics, technology, farming, medicine, or sales, every believer should see vocation as an opportunity to minister for Christ. Some vocations make ministry outlets more obvious, and I admit, serving at a denomination's Christian college provides more opportunities for ministry. But in my department—admissions and enrollment—the opportunities are not as obvious as they might be for theology and ministry professors.

I'm a pastor. God has called me to serve the church through preaching and teaching, leading singing, discipling, and evangelizing. So, prior to accepting the position of director of enrollment at Welch College, I asked President Pinson this question: *how can college admissions be an outlet for ministry and more specifically, for pastoral ministry?* Not only was he supportive of my asking this question, he encouraged me to see my new role as an outlet to continue my pastoral ministry. Here are five outlets for ministry unique to Christian college admissions.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCIPLESHIP

The enrollment and admissions team at Welch College has the opportunity to be face-to-face with high school students consistently. This is the kind of opportunity many youth pastors would *love* to have! Many times, these students are nervous about God's will for their lives; they wonder if God will provide for their future needs; they are unsure about what degree to pursue. Tasked with counseling students through the enrollment process, we seize the opportunity to have more of an impact.



We disciple them by proclaiming truth into their lives. It is not unusual for my team to pray with and for potential students while they make college decisions. Sometimes they end up at Welch, and sometimes they don't—that's okay. It brings us joy to know we are playing a part in the Kingdom.

I also have the unique opportunity to continue discipling students after they start classes at Welch. I have advised students on a variety of topics—stewardship of finances and time, ministry, entertainment choices, personal habits, marriage, dating, and more. These opportunities come about, not only as a result of the classes I teach at Welch, but also because of their familiarity with me due to the recruiting process.

FAMILY COUNSELING

Students are not the only ones who need discipleship and direction. Parents often make college decisions for their children with a “mixed bag” of values. I remind parents a successful career and making money are not bad things, but they should not be the main goal for any believer. I also remind parents attending a community college may be cheaper but paying a little more for Welch is worth the investment, because college is where many students meet their future spouses. Attending a state university may be closer to home, but the professors at Welch will not only provide a great education but do so through the lens of Scripture.

DENOMINATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

My department also has the pleasure of participating with youth events led by Randall House and IM, Inc. We look forward to serving alongside the leaders of E-TEAM, YET, and Truth & Peace, and ministering to students directly and through acts of service during these events. These events are the highlight of our summers.

Each member of my team and our student reps were devastated when events this past summer were canceled in light of coronavirus, though, obviously, we understand this was the right decision. Furthermore, Welch makes \$250,000 available to the participants of E-TEAM, YET, and Truth & Peace every summer. That's a quarter million dollars in potential scholarship money for these students if they choose Welch College!

SERVICE-FOCUSED RECRUITING

Each summer, my department trains and sends out more than 20 student representatives to attend 30-plus camps/conferences in at least 16 states. Each student rep has been CPR certified and trained by our staff to minister through music, preaching, teaching, and leading recreation. More importantly—and my student reps can attest to this—we stress that our reps are at camps/conferences to *serve*. I even tell them service comes before recruiting. They've all heard my talk about not letting the camp director take the trash out. I tell them, “*You go help and take those bags to the dumpster.*” Our motto for student reps in Enrollment Services is “How Can I Help?”

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Here at Welch, our department has the opportunity to be an active part of the student body by assisting Student Services with events throughout the year. Just as a youth pastor provides opportunities for fellowship for his youth group, we provide a venue for Christian fun and fellowship among the students. We take this as no light matter. Providing a safe, wholesome environment for students to mingle is a huge honor. Sure, we're primarily a college to provide a Christ-focused education, but we do this in the context of a Christ-focused community. We minister to the Body of Christ in a big way every time we provide these kinds of events.

These five outlets are a big part of why I left serving as a lead pastor to be the director of enrollment at Welch College. I see these as a way to serve the Free Will Baptist church in a unique way, and in doing so, mentor young men and women to develop a heart for the local church and the lost around the world. If your vocation is outside of the local church, I hope you will ask the same question: *how can my job be a ministry outlet for Christ to His church and in His world?* **ONE**

About the Writer: Daniel Webster is director of enrollment and adjunct instructor at Welch College. He serves as moderator of the Northern Quarterly of the Cumberland Association of Free Will Baptists and as music director at Immanuel FWB Church in Gallatin, Tennessee. He and his wife Kimberly have three children.

Why Support Welch College?

BY MIKE EDWARDS

I have the honor of traveling across our denomination promoting the ministry of Welch College and raising support for the Welch Fund. I am often asked, "Why should I support Welch College?" I have a couple of responses. The first is, "When you give to the Welch Fund, you invest in the lives of students who will make and are making an eternal difference in the world for the cause of Christ."

Another response I offer is, "Welch College is educating leaders to serve Christ, and He has a plan for every student. He calls some to be pastors, youth pastors, missionaries, and worship leaders. Others He calls to be educators, nurses, counselors, business professionals, or physical therapists who will also serve in the local church. You make an eternal difference when you invest in students attending Welch."

I want to point out that supporting Welch College involves more than donating funds to the college. Supporting the college also includes *praying* for the college. I challenge you to pray for our current students to earnestly seek the will of God and excel in their studies. Pray for faculty and staff as they serve the Lord at the college. Pray for President Pinson and the administration as they lead through these unprecedented days. Pray for prospective students making decisions about attending Welch in the future.

Recommending the college to potential students is another way individuals support the college. Welch is not for everyone. However, I am confident more students will consider it as their pastor, parents, and other people of influence recommended the college. Welch is both Christian and distinctively Free Will Baptist. Our professors

present the content of their classes through a conservative Christian worldview. Your recommendation of Welch College may be used by God to change the direction of a student's life.

Supporting Welch involves three vital components: recommending the college to potential students, praying for the college and college family, and giving financially to the Welch Fund. The Welch Fund helps provide student scholarships. The generous giving of Free Will Baptist churches and individuals last year lowered annual tuition costs by approximately \$5,000 per student. This kind of support is just what students need to attend Welch College. Your financial support impacts the students at Welch.

According to the denominational calendar, February is the Welch College emphasis month. I challenge Free Will Baptist churches everywhere to receive a special love offering for the Welch Fund in February. I challenge Welch alumni and friends to give a special offering to the Welch Fund as well. Your generosity makes a difference for every student.

I also encourage you to consider becoming a member of the *Torchbearer Club*. Members support the Welch Fund through automated monthly gifts of at least \$25. A \$25 per month gift enables you to give \$300 per year, and \$50 per month provides a \$600 annual contribution to Welch. A monthly donation of \$83.34 makes a \$1,000 contribution each year. *Torchbearer Club* members' monthly contributions range from \$25 to \$450 per month. Join the club! Torchbearers receive a t-shirt and other perks throughout the year. Learn more by visiting www.torchbearerclub.com.

Student needs are as great as they have ever been. The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted many students, requiring greater assistance from the Welch Fund. Prayerfully consider becoming a *Torchbearer Club* member and encourage your pastor to lead the congregation in praying for the college and receiving a special offering for the college in February. You can make a difference in the lives of students and a difference in the ministry of Welch College.

Have you considered making a planned gift to Welch College? Free Will Baptist Foundation specializes in assisting people with estate planning and planned gifts. David Brown and his team will be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding estate planning and planned gifts. Leave a gift to Welch that will continue until the Lord returns. To find out more, visit www.fwbgifts.org.

Consider these important facts about Welch College:

- Established in 1942

- Offers more than 40 programs of study
- Student to teacher ratio of 10:1
- Student body represents 23 states and five countries
- Accredited regionally and nationally to offer associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees
- Ranked 18th among best regional colleges in the South by *U.S. News and World Report* (2019)
- Top programs: theological studies, pre-med/nursing, business, teacher education, psychology, and music.
- Two-thirds of faculty members hold doctorates in their fields of study.

Welch College is a community of faith and learning—*educating leaders to serve Christ.* **ONE**

About the Writer: Mike Edwards is director of the Welch Fund. Learn more: welch.edu.

Legacy of Serving...

Although well known for her many roles at FWB Bible College, from secretary and receptionist to bookkeeper, typist, and English instructor, the influence of **Mary Ann Welch** stretches far beyond the campus. The North Carolina native was instrumental in forming both the Free Will Baptist League (CTS) and the Women's National Auxiliary Convention (WNAC), two of the most enduring programs in Free Will Baptist history. Long after Mary and her husband John were no longer officially involved with the college, she remained a uniquely influential figure. "Students found a warm mother figure in 'Miss Mary,'" writes Welch College President Matt Pinson. "She gladly offered much wise counsel and intercessory prayer." To honor the service-minded couple, the name of FWB Bible College was changed to Welch College in 2012.

Why not start your own legacy to serve future Welch College students through an endowment with FWB Foundation?

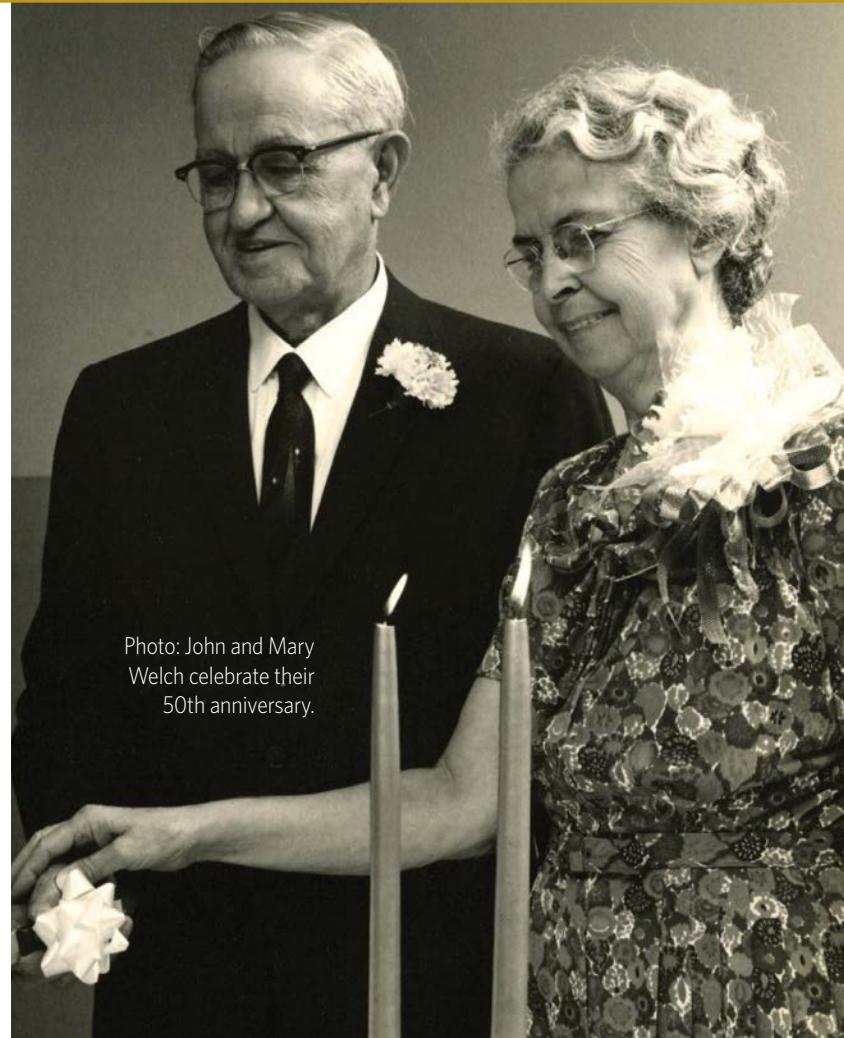


Photo: John and Mary Welch celebrate their 50th anniversary.



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EDUCATION ON THE CUTTING EDGE

BY WILLIAM SLATER

Early adopters of home Internet access will never forget the screeching sound when dialing up modem service provided by America Online. In the mid-1990s, having an email address on your business card meant you were on the “cutting edge” of technology. Most email addresses back then ended with aol.com. My wife still uses one of those addresses, which borders on embarrassing. Believe it or not, AOL is still around. My bride must explain that every time she shares her email address.

Swift changes in technology mark the age in which we live. By the time you bring a new device home and unbox it, it is out of date. Technology is not the only area in which sand shifts rapidly. If anything was learned in 2020, it is that global change can take place quickly. Arguably, there has not been a single year in our lifetime with as much uncertainty as this one. So much has been said and written, there is no need to retrace the turnstile of this year’s events. Our world, our nation, and our families have been disrupted in significant ways.

Your work, or the way you work, may have changed within the past year. If so, you may have considered earning a college degree or finishing one you previously started. Adding a degree to your resume sometimes makes the difference in current and future job opportunities.

Earning a degree can be tough while juggling family, work, and ministry obligations. But face it, you are not getting any younger, and the next big change could be just around the corner. Welch College is ready to help you chart your course as you prepare not only for change,

but also for your calling. The best part is you don’t have to leave home to take this journey. Welch College is pleased to offer several programs in distance learning formats.

STARTING OR ADVANCING A CAREER IN BUSINESS

A degree in business from Welch College will provide you with a solid education in business and prepare you to meet the increased demand for business professionals in all industries. You will be equipped with biblical and practical principles to succeed as an effective servant leader in your career field.

Integrating faith and learning for accounting, finance, and business is the structure that differentiates Welch College from many other institutions. Rather than simply being a Christian in the business realm, you’ll learn your Christian life can shape the everyday practices of the marketplace.

Adult students can earn a two-year associate’s degree or a four-year bachelor’s degree in business completely online. Qualified credits from other institutions can be transferred.



MINISTRY PREPARATION OPPORTUNITIES

Welch College offers an online Associate of Science in Ministry. This associate degree provides quality, basic preparation for local church ministry. The primary purpose for offering this program is to support and enhance the Christian ministries of bi-vocational pastors and volunteer lay workers in the local church. Those called to pastor can continue their education by completing the online Bachelor of Science in Theological Studies and General Christian Ministry.

If you have a bachelor's degree, you should consider continuing your education with a Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry degree. The M.A. is designed for college graduates who desire additional education in the classical theological disciplines and the integration of those disciplines within the practice of Christian ministry.

The 33-semester-hour M.A. degree is an advanced degree, with a hybrid format, that focuses on developing skills and knowledge in the area of Christian ministry. You will study under faculty members who are gifted scholars with specialties in a broad range of disciplines and ministry experience. They will teach effectively and mentor you intentionally to apply biblical and theological depth to your ministry. The emphasis on practical application builds on your experience.

GRADUATE DEGREE IN EDUCATION

Has God called you to teach? The Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) is a 33-semester-hour graduate degree providing leaders with graduate education in the art and science of teaching. It is designed for college graduates

who desire additional education as professional teachers. The program core for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree seeks to enhance Christian thinking and attitudes, professional teaching skills, and habits of lifetime learners.

There are five specialty tracks in the M.A.: teaching, special education, higher education, English language learners, and instructional leadership. Students choose one of these tracks upon enrolling in the program. MAT courses are delivered on campus but are available remotely through teleconferencing. No matter where you live, you can complete your master's degree in education from Welch College.

All programs and degrees above are regionally and nationally accredited. They are affordable too. This year, the college put the Welch Cares Scholarship in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tuition rates have been reduced and "locked in" through the 2021-22 academic year.

There are many opportunities to prepare for life's changes at Welch College, but there is at least one thing that won't change, the mission of Welch College: *to educate leaders to serve Christ, His church, and His world through biblical thought and life.* **ONE**

About the Writer: William Slater is the Dean of Adult and Online Studies at Welch College. Contact him at wslater@welch.edu or by phone at 615-675-5350 to learn more about distance degree programs available for adult learners.

Music and Singing in Corporate Worship

BY MATTHEW MCAFEE AND BARRY RAPER

Have you ever heard the music of a song you haven't listened to in years, but in a single moment, you pull up the lyrics in your mind? This speaks to the power of music. How does music relate to the practice of congregational singing? In this

last article of our four-part series on worship, we want to touch on a few scriptural principles related to music and singing in corporate worship.

Principle: Scripture Shows the Supporting Role of Music for Congregational Singing

Music has a long heritage in the Old Testament. The collection of psalms attests the richness of this heritage, particularly in the psalm titles. The Hebrew title for the whole collection is *tehilim*, which simply means *praises*. This is what we usually associate with the psalter. However, many individual psalms are further qualified as *mizmors*. For instance, the title for Psalm 3 reads: "A *mizmor* of David." The term *mizmor* comes from the word *zmr*, which means "to make music." A *mizmor* is therefore a song put to music to be sung corporately with musical accompaniment. Other musical

notations are also found in the psalm titles. One common designation is *lamnasseah*, meaning, "for the choir director." A notation often follows, indicating musical instruments to accompany the singing of the psalm, or the melody to be used. Many of these Hebrew terms are unknown to modern interpreters, even though their function as musical designations is widely accepted. The following examples illustrate this point:

- Psalm 4: "For the choir director: on the *neginot* (stringed instrument); a *mizmor* of David"
- Psalm 5: "For the choir director: on the *nehilot* (thought to be a flute-like instrument); a *mizmor* of David"
- Psalm 6: "For the choir director: on the *neginot*, on the *sheminim* (likely eight-stringed instruments); a *mizmor* of David"

Other examples of singing to music abound in the Old Testament. One memorable scene comes from King Hezekiah's recommissioning of temple worship recorded in 2 Chronicles 29:20-36. Hezekiah stationed Levites with all kinds of musical instruments (cymbals, harps, and lyres), "according to the command of David" (verse 25). The priests stood



with trumpets (verse 26). When the burnt offering commenced, the whole assembly began to sing “the song of the LORD” with trumpets and the instruments of David (verse 27). After the offerings were completed, the Levites were ordered to praise the LORD “with the words of David and Asaph the seer” (verse 30). At various intervals the people responded with prostration before the LORD (verses 29, 30). The tone of the entire gathering was one of joy and humble reverence.

Music in Scripture serves a supporting role for corporate worship. In ancient Israel, musical accompaniment supported congregational singing from the psalter, the Israelite hymnal. The focus of this singing was recounting the word of the LORD delivered through David, Asaph, and other great hymn writers of Israel.¹ The tradition of the psalter established the practice of putting Scripture to music for corporate singing. The reforms of Hezekiah sought to reestablish this practice in Israel. Paul reiterates this heritage to the Colossian believers, admonishing them to allow the word of Christ to dwell in them richly, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God (Colossians 3:16).

Principle: Congregational Singing Strengthens the Faith of Believers.

The power of song is undeniable. Many of us have experienced this

¹ The psalm titles identify the following authors, with David chief among them: David, Asaph, Sons of Korah, Solomon, and Moses.

most poignantly from secular music (especially from our teen years), but the same is true of sacred music. Scripture commands believers to sing the Word in corporate worship. Songs set to music teach the congregation (Colossians 3), aiding the memory in recalling truth and reinforcing our deeply held convictions. In this way, music is an effective means of fostering biblical literacy in the church.

It also nourishes the soul of believers because it leads us to meditate on the life-giving Word of God. Scriptural meditation through song can even renew our minds beyond our corporate gatherings. The powerful melodies we sing together on Sundays resound in our hearts throughout the week. Good melodies are ready-made for committing scriptural truth to memory.

Principle: Congregational Singing Is an Element of Corporate Worship

We have emphasized throughout these articles on worship the importance of seeing every biblical element as an act of worship. Biblical elements or practices of local church worship include reading of Scripture, preaching of God’s Word, praying, giving, celebrating the ordinances, and singing. When our minds and hearts are engaged in these practices, the Lord uses them as a means of personal and corporate transformation.

It is important to understand musical *accompaniment* supports the biblical element of singing, but it is not the element itself. When we equate accompaniment with worship, it

actually supplants true worship. Song leaders become worship leaders. Musical performers take center stage. Instrumental music overpowers the corporate voice of the saints. Division over musical style takes root.

In its proper place, music represents a joyous gift from God. In corporate worship, music serves as the humble handmaid of congregational singing. We need to hear the voices of our brothers and sisters united in song. We need singable and congregationally-friendly melodies to guide our voices united in praise to the Lord. This approach both edifies the church and glorifies God.

In Summary

We are called to sing “as unto the Lord” (otherwise, it is just performance). But we are also called to “speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.” Therefore, it is paramount we hear our brothers and sisters lifting their voices to God in worship.

Congregational singing uniquely brings together two important facets of corporate worship: the edification of Christ’s Body and the praise due to His glorious name. **ONE**

About the Columnists: 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 Church in Ashland City, Tennessee.



Pitching Our Tents Toward Discipleship

BY RUTH MCDONALD

Call it intuition, but I could usually tell who my kids had been hanging out with by subtle changes in their speech and mannerisms. I've noticed the same phenomenon in myself when my pronunciation turns Canadian after a weekend with my best girlfriend.

As Christ followers, we should spend time with Him, hang on to His words, and pick up His characteristics. The closer our relationship with Him, the more His speech, mannerisms, and personality influence us. People will notice as we remind them more and more of Him.

I like the nuances of discipleship as defined by the Japanese culture. The word *disciple* (*deshi*) has been used among the Japanese since ancient times to denote a special relationship between master and student. The actual word means "younger brother" and originally referred to a student selected as the master's protégé, taken into his household, and treated as a younger sibling. Teachers have many students but only a few *deshi*. Living with the master, a *deshi* takes on a familial resemblance and imitates his lifestyle, ensuring the master's legacy continues.

By being adopted into God's family, doing daily life with Him, and imitating the things He does, we become true disciples. We grow to know Him well, and His habits wear off on us.

Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20). He chose 12 men to do life with Him, much like a Japanese master teacher. Does that mean we need to adopt young believers into our homes and let them live with us for a few years? Actually, it sometimes does.

We know one obvious group of people we are responsible to take into our home: our family. If you are a believer, and God has blessed you with children, you have the job of discipling them. If you've ever opened your mouth and heard your mother or father's voice come out, you know this happens quite naturally. For good or for bad,

your children resemble you. They pick up your speech patterns, inflections, mannerisms, and often, your values. Outsiders may not be able to distinguish your voices on the phone.

My friends include violin teachers, expert gardeners, golf enthusiasts, snow skiers, hikers, and football fans. You know what? In every case, they passed these passions down to their children. Taking them to games and concerts, they exposed their children to the subculture they love. They spent their free time including them in their favorite activities. When we're truly excited about something, it's easy to share it with others, and our enthusiasm is contagious.

We've all heard the expression "more things are caught than taught." I was born on a Thursday and carried to church the following Sunday morning by my mom. She was the preacher's wife, and I was her youngest child. My siblings and I were typical kids. We spent most of Dad's sermon time passing notes, drawing pictures, or keeping a tally of how many times he said "uh" or mispronounced a word.

Our family was imperfect. We had family devotions inconsistently. Our parents never sat down and did a Bible study with us specifically. But somehow we "caught" our parents' faith. We remember the frequent prayers, the open Bible and coffee cup in front of my mom each and every morning, the ways they loved us and others. We were shaped by the dailyness of living with people with a deep, abiding faith in Christ and His provision. We watched their sacrificial love and service for the Kingdom. Their hearts were tender toward Jesus, and it showed.

Short of forming a commune (which I do not recommend!), we will not have a family relationship with everyone. Yet, we are responsible for others—even for "all nations." The "us four and no more" philosophy has never been God's plan—not for Israel, and not for you. Proximity is necessary for influence.

I once attended a testimony meeting and heard a lady say, "I am so thankful for this church. I literally don't have any friends who are not members of this church. I'm also thankful I get to work every day in a Christian environment where all of my co-workers are fellow believers." I

looked around the room as others nodded and smiled, but I was cringing inside. "This is not okay," I thought. "No wonder the church isn't impacting the world!"

I'm so glad Jesus didn't live that testimony, aren't you? He left home (Heaven), moved to a new country, and "dwelt among us." I'm told the original phrase in Greek means, "He pitched His tent among us." I've done some tent camping, and let me tell you, tents in close proximity don't experience a lot of privacy. Singing, arguing, cooking, sneezing—you *know* what your neighbors are doing. At one site, the Japanese neighbor came carrying my

child piggyback because she dropped her shoe down the outhouse hole and wouldn't walk back in the mud.

They're seeing the good, the bad, and...the stinky!

Yes, I slipped in a cute story, but the point is this: *the watching world cannot be influenced by what they cannot observe.* Japanese people frequently say a

Christian family doing life in a non-Christian culture is the greatest form of evangelism and discipleship they know. Just being Christian in front of them, living out all the implications of our faith, is a powerful example. (Not sure how the shoe in the outhouse relates, but hey, it was real.)

It's often uncomfortable to live vulnerably and in close proximity with people who don't share your faith and values. Gravitating toward like-minded people is our default. That tendency sparked the now famous quote by Pauline Kael: "I can't believe Nixon won. I don't know *anyone* who voted for him." Obviously, the majority of Americans did vote for him, but Pauline only knew those who voted like her.

A few years ago, our Nashville, Tennessee, church held an outdoor event at a nearby park. I greeted people and offered Bibles and other literature to them. Most people kindly accepted or declined. When I offered an Asian lady a Bible she firmly said, "I am Buddhist!" She expect-

The more polarized our world, the more important it is to intentionally place ourselves with people unlike us.

ed this middle-aged, white lady to be put off by that, I'm sure. I just smiled and said, "Okay, I have tons of Buddhist friends. Would you like a Bible?"

Jesus came to seek and save the lost. It's the Buddhists, Muslims, atheists, and "nones" who need a Savior, not our friends at church socials (though, yes, they need Him too).

The example of pioneer missionary Trula Cronk, who served with her husband Dan in India for many years, challenges me. When the couple returned to the States, she did not sit around and enjoy the saints. She went to work for social services and soon had a thriving ministry reaching former prostitutes.

The more polarized our world, the more important it is to intentionally place ourselves with people unlike us.

This job of discipleship, at its essence, cannot be done remotely. Don't get me wrong—I'm thankful for technology that allows us to study the Bible and teach new Christians online. Instruction in the Word is absolutely essential in the task of discipleship. But discipleship isn't

done only with a notebook and pencil.

A missionary named Paul asked new believers to "imitate me, as I imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). I think we can assume Paul lived a show-and-tell lifestyle that allowed others to observe his walk of faith. Though he spent time in churches and synagogues, he also hung out with a variety of people who did not resemble him. We know he made tents, so I'm sure he also spent time in them. Paul must have been comfortable with thin walls, authenticity, and noisy neighbors.

By "pitching our tent" and "living among them," we can imitate both Paul and Jesus. With intentionality, we can maximize our influence and ensure faith is passed on to the next generation of disciples. **ONE**

About the Writer: Ruth McDonald and her husband Donnie are career missionaries to Japan. Learn more: www.iminc.org.

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Snapshots Around the World

Japan: The Hope Alive team received the keys to the first floor of their building. Demolition has begun in the space to expand their ministry.

Bulgaria: On Sunday, September 6, Josh Provow baptized a lady in the Shumen church. The next weekend, five people followed the Lord in baptism during the annual retreat/conference of FWB churches in Bulgaria.

France: Jonathan and Michelle Chereau (St. Sebastien) renewed their Connexion Kidz ministry on September 30 with two new families attending.

Bulgaria: Brenton Driscoll joined an American flag football team in Shumen. Not only does he enjoy the exercise and opportunity to meet people, but he also is able to practice his growing language skills.



Côte d'Ivoire: The Nassian FWB Church celebrated the ordinance of feet washing on October 4.



Japan: After many hours, several translators, and many meetings with the Japan FWB publication division the FWB Catechism is now in Japanese. "We give God the glory and pray many Japanese believers gain a deeper understanding of theology and grow in their relationship with Christ as a result," enthused Doug Bishop, who spearheaded the project. To make more Christian material available in Japanese give to "IMPact Japan JWFB Translation" project.

France: Matt Price indicated the St. Nazaire congregation began slowly restarting church activities in June. "We have had a large number of first-time visitors come to our church, 20 of them in just the last month, which is amazing!" he wrote on October 8. "Some are solid Christians ready to jump in and help in the ministry of the church. Others have very little biblical knowledge. In these, we can see a real thirst to truly understand what the Bible says."

Bulgaria: Throughout 2020, the missionary team in Bulgaria has worked on a gift version of the Gospel of

Brazil: After about six months of online classes, the Bible seminary in Campinas, Brazil, resumed in-person classes on October 5. The teaching is also transmitted online for students unable to participate in the classroom. Kenneth Eagleton has a total of 16 students in the class. Additionally, the Alliance of FWB Churches in Brazil chose to expand the seminary training through satellite locations. The Jaboticabal program began with 28 students and three teachers.

Luke. Trif Trifonov wrote a forward. Jonathan Postlewaite wrote the plan of salvation. Josh Provow wrote questions and explanatory notes for the margins. Josh said, "This is an ideal ministry tool for someone intimidated by the size of the Bible and who doesn't know where to start or how to understand it. Because it is the entire Gospel of Luke, it is an ideal text for an introductory Bible study." The project was made possible by a group of stateside churches donating several thousand dollars for the purpose of purchasing Bibles.

Former Missionary to Cuba Dies

Antioch, TN—Lucy Ellen Wisehart Lima Hyman of Albany, Georgia, died Wednesday, September 2, 2020, at Lee County Health and Rehabilitation. Services for the 90-year-old were held Saturday, September 5, at First FWB Church, Albany, Georgia. Billy D. Hanna and Donnie Burke officiated.

Born in Myrtle, Missouri, Lucy graduated from Couch High School in Couch, Missouri. She earned a B.A. from Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee (now Welch College), a B.A. in business administration from the University of Texas Pan American, and a doctorate in religious education from Andersonville Theological Seminary.

Lucy served in Cuba (1953-57) under Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions (now IM, Inc.), acting as bookkeeper and secretary at Cedars of Lebanon Seminary. While working with Pop and Mom Willey, she met Felix Lima, a graduate of the seminary. They married, served two churches in Cuba, and moved to the States in 1961 following Cuba's revolution. Together, they served as missionaries to Hispanics in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas with American Missionary Fellowship. In 1986, widow Lucy and widower Dr. Irvin Hyman married at First FWB Church in McAllen, Texas, and moved to Albany, Georgia.

Preceding her in death are her parents William Henry and Ora Wisehart, four sisters, and her husband Rev. Felix Lima. Survivors include

her husband of 35 years, Dr. Irvin Hyman, of Albany, Georgia; daughters Marilyn Lima of Nashville, Tennessee, and Magdalene Lima-Fiallos (Gene) of Portland, Oregon; two step-grandsons, Gene and Edgar Fiallos; two sisters Lavern Clark (Boyd) of Thayer, Missouri, and Dr. Mary Ruth Wisehart of Nashville,



Lucy (Wisehart) Hyman

Tennessee; several nieces and nephews; brother-in-law Howard Hyman (Betty), and sister-in-law Mable Hyman all of Florence, South Carolina.

Memorial gifts may be sent to First FWB Church, 420 N. Westover Blvd, Albany, GA 31707 or IM, Inc., PO Box 5002 Antioch, TN 37011-5002. [ONE](#)

Alliance of FWB Churches Meet in Brazil

Minas Gerais, Brazil—Kenneth and Rejane Eagleton participated in a retreat/association meeting of the Alliance of FWB churches in Brazil, September 4-7. Held on a farm in the state of Minas Gerais, participants traveled up to 400 miles to attend. The Alliance represents 13 churches.

The Jaboticabal delegation wrecked while traveling to the event. Kenneth said, "We praise the Lord a near head-on collision turned out to be a high-speed car swipe pushing the vehicle off the road and tearing off the back wheel." No one sustained serious injuries, and the group made it to the meeting.



The associational gathering included preaching, worship, leisure, and discussion of the future of the Alliance in Brazil. A new slate of officers was elected for a two-year term, and Kenneth was asked to develop a system to make courses offered at the Campinas Bible seminary available to students from other churches. They plan to set up several satellite locations. [ONE](#)

Mini Big Days

BY JOSH BENNETT

Have you ever watched a hamster spin in a wheel? It can be both amazing and frustrating at the same time. He runs and gets nowhere. He keeps doing it because it is comfortable, and he knows how to do it. In many ways, the world of ministry can be like a hamster wheel. If you are a pastor or church leader, there is a good chance that, at some point, you have felt like you are just spinning a wheel. Perhaps it feels more like spinning in circles.

I have been there! But, in 2014, I ran across a book that changed my ministry. I opened the mail one day to find a book by Bob Franquiz called *Pull*. Bob chose to send this book to me for some reason, and I am grateful he did. One of the chapters is called “Mini Easters.” It is an idea we renamed “Mini Big Days,” and it is not really a new idea at all. In fact, Terry Forrest taught this same principle in church growth class when I was a student at Welch College.

Why Mini Big Days?

Imagine waiting for hours at Disney World for a new and exciting ride. When you finally get to ride, the car makes an exciting climb, has one big drop and then turns back down into the station. After all the anticipation, you are left wondering, “Is that all?”

Of course not! Although brief, amusement rides are built off the little, exciting moments. Many

churches are a one-scream roller coaster. I learned this principle as a church planter in Arizona. We spent most of our energy and budget on Easter, enjoyed an exciting climb and a huge day, followed by a sudden drop. That was it, until the following year, when we tried to make Easter bigger and better than ever.

In his book, however, Franquiz taught us to build ongoing “little moments” of excitement, eight to ten days a year when we push for a big day. These Mini Big Days help build momentum, maintain excitement, and eventually convert into consistent church growth.

What is a Mini Big Day?

Every time our team puts a Mini Big Day on the calendar, we face the same question: “What to do?” This is where your team’s creativity gets to shine. Listen to their ideas and follow suit. A Mini Big Day can be anything that gets people excited about coming and inviting people to church. We have had block parties, tailgate Sundays, holiday-themed services, and much more. The biggest thing is to pick a day and challenge your people to invite everyone they know. Launch campaigns, print invitation cards, encourage each one to bring one—whatever it takes—focus all your inviting methods on these days!



When are Mini Big Days?

Our teams have focused on two key approaches to picking Mini Big Days. We look at the calendar and ask two questions: first, what is a day that is normally great we can make even better? For example, Mother’s Day. Focus all your energy on taking one of the biggest days of the year and making it 20% better. Second, what is one day we know will be bad that we can make better? Take one of those days like Memorial Day, Labor Day, or Super Bowl Sunday and find a way to make your lowest attended Sunday 20% better. Labor Day will never match Mother’s Day, but if it is 20% better than last year, when you did nothing, it will help you build momentum and cultivate church growth.

I love talking Mini Big Days, and I love getting new ideas for them. If you ever get stuck, need an idea, or have an idea to share, I would love to be a part of that conversation.

May the Lord be glorified, may His Church be built, and may we do more than spin the wheel. **ONE**

About the Columnist: Josh Bennett is lead church planter at Awaken FWB Church in Tifton, Georgia. Learn more: awakenyourfaith.church.



All I Want for Christmas Is...

BY BOBBY BOWEN

What happens when you allow your children to complete that simple phrase? Do immediate images of dollar signs begin to flash through your mind? Been there, done that!

I have spent the past three Christmases in Jinja, Uganda, my mission home. Christmas is entirely different in this land that values community and family. No gifts, no tree—none of the frills we think we need. Christmas is a time for families to gather in their home villages and spend time with each other, cooking and singing and visiting. Churches are generally open to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Shops are closed for the week so workers can spend time with family. If at all possible, people go “home.”

For the past two years, I have hosted a Christmas party for the kids we help in a slum area of Jinja called Works Village. On a typical day, we have between 60 and 75 kids for classroom study. We have become family. Many of these kids can’t return to the village of their extended families due to the excessive cost of transport. They spend Christmas as just another normal day. We wanted to make this day extra special for them, so we threw a Christmas party. And, because the party was open to anyone in the community, our normal 75 quickly grew to over 300 kids!

These children love dramas. The first year, they acted out the nativity story all on their own and did a fabulous job. No costumes, no props—just kids and the Word. How funny to see some of our younger kids acting as sheep, bouncing all over the performing area! Then they sang “Joy to the World” in English. I still watch the video of their singing when I begin to miss them. The day included Scripture memorization, and traditional singing and dance. It was their day to be kids.

The highlight of the day was the meal. We enjoyed the traditional rice, posho (maize flour and water cooked to a dough-like consistency), and beans. But we wanted to give the kids something to make this day extra special.

If I asked the children of Works Village to fill in the phrase, *All I want for Christmas is _____*, it would not be toys, electronics, brand-name clothes, bikes, or whatever else a child from the West wants. The greatest request, by far, would be meat for their meal—something they never get in their daily life. Both years, I bought a goat, and the children enjoyed meat with their meal. The kids love cake as well, so we served cake. A ten-inch cake fed 300 kids last year. All they want is a small taste.

Christmas seems real in Works Village, even in the middle of poverty and deplorable living conditions. They



have not forgotten Christmas is really about spending time with family and worshiping the One on Whom this day is centered: JESUS. **ONE**

Note: At the time of this publication, a new landowner tore down the entire village where Bobby served, displacing at least 3,000 people. Her team now runs five feeding programs in different parts of the city for those displaced and out of work. Bobby said, "I am busier now than I was in Uganda."

About the Writer: Bobby Bowen served as secretary-treasurer of West Virginia WAC for 14 years. She was also the collection center coordinator for the West Virginia/Kentucky/Ohio area for Operation Christmas Child for 13 years. She was commissioned by Global Outreach International in Tupelo, Mississippi, in June 2017, and has served as a full-time missionary in Uganda since October 2017. She is now on extended pandemic furlough, but is overseeing hunger relief and food distribution programs in Uganda from the United States.

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From the Loftiest to the Lowliest

BY PAUL V. HARRISON

Louis XIV was born at 11:20 AM, September 5, 1638, to Anne of Austria, Queen of France, and her husband, King Louis XIII. After two decades of childless marriage, Anne's pregnancy was celebrated far and wide. Historian John Wolf wrote that as the news of the boy's birth spread, "the rattle of muskets, the booming of cannons, the ringing of church bells, the chanting of *Te Deums*, the offering of masses in thanksgiving, the bonfires and fireworks, the singing, drinking, and dancing in the streets with free wine for the people, all testified to the joy and excitement of the kingdom."

It has often been with royalty that pomp and circumstance attend them, but when the Apostle Paul wanted to impress us with an illustration of humility, he pointed to a different kind of king—King Jesus. He wrote: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:5–7), literally "made Himself nothing."

He could not have been greater: He was "in very nature God." One could not become lowlier: He "made himself nothing." The loftiest became the lowliest. And note the wording: this lowness of Christ didn't just happen. He "*made himself nothing.*" This was his *intention*, His *plan*, a most unusual plan for royalty.

This lowness was especially in evidence at Jesus' birth. Joseph and Mary, an obscure and poor couple, were not people of position and authority. Jewish blood flowed in their veins, and Jews lived under the heel of the Roman



government.

In the eyes
of the world, to
the little extent they were

noticed at all, Mary and Joseph were "little" people. God knew them. Almost no one else did. Yet they were selected to play the role of Jesus' parents.

The location of Jesus' birth wasn't much to speak of. About six miles south and a bit west of Jerusalem, Bethlehem was no capital city or thriving metropolis. The prophet Micah referred to it as "small among the clans of Judah" (Micah 5:2). Some scholars have estimated its population at a few hundred, so we rightly sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

If the city of Jesus' birth is surprising, the specific place is even more so. Luke 2:7 states: "she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Some city folk need to be educated a bit on mangers. A *manger* is an animal's feeding trough. This, of course, means little Jesus was born in a stall, a place for livestock, and instead of being laid in a clean bassinet, he rested where sheep and goats and the like found and ate their food.

We should also note the first recorded visitors to the makeshift delivery room were shepherds. Not kings or



princes. Not doctors or people of influence, but men who slept outdoors and watched sheep. In that day, those who tended animals were so low in social status they were not allowed to testify in legal proceedings. If the announcement of Jesus' birth had come to them in written form, in all likelihood, they would not have been able to read it. Not only were shepherds low in social status, but they were low in moral standing as well. The great scholar Joachim Jeremias noted that buying wool, milk, or a kid from a shepherd was forbidden on the assumption that it was stolen property.

In summary, lowly parents traveled to a lowly place where their little baby was born, and the rejects of society came to visit him.

Finally, we should recall that when these early weeks of Jesus' life passed, Mary and Joseph took him to their home in Nazareth. Again, this Galilean city offered little. Someone once asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" So insignificant a community it wasn't mentioned in either the Old Testament or in the writings of Josephus. Yet, Nazareth became Jesus' childhood "stomp-

ing ground." He sometimes took a trip to the big city, but He surely didn't live in one.

Christmas reminds us that God loves contrast. He loves to take a trickle of water and stretch it into Niagara Falls. He likes to take sky and sun and mix in some clouds and produce a sunset no human artist could duplicate. Oh, what a contrast on that first Noel! The Almighty took an "ordinary" birth and transformed it into the birth of all births, the birth of God Himself. He took a dark world and into it introduced a seemingly small light, a baby light that, in a few short years grew to illuminate all of creation, and still shines brightly today.

God would love to make a contrast of you. He would love to take your darkness and replace it with a flame to point others to Himself, the Light of the World. [ONE](#)

About the Writer: Dr. Paul V. Harrison has pastored Madison FWB Church (AL) since 2015. He is creator of the Classic Sermon Index: www.classicsermonindex.com.



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Planning for Retirement

BY CHRIS COMPTON



Most of us want to retire someday. In fact, some may even have a plan for what that will look like, and all the things they want to do. Others just know they do not want to work all their lives. Whether you have a plan for what you want to do in retirement or not, without proper planning and preparation it may never come to fruition.

Planning for retirement can seem daunting. It does not have to be. Put the following basic retirement savings tips into practice to help you get started.

Make a plan and identify your goal. When planning for retirement, consider the age you would like to retire and what kind of income you would like to have. Both are important, and one may influence the other. There is not a one-size-fits-all number you need to save, but most experts suggest aiming to replace 80% of your income in retirement.

Once you determine how much you will need, use an online calculator to see how much money you need to save to reach that goal. You may have to start out smaller but save as much as you can. Things will change over time (life-changing events, inflation, sickness, changes in taxes, etc.), and you may have to revisit and adjust your savings goal. But, if you don't know where you are going, you probably will not get there.

Start saving as early as you can. The sooner you start saving for your retirement, the easier it is to save. Starting during your first job, with your first paycheck is ideal.

The longer you put it off, the harder it is to start and to make up for lost time on your investment. Time and compound interest can be your best friends in saving for retirement. The longer you save, the more time your money has to work for you. Wherever you are in the journey, the key is to start saving *now* for retirement.

Take advantage of your employer match. Some employers offer matching retirement contributions. This can be a huge help in reaching your retirement goals. Don't miss out on this free money. You will not find a better return on your investment. Be sure to save enough to get the full employer match. If you can save more, do it.

Automate your retirement savings. Do you ever forget things? You may not be as prone to that now, but as you age, it happens. So, leverage technology and automate your retirement savings. If your employer has a retirement plan, like a 401 (K) or 403 (B), have the contributions withdrawn directly from your paycheck and put into your retirement account. If your employer doesn't have a retirement plan, and you set up an IRA or ROTH IRA, have contributions automatically withdrawn from your checking account.

Stay Consistent. Many things keep people from being consistent. They change jobs and don't keep saving. They fail to live on a budget or live outside their means. They are unprepared for financial difficulties that arise. In order to save consistently, you should

1. Develop a budget and stick with it.
2. Have an emergency savings fund.
3. Don't just live for the here and now.

You may have to adjust the percentage you save (and that's okay), but make sure you keep saving.

Invest for the long haul. In a pinch, it is easy to cash out your retirement savings early. If at all possible, don't do it. Cashing out your retirement savings early means

you will pay taxes in a lump sum and face an early withdrawal penalty. That could cost up to 30% of your savings! Stay invested, keep saving, and plan ahead. Your future self will thank you.

Saving for the future is a marathon, not a sprint. It takes discipline and a plan. It can be easy to let life get in the way of your retirement savings. With the right plan and the right actions, you can enjoy your life now and still make progress toward your financial goals. **ONE**

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



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Podcast and Resources

BY JOHN BRUMMITT

The action of reinvesting is to invest again or anew. *Reinvestment*, from a financial viewpoint, is the practice of using dividends, interest, or any other form of income distribution earned in investment to purchase additional shares or units, rather than receiving the distribution in cash.

The Reinvest Conference is based on the idea of reinvesting into the future of our denomination. In 2019, the Board of Retirement hosted its first educational training conference, the Reinvest Conference. The purpose of the meeting was to help train new and young leaders in the areas of finance and leadership. We planned to continue this conference in 2020, but COVID-19 affected the abilities of the world to meet together in person, especially when travel is required.

Financial issues can cause significant trouble for ministers in addition to the challenges of ministry. Finances affect our daily lives, but very few people believe they have a firm grasp on the best way to handle finances. When it comes to ministry, like other non-profits, leaders trained in areas other than finance are often required to wear the "financial hat" for the church or organization because there is no one else. The Reinvest Conference was created to provide some of the training these leaders would need to give them the confidence to manage not only their personal finances but the finances of the ministries they oversee.

Since we had to readjust to the new normal in 2020, we are switching gears and creating online resources and podcasts for our denomination through reinvestfwb.com, so more of our denominational leaders can access this information and training from Reinvest. The online resources will cover a variety of topics ranging from personal finance to the business side of running a fruitful ministry. The aim is to provide information that not only ensures your ministry fulfills legal requirements but also can thrive in the future,

with proper planning and risk management. We are also launching a podcast for accessible education on the go. These conversations will include topics many people have questions about, but don't know who or exactly how to ask. These include financial issues like:

- Things to know if/when your parents pass away.
- Is it better to purchase or rent a home?
- What does "financial stability" actually look like?

The majority of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, which leads to a lot of misinformation when it comes to finances. As stewards of our God-entrusted resources, we want to help teach our denomination to be the servants who received five talents and returned ten, or the servant who received three and returned six. Exposure and training in financial principles is the only way to help young leaders build the confidence needed to move forward and develop for the future.

Our goal is to help our denomination grow and fulfill the mission the Lord has for each of us. Finance is a tool each of us must master to help our denomination reach full potential. Whether personal finances or financial planning for an individual ministry, being prepared for the opportunities in the future will allow us to meet God where He is already working and join Him. **ONE**

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

Is It Time to Retire?

BY DAVID BROWN, CPA

Multiple factors determine when someone should retire. Many people look forward to retirement and focus on the earliest possible date. Others enjoy their job or own a business they love and don't plan to retire. There is no "right" answer for when it's time to retire.

Sometimes, a retirement date is the day both spouses decide on together. When one spouse is retired and the other continues to work, it can cause difficulties in a marriage. Therefore, many retire on the same date. However, they may not be the same age when they retire. When one spouse is significantly older than the other, the older spouse may retire at an older age, and the younger retires at a more typical age. An individual with health issues or with a shorter expected lifespan due to genetics may wish to retire earlier, while someone in good health with a family history of long lifespans may want to delay.

Economic factors also influence retirement. Preparing for retirement by contributing to an IRA, 401k, 403b, or other plans make early retirement possible, but delaying preparation means you may have no choice but to delay retirement. Social Security benefits are usually a big part of retirement income. The typical retirement age of 65 does not apply today. To reach



"full retirement age," for someone born in 1955 (65 years ago), you must work until 66 years and two months. This adjusts by two months each year thereafter. So, if your birth year is 1956, then 66 and four months is full retirement and so forth till those born after 1960 is age 67. However, by delaying the date you start receiving Social Security, you raise the amount you receive. The maximum age you can delay your benefits is age 70, but delaying can increase your benefit by more than 30%.

If you delay retirement, an honest evaluation of your job effectiveness is essential. As we age, our physical and mental abilities sometimes deteriorate. No one wants to continue in a job if they honestly know they are unable to do the work required.

It is better for you to make that determination rather than be forced into retirement because you cannot do your job. Be truthful with your own evaluation, and perhaps even consult with an unbiased friend who will tell you the truth in love. It is best to retire before you reach the point of diminishing skills and become a burden to your employer or business. **ONE**

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

HAIRY, SIX-FOOTED

Part One



HONEY-MAKERS

BY BILL AND BRENDA EVANS

One thing friends do is prod you to pay attention to things you never paid attention to before. Our friend Chuck Hennecke drew our attention to six-footed honey bees. He and another friend, Warren Rogers, are beekeepers, more specifically, keepers of *Apis mellifera*, the Latin name botanist and zoologist Carl Linnaeus gave these honey-bearers in 1758. Three years later, he preferred the name *Apis mellifica*, honey-maker.

Chuck got acquainted with honey bees when he was young and got stung mowing the lawn around his father's bee-hives. About ten years ago, Chuck became better acquainted. He heard a West Virginia state inspector apiarist say, "If somebody tells you he knows all about honey bees, he's lying, and he'll tell you another one." That amused Chuck, but also drew him in, challenged him to know more, to raise the hairy six-footed insects, help them thrive and make honey. He bought a colony of bees and a ten-frame hive, then used the boxy hive as a model to build more.

Chuck and Warren's fathers were beekeepers, but both vowed they would never be. Warren now has nine colonies and is the vice president of the Northeast Kentucky Beekeepers Association. Chuck has 17 colonies and is the apiarist for the association where he tends five more.

What does it take to be a good beekeeper? A lot. Chuck and Warren started with curiosity, liking a challenge, and a passion to do battle. Chuck likes figuring things out, solving problems, learning what to do to help the inch-long gold and brown honey-makers thrive. Warren says, "You have to love them, too, so you'll fight to keep them alive and productive."

We visited Chuck's workshop and honey house in mid-summer. He has built a 4- by 6-foot oak observation hive with glass on each side. There, we put our noses to the glass and watched thousands of worker bees and one large queen hard at their jobs, moving over the honeycombs, making and storing honey, rearing their young. It was fascinating. Later that day in the honey house, we watched Chuck and Warren extract honey. July in Kentucky is honey harvest time.

From our friends, we've learned a lot about hairy, six-footed honey-makers. To begin with, honey bees are not native to North America. European settlers first brought them to coastal Virginia in 1622. By 1650, hives were prospering in Massachusetts and other places along the East Coast. They moved into the Ohio Valley around 1670 then spread across the Mississippi, the Plains, and on to California by 1853. Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1783 that Native Americans called the honey bee "the white man's fly."

Honey is an ancient product. In his Deuteronomy 32 song, Moses extolled the Lord for his myriad blessings, among them honey drawn from the crevices of unproductive desert rocks where colonies of wild honey bees had laid down their honey for God's people. There, and in about 60 other places, the Bible mentions honey as a valuable food; bartering commodity; and symbol of abundance, wisdom, even the Word itself. Ten biblical characters talk about honey.

Honey bees are most memorably highlighted in Judges 4 and 5 when the "honey bee" judge Deborah (honey bee is the meaning of her Hebrew name) called out Barak, at worst for his cowardice, at best for his unwillingness to go to battle without her. Deborah promised to go but warned

Barak he would get no glory for the victory over the Canaanites Jabin and Sisera. Glory would go to a woman, she said. And it did, first to Deborah, the honey bee, and then to Jael, that fierce, nomadic, tent-dwelling, non-Hebrew woman who drove a tent peg all the way through Sisera's temple and into the ground. The British poet Tennyson called Deborah "that great dame of Lapidoth," and great that honey bee was.

As for honey bees themselves, what's so intriguing? One thing is their tight organization within a colony. Zoologists call them *eusocial* because of their advanced division of duties, functions, and lines of work. As a rule, a colony has one queen, 20 to 30 thousand workers, and several thousand drones. Colonies can go as high as 40 to 60 thousand.

The queen's sole function is to be an egg-laying machine, as many as 2,000 eggs (or her weight) a day. Worker bees are female, non-reproducing, and are divided into castes. Young workers, three to ten days old, are called nurse bees. They feed the infant larva royal jelly, a thick, sticky, pale yellow liquid secreted from glands in the heads of nurse bees. This bee milk, as it is called, is water, proteins, sugars, fats, and vitamins.

If a larva feeds only on royal jelly, it goes on to pupate and grow to maturity as a queen in about 16 days. The queen continues to be fed only royal jelly until her ouster or death in about three years. But nurse bees briefly feed other larvae royal jelly, and later a mixture of nectar and pollen called bee bread. Those pupate emerge as workers or drones. Workers emerge fully developed in about 20 days and drones in about 24 days.

Older workers do the "other" work of the colony. Though they can't reproduce, workers control most of what goes on. They feed and tend the queen, clean, feed drones and larvae, make and store honey. As sticklers for a good place to live and work, they are the architects of the hexagonal honeycombs, guardians of the hive, and undertakers for the dead. In winter, they keep the hive from freezing by forming a tight ball of bees around the queen and "shivering" to create heat. In summer, they fan their wings to cool the hive.

Workers also are the foragers who fly out to collect pollen, nectar, water, and plant resins. They also are the only bees in the colony who can sting. If they do, they die because their stinger gets stuck in the victim and pulls out the bee's guts. Most workers live only about four weeks.

Drones, the largest bees in the colony, are the only males. They make up about 10% of the colony's population. They eat a lot, but do not work, sting, or gather nectar and pollen. Their primary role is to mate with a queen to propagate the colony then quickly die.

Unmating drones get kicked out of the colony after about 90 days. New ones are raised each spring.

As for anatomy, a honey bee's three-part body is hairy all over. As workers brush against flowers and trees, their hairs spread pollen to other plants and also gather it for their hive. Their six feet and legs "groom" or gather the pollen from the hairs and move it to a joint in their hind legs that presses it into pellets. The pellets are then stored in a pollen basket on the outside of the hind lower leg and delivered to the hive.

Honey bees' brains are the size of a sesame seed. They have no ears, but their antennae provide a kind of hearing—the detection of vibrations—used inside the hive, but especially outside the hive in bee dances that help direct foraging workers to nectar and pollen. Workers perform at least two dances, the waggle and the round dance. The *waggle* communicates direction, distance, and quality of the food source. The *round* dance indicates food is very near.

Honey bees also have a sense of touch, taste, and smell. Scientists believe the sense of smell is better than a human's. Their taste receptors can discern which nectars are sweetest. Their mouth parts or proboscis form a sucking tube and tongue. Their eyes can detect color, helping them orient in the field to collect nectar, pollen, resins, and water. Painting hives different colors can help bees find their own hive.

Honey bees are amazing insects. Somewhere in His creative acts, the Lord fashioned the hairy, six-footed honey bee. We think He said, "They are very good."

(We will go into Chuck's honey house and watch a honey harvest in *Hairy, Six-Footed Honey-Makers: Part 2.*) [ONE](#)

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

ENJOY *the* JOURNEY

BY BRAD RANSOM



The older I get, the more reflective I become. Anniversary dates and milestones are important to me. This year I celebrated seven years at North American Ministries (NAM). This is a big deal to me, because I never dreamed I would be here at all. I started out in ministry just doing what God called me to do, and I have been so blessed!

God allowed me to serve on staff at three great churches: Grace FWB Church and Logos Christian School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1980-1988); First FWB Church, Ada, Oklahoma (1988-1993) and First FWB Church, Sulphur, Oklahoma (1993-2007). I honestly thought I'd spend the rest of my career pastoring the First FWB Church of Sulphur, Oklahoma, and would have loved doing it. But a conversation with Jim Puckett (then Oklahoma state mission director) changed the trajectory of my ministry and life.

When Jim asked (more like *told*) me to pray about following him as state mission director, I thought, "Why me?" I had no experience or background in missions other than being a pastor who believed in and supported missions. I had been on several mission trips and personally supported missionaries and church planters. When Allen Mabra, chairman of the Oklahoma State Mission Board reached out and asked me to pray about it, I resisted. Why would I leave the church I loved pastoring, where I had a successful ministry?

Back then, I had no idea "why." In fact, the answer wouldn't become clear for several years. After resisting the invitation to consider serving as the state mission

director, I finally conceded to pray about it, still never believing it would come to fruition (or wanting it to). In my final prayer before conceding to the "call," I remember telling God all the reasons why I couldn't go. Our church was growing. We had just finished building a new sanctuary and had seen new outreach efforts reaching more people than I could have ever dreamed. We had voted to hire a new outreach minister, we were remodeling older facilities, we were raising money to build a family life center, and we were winning many people to Christ. Why would I want to go anywhere? My people seemed happy; they loved me, and we loved them. It was every pastor's dream! Then God spoke: "You've given Me all the reasons you don't think you can go, but you haven't asked Me if I *want* you to go." I told God right then, I'd go wherever He wanted me to go.

After a difficult and tearful departure from my beloved congregation, I'll never forget my first day alone in the new office at the Oklahoma state office. "What in the world am I doing here? I am out of my league! I don't know what I'm doing!" These and many more thoughts like them were running through my head. But one thing I knew for sure. God had led me there. I still wasn't sure

why, but I knew He had. I quickly jumped in trying to figure it all out.

Fast forward six years. I was in another state, approximately 1,500 miles away, preparing to speak at their state meeting. They had heard about the good things happening in Oklahoma and invited me to speak (another “scratch your head and wonder” moment). As I drove along the interstate to the meeting my cell phone rang.

Caller ID indicated a Tennessee number, but one I didn’t recognize or have in my contact list. Upon answering the call, I was greeted by a voice I had only heard on a couple of occasions. The caller identified himself as Dr. David Crowe, the newly-appointed general director of NAM.

My first thought was, “Why is David Crowe calling me?”

He quickly answered my question. “God has laid you on my heart, and I wanted to ask you to pray about joining my staff as director of missionary assistance.”

I honestly can’t describe my feelings at that moment, but the single response that came to mind (and, thankfully, I didn’t articulate) was “Are you kidding me?” The same thoughts flooded my mind as they did six years earlier on my first day in the Oklahoma state office. “I’m not qualified. I don’t have a clue.”

I may have degrees in theology, Christian counseling, evangelism, and church planting, but am I qualified to do this job? By my own merit and judgment, I’m not qualified. But, by God’s call, I am.

After almost 35 years of ministry experience, many things started to make sense. I suddenly understood why God laid my name on the hearts of Jim Puckett and

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Allen Mabra years earlier. I realized the years I spent in the pastorate helped prepare me for the years I spent as Oklahoma’s state mission director. Those years as director gave me opportunity and experience to do what God has for me at this point in my life.

So, have I arrived? Is this it? Has God fashioned me all these years to do what I do now? I feel like this is true, but I won’t truly know until my life is over. God fashions all of us who are willing to go wherever He sends us.

So let me urge you: whether you feel qualified or ready, go where God leads you! The past seven years at NAM have been some of the greatest years of my ministry, and I know I could not have gotten here without my journey. I also know God has used some great men to mentor me and walk beside me on my journey. God places individuals in our lives to lead us and give us wise counsel. My advice is to trust them! You may not understand it now, but in time, God will reveal His plan. If your experience is like mine, it may take many years. But God’s plan is a great journey. In the end, I always return to my life’s verse: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

God may be preparing you and leading you to do something you could never imagine (like planting a church). Trust Him. You can depend on His plan and allow Him to take you on the path that will prepare you for whatever direction He leads. When you get there and look back, you will know it wasn’t always easy, but I guarantee it will be worth it!

My journey has been incredible, and I love to look back and see how God orchestrated so many things I couldn’t see at the time. God’s view is greater, and He will always lead you through. Trust Him and enjoy the journey. **ONE**

About the Writer: Dr. Brad Ransom is chief training officer at North American Missions. Learn more: fwbnam.com.

Stirring Potential

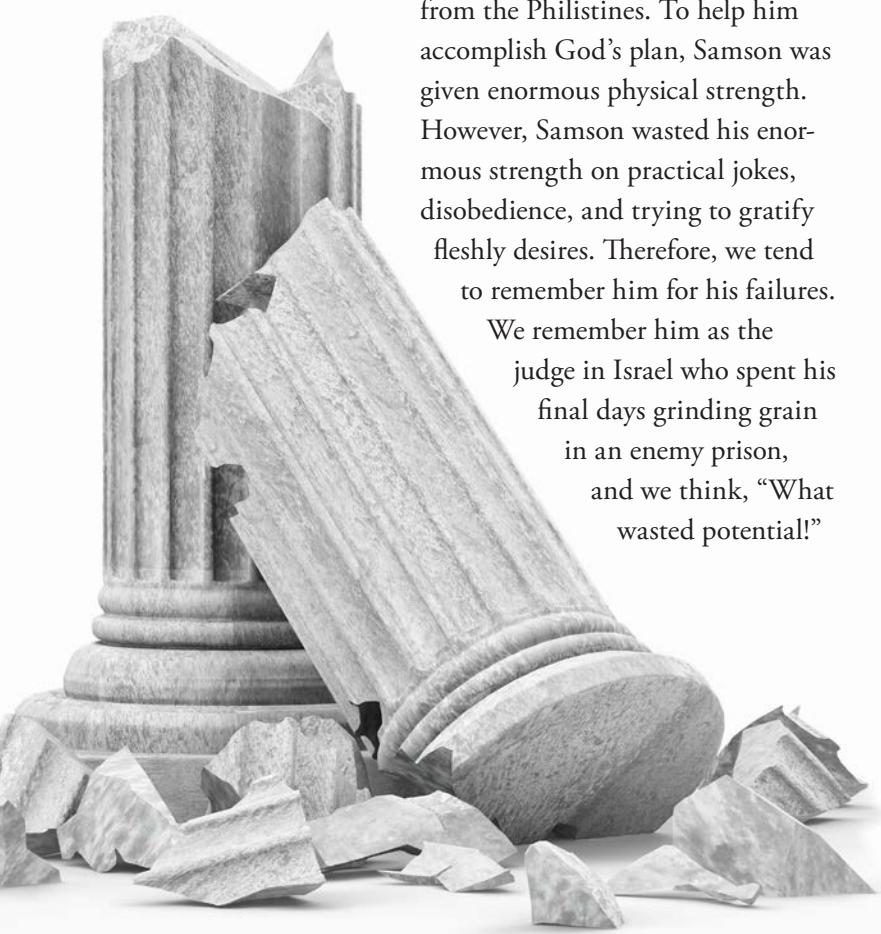
BY CH (MAJ) W. LEE FRYE, JR.

And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him... (Judges 13:25a)

God's own heart was stirred for us when we were lost, and He sacrificed His Son.

Today, He stirs our hearts for others. —Jason Berry

Do you want to be remembered for the potential of what might have been or done? Or, are you willing to allow God to change you into what He wants you to become? Recently, while reading through the book of Judges, I was reminded of the tremendous God-given potential and strength Samson possessed. Not many people have started life with credentials like his. Born as a result of God's plan in the lives of Manoah and his wife, Samson was to accomplish a great work for God, to deliver Israel



from the Philistines. To help him accomplish God's plan, Samson was given enormous physical strength. However, Samson wasted his enormous strength on practical jokes, disobedience, and trying to gratify fleshly desires. Therefore, we tend to remember him for his failures.

We remember him as the judge in Israel who spent his final days grinding grain in an enemy prison, and we think, "What wasted potential!"

Think about all the things Samson *could* have done. He *could* have strengthened his nation. He *could* have returned his people to the worship of God. He *could* have wiped out the Philistines. Yet, even though Samson did none of those things, he still accomplished the purpose announced by the angel who visited his parents before his birth. In his final act, Samson did his part to rescue Israel from the Philistines.

Today, when we read the New Testament, it does not mention Samson's failures or his heroic feats of strength. He is simply listed in the book of Hebrews, along with others "who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice and gained what was promised." In the end, Samson recognized his dependence on God and prayed the Almighty would stir his strength, one last time. When he died, God turned his failures and defeats into victory.

What stirs your heart? These things may indicate areas where God wants to use you. God uses a variety of means to develop and prepare us: Scripture, the Holy Spirit, parents, churches, schools, friends, articles (like this one), and even personal experiences.

Although I cannot relate to all of Samson's life struggles, I can relate to the Lord stirring my heart and struggling to find courage to step out in faith. Early in life, after accepting Christ, the Lord began to stir my heart with the desire to preach His Word. I remember sitting in the front row of our church, watching pastor Bob Prichard's every move. I thought, "Wow! I want to do that Lord!" I even started to dress like him,

wearing a suit, tie, and black leather zip up boots—you know the ones with the heel on them, that make you look taller. I never understood why my pastor needed them, though, because from pew to the pulpit, he looked like a powerful giant of a man. This is where it all started for me.

However, it was not until the summer of 2006, while attending the National Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, that God confirmed His plan for my family and me. On the second day of the convention, my wife Blair and I took our children (Hayden and Lily) to our hotel room for a much-needed afternoon nap. At this point, Hayden thought he was Dash from *The Incredibles* (thank goodness for Blair's *Elastigirl* arm), and Lily had turned into *The Incredible Hulk*, trying to break free from her five-point stroller harness.

Just about the time we had everyone's attention in the metropolitan area, the elevator door opened, we slipped in, and to our surprise other brave souls joined us. While ascending to our room, with operation nap time in full effect, Blair and I noticed another couple in the elevator. It was Chaplain Kerry Steedley and his wife Brenda. We both will never forget what happened next. Chaplain Steedley looked at us and asked, "Have you ever considered serving in the Army chaplaincy?"

The next day, thanks to my parents, we enjoyed coffee with the Steedleys. Blair and I told them the Lord had been stirring our hearts for some time regarding the chaplaincy. We definitely felt as though the Lord was calling us to pastor soldiers and their families. Neither of us wanted to miss out on God's potential plan for our family. But the risks of change, family separation, and war weighed heavily on our minds. We asked the Steedleys to commit to pray with us to see what the Lord would do.

In her book *Rhythms of Renewal*, Rebekah Lyons says, "Taking a risk may be the hardest thing you'll ever do, but it's the only way we can partner with God in creating good and beautiful things." Partnering with God and living out His plan and purpose for our lives always comes with risks. It ultimately cost Samson his life. And, it will cost us something, too. However, standing on the

sidelines of life, while knowing God is calling you to partner with Him is also a risk. You risk missing out on God's best. You risk missing out on the adventure He has for you. You risk the loss of rewards He has in store for you and your family.

After much prayer, Blair and I decided to partner with God and follow His plan for our lives. We decided to trust, to dream, to step out in faith, and embrace His calling. We decided not to worry about tomorrow, but to live in the peace of God's purpose for us today. Team Frye has now been serving in active duty Army Chaplaincy since 2009.

Although there have been many challenges, like my current deployment, there have also been some incredible adventures and amazing ministry opportunities for the family. Looking back, we are glad the Lord stirred our hearts to do His will and work. We are humbled by the work He prepared in advance for us to do. We are truly grateful for the work to which He has called us, and for allowing us to continue to partner with Him in the chaplaincy. In Ephesians 2:10, Paul said we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works God has prepared in advance for us. Ultimately, God's intention for all of us is that salvation results in acts of service that build up the Church. And to think: He considers us His works of art!

So, what about you? Has the Lord been stirring your heart? Has He been challenging you and calling you to partner with Him for a particular work? Maybe He is quietly asking what Chaplain Steedley asked: "Have you ever thought about serving the Lord in _____?"

Let me encourage you with a saying we have in the chaplaincy: "Live the call!" In whatever the Lord has prepared in advance for you: "Live the call!" Samson's story teaches us it is never too late to take a risk to partner with God. Samson wasted so much of his life standing on the sidelines, but ultimately, he accomplished God's purpose for his life.

However badly we may have failed, drifted, or stood watching from the sidelines, today is not too late for us

(continued on page 46)

North American Ministries Launches New Onsite Assessment Center

Antioch, TN—For several years, North American Ministries (NAM) has been working to implement an assessment process to help identify church planters more likely to be successful in planting a church. While there are no “guarantees” in ministry, especially in church planting, some proven factors make certain individuals better suited to the task than others. Many denominations and church planting networks have onsite assessment centers, and it has been a goal of NAM to have our own for several years.

For more than six years, NAM has developed and implemented its own assessment process. The department has drafted many of its own tools and used some developed by others to provide the most comprehensive assessment possible. Our current assessment process consists of more than 20

individual pieces including personality assessments, essential church planter characteristics, ministry experience, marriage check-up, risk factor analysis, and others. These have proven invaluable in helping determine those best suited to plant churches. It is a huge financial investment to plant a church, and we are trying to be good stewards of both time and money as we send families to plant churches across North America.

NAM is excited to announce the launch of an onsite Church Planter Assessment Center. The assessment process will be carried out at our offices in Antioch, Tennessee, over a three-day period and will be required for all church planting candidates. We are excited to see how this will help us send strong candi-



dates ready to face the challenges of planting a church wherever God has called them.

Please pray for NAM and potential church planting candidates as we help them discern God’s calling on their lives and ministries. NAM takes seriously this important responsibility entrusted to us by Free Will Baptists, and we value your prayers and support.

For more information about assessment, or how you can become a church planter, contact us at www.fwbnam.com. **ONE**

(continued from page 45)

to put complete trust in God and embrace His plan and purpose for life. Live the call! **ONE**

A personal note from Chaplain Frye: First, I am so thankful God desires to partner with us in ministry. I am also thankful for people like you and organizations like Randall House Publications, that partner with us too. Randall House Publications has and continues to support Free Will Baptist chaplains by shipping free Bible study materials wherever we are sent. Thanks to Ron Hunter and crew for the prayer and materials! Thanks

for helping us stir Christ’s potential in the hearts and lives of others. Second, to my Free Will Baptist family, may the Lord protect you and use you mightily during this worldwide pandemic.

About the Writer: CH (MAJ) W. Lee Frye, Jr. has served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army since 2009. He is currently stationed at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia. Learn more about becoming a Free Will Baptist chaplain: fwbnam.com/chaplaincy.



Responding to *Sally*

BY SAM MCVAY

During the early morning hours of Wednesday, September 16, Hurricane Sally slowly made landfall in Pensacola, Florida, several miles east of where she had been projected to land. Her slow movement and unexpected directional change caught many by surprise. Unrelenting heavy rains and destructive winds wreaked havoc in the Pensacola area.

The Master's Men Disaster Response Team (DRT) immediately sprang into action, making plans to join the Florida DRT to help those impacted by the storm. The National DRT, led by Sam McVay, and the Florida DRT, led by Allan Austin, were joined by Florida Executive Director Randy Bryant, local pastor Blake Nance, and men from the Beulah (Pensacola) and Damascus (Marianna) Free Will Baptist churches in assisting with clean up and relief.

Most of the work involved cleaning up large trees that had fallen on homes, across drives, and in yards. Sam's brother, Mike McVay, brought his skid steer and was a tremendous asset to the efforts. With the skid steer, the team removed debris from three local Free Will Baptist churches and several family residences in four days. Much work remains to be done, and at the time of this report, the South Carolina DRT is coordinating with the Florida and National teams to return to help with the cleanup.

Whether removing trees from a house, a storage building, a car, across fences, blocking driveways, or just across the yard, those impacted were extremely thankful and appreciative. During a very stressful time, the disaster relief ministry brings help and encouragement to those impacted. We are thankful for men and women who serve the Lord by volunteering their time and efforts to bring help and relief to those impacted by disasters.

If you are interested in helping support the ministry of Master's Men Disaster Response, or in volunteering yourself, go to fwbmastersmen.org. Your donation will help Master's Men purchase the necessary equipment to minister effectively to those suffering from the latest disaster. **ONE**

About the Writer: Sam McVay is church relations officer for Free Will Baptist North American ministries. Learn more: fwbnam.com/masters-men.



Burnout Through the Eyes of Winnie the Pooh

BY RON HUNTER JR., PH.D.

"You are braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think," said Christopher Robin to Winnie the Pooh. But author A. A. Milne reminded us through other characters that emotions can swing radically. For example, who can forget bouncing Tigger having fun living in the moment, or Owl whose wisdom calms the moment? Do not overlook Piglet who always worries, feels anxious, and struggles with self-esteem. Then there's Eeyore, who carries the weight of the world on his droopy shoulders, seeing the doom and gloom in every situation.

While each of these characters were friends of Christopher Robin, these characteristics accompany our outlook as well. While you would love to claim the calm of Owl or the positivity of Tigger, you also need the cautions of Eeyore.

After Hurricane Harvey hit in 2017, a long-time pastor in Houston reported the churches in that region experienced a turnover in staff/ministers of about 25%. Helping people during the



Illustration by E. H. Shepard. Appears on page 29 of A.A. Milne's book, *The House at Pooh Corner* in Chapter 2.

storm and the aftermath caused one in four staff members to burnout and leave the ministry. Something about a crisis brings out the best and worst in all of us.

Do you recognize the characteristics of burnout when you see them? They do not carry cuddly names like Piglet, but they get close enough to influence how you feel, respond, and act. If a hurricane took out 25% of ministers in the Houston area, what will COVID do to the world's ministry population?

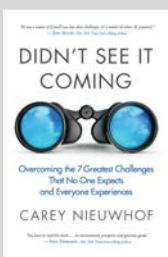
What does burnout look like? The World Health Organization came up with three factors: exhaustion or depletion of energy, increased mental distance from one's job that may include cynicism or negativity, and a reduction in desired results or effectiveness. Everyone feels some or all of the above at times, but when the characteristics linger, what do you do?

Five practices help prevent burnout: hobbies, exercise, sleep, eating right, and avoiding isolation. Find a hobby, other than television, to help you

change lanes mentally and stop the stress of your day from occupying all of your mind. If your hobby includes exercise, one stone—two birds. Eat well and get regular sleep. Routines are your friend and varying what you dwell on helps enormously.

You need Eeyore to balance your inner Tigger, but he should not dominate all the time. God gave us emotions and rationale to work together in ministry and life. Find a friend to whom you can talk honestly and lay that same honesty on our Father in prayer. **ONE**

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



RECOMMENDED BOOK

Didn't See It Coming: Overcoming the Seven Greatest Challenges That No One Expects and Everyone Experiences

By Carey Nieuwhof

LEADERSHIP QUOTE

"It's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it."

—Lou Holtz

2021 Youth Evangelistic Team

Nashville, TN—Vertical Three

Ministries is proud to announce the following students were selected to be members of the 2021 Youth Evangelistic Team. Tour dates and locations will be announced at a later time on verticalthree.com.

Ally Skelton

Northport, AL
Attends Sulphur Springs FWB,
Samantha, AL

Payton Aldridge

Tampa, FL
Attends Tampa First FWB

Cady Houske

Gallatin, TN
Attends Immanuel Church, FWB

Abigail McAfee

Gallatin, TN
Attends Immanuel Church, FWB



Katie Burke

Leesburg, GA
Attends Albany First FWB

Helen Shtefan

Tampa, FL
Attends Tampa First FWB

Rachael Wilkerson

Gallatin, TN
Attends Hendersonville FWB

Camden Lewis

Clarksville, TN
Attends Clarksville 180 Church

Easton Truett

Kinston, NC
Attends Bethel FWB

Jackson Keith

Muldrow, OK
Attends Cavanaugh FWB,
Fort Smith, AR

Jacob Robertson

Smithville, MS
Attends Smithville FWB Church

Zach Smith

Wabash, IN
Attends Southside FWB

Daniel Rodriguez

Gallatin, TN
Attends Hendersonville FWB ONE

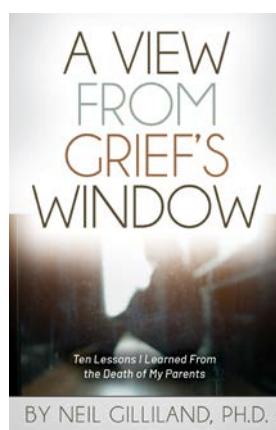
Gilliland Releases New Book

Antioch, TN—Dr. Neil Gilliland recently released his first book, *A View From Grief's Window: 10 Lessons I Learned From the Death of My Parents*. This first-hand perspective on grief from a trained counselor offers encouragement and hope to teens and adults of all ages who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Grief is real, painful, and often doesn't make sense, but it can also refine our perspective on life, death, and what matters most. Gilliland shares practical and theologically-

sound counsel through well-written and witty stories about this universal experience of loss. He includes personal narratives and biblical examples to give readers a sense of normalcy in the grieving process.

Gilliland studied Bible and missions at Welch College, and earned a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Tennessee



State University. He and his wife of 43 years, Sheila, served as missionaries in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, for eight years. He currently serves as director of member care for IM, Inc.

A View From Grief's Window is available through Randall House by calling 800-877-7030 or by visiting randallhouse.com. ONE

Beyond The Setting Sun

Words by Doug Little

Music by Doug Little

The musical score consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a bass clef. The music is primarily composed of quarter notes and eighth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are integrated into the music, appearing below the staff lines. The score is divided into four sections, each starting with a measure number (1, 5, 9, 13) and continuing through the end of the section.

1. Some day be - side the Lord I'll stand, when life on earth is done; I'll
2. We'll nev - er know a pain or care, and night will nev - er fall; 'Twill
3. I've trav - eled man - y wear - y miles, my race is al - most run; Soon

5
live with Him for - ev - er just be - yond the set - ting sun. Just be -
all be joy and hap - pi - ness there, Praise God! it won't be sun long.
I shall see Him face to face, be - yond the set - ting sun.

9
yond the fi - nal val - ley, just be - yond the last, long mile; I shall
Just be - yond the fi - nal val - ley, just be - yond the last, long mile

13
rest be - side the riv - er, just be - yond the set - ting sun.
I shall rest be - side the riv - er, just be - yond the set - ting sun.

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What a Ride!

BY EDWARD E. MOODY

Chloe and I pulled out of LaGrange, North Carolina, early on August 31, 2019. A brown dachshund who thought she was the protector of our family, I couldn't help but wonder how she would handle the trip. Passing Raleigh, I decided to stop one last time at my favorite coffee shop: Cup A Joe. The shop had just opened when I began to visit as a new student at North Carolina State University 27 years earlier. I'd stopped there many times while making the trip to North Carolina Central University in Durham. I often made final adjustments to my Wednesday night Bible studies there. I got my coffee, and Chloe and I were set.

It was the first time I'd paused over the previous weeks. My mind wandered back to my last day as pastor of Tippett's Chapel. We had already said our goodbyes, but our last day fell on Wednesday. We continued our regular activities, and I concluded the final lesson for our adult Bible study series.

Earlier that day, I had visited the UNC Burn Center to see a church neighbor who had been severely burned. It was like everything had come full circle. Early in our ministry, I had tried to interact with him and there, in those last hours, we were talking about Jesus. I had started at Tippett's Chapel on a Thursday. Nineteen years and two months later, I ended on Wednesday. As we rolled west, I thought about the ups and downs, and the way God worked. I looked over at Chloe and thought, "What a ride!"

It was hard to believe how everything fell into perfect place. We packed our home, closed on one house, and bought another and moved almost simultaneously. Chloe stayed with my parents while Lynne set up the house in Nashville, and Mitchell moved into the dorm at Welch College for his freshman year. After a weekend in Nashville, I caught a plane back to North Carolina and spent a final week in Chapel Hill, finishing up my work at North Carolina Central University.

On my last day at NCCU, students and faculty kept coming by the office, and I felt there was so much more to do. I just couldn't get things wrapped up. Finally, a long-time faculty member and close friend remarked, "It will never end until you go."

So, I said my goodbyes and walked out the door, almost 24 years to the day since I had begun my

work there. Much happened during those years. I had a role in hiring most of the faculty in the School of Education. We developed new programs, and I was privileged to work with many wonderful students. I hoped I had been salt and light. As we rolled toward Nashville, I looked over at Chloe and thought, "What a ride!"

Over the course of a ten-hour trip with a dachshund who requires frequent bathroom stops, you can process a lot. I thought about the trip from Tennessee to North Carolina 29 years earlier when our truck broke down in the mountains. As we approached Nashville, I recalled the time I made the trip from North Carolina to Nashville to become a new student at then Free Will Baptist Bible College. After hours of pondering, we finally pulled up to our new home. I looked over at Chloe, and her expression seemed to be saying, "What a ride!"

It was Labor Day weekend. On Labor Day, we met Keith Burden and his wife Debbie at the National Offices Building. They helped Lynne and me get acclimated. As I moved into the office, I immediately noticed the Free Will Baptist logo on every bookshelf. My mind went to Dr. Melvin Worthington. It gives me a deep sense of responsibility to know the kind of men I followed into that office. The next day, it was off to Oklahoma City with our team to plan the 2020 National Convention. I watched Brother Keith interact with the officials and noted the important relationships he had developed over the years. I would understand how important those Oklahoma City relationships were a few months later.

September sped by, and soon Keith and Debbie said their goodbyes. Suddenly, the traveling began: the D6 Conference followed by a service with Pastor Jim Christian in Florida. (I'm so glad I was able to be with him before he passed away.) Then it was off to North Carolina (twice), Arkansas, West Virginia, back to North Carolina and a service in Tennessee, followed by the Leadership Conference and the holidays. Between trips, we recorded podcasts and videos, and developed new resources our churches could utilize.

The New Year kicked off in Florida, then back to Oklahoma City and up to Michigan. Snow covered the ground when I met with Jimmy Lawson and our pastors in Michigan, but I left them for sunny Florida and

several blistering hot days in Cuba. I found myself drawn to Florida again in February, then South Carolina, and Georgia.

When I got home, I learned that Chloe had become very ill in my absence. She died the afternoon of March 2.

That night, historic numbers of damaging tornadoes rolled through Tennessee, but Lynne and I were so exhausted, we never stirred. Chloe would have awakened us.

Those devastating tornadoes allowed us to see our churches in action, as hundreds partnered with The Donelson Fellowship to help. On the Wednesday after the tornadoes, I drove their path along I-40 to Cookeville FWB Church to meet the Disaster Response Team from South Carolina. Other teams came from Florida, Illinois, and only Ken Akers or Chris Dotson could tell us where else. Today, nine months later, that recovery work goes on. Samaritan's Purse still has offices at Sylvan Park FWB Church, and every weekday, a team goes out to rebuild homes in East Nashville.

The following weekend, Lynne and I returned to North Carolina, to Bethel FWB Church in Kinston, where I grew up. When we returned to the office, we hosted a church coaches training led by Dr. Danny Dwyer, partnering with North American Ministries to turn Dr. Dwyer into a "coach of coaches" to greatly expand our efforts to create healthy churches.

After such a hectic schedule, I realized I did not feel well, perhaps a bit run down. I went to the doctor but did not improve. About the time I was scheduled to arrive in Arizona that weekend, I found myself at a hospital in Nashville. As the doctors were treating me, we spent a great deal of time talking about COVID-19. Those conversations became very valuable in the days and weeks to come.

On Sunday, March 15, I was at home when I received the CDC recommendations regarding COVID. I quickly forwarded them to my friend Harold Koenig, a Duke University medical researcher and asked, "Does this mean what I think it means?" His response made it clear that everything was about to change.



↑
Chloe

On Monday morning, Moderator Tim York and I called an emergency meeting with state leaders and shared what we knew. We all were very worried for our churches and our people. We began to work with our churches to point them toward technical assistance to help them get online. Before long, we officially shut the National Offices Building down, but we continued to run the mail and get those IRS letters out on the day we received the request.

Despite the social restrictions and growing pandemic, I sensed Free Will Baptists were going to be okay on March 22, when it felt like every Free Will Baptist church in North America sent a picture of their pastor conducting an online service. Prior to COVID-19, evan-

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glical churches and denominations (including our own) were under great duress. When I finally went to bed that night, I felt an overwhelming sense of joy. Our pastors were trying hard to minister to their people, and our people were proud of their efforts. Hope in the Darkness!

Our team worked to produce resources to help our people. Though we did this during COVID, most of the resources developed will remain applicable

post COVID. The relationships previously developed in Oklahoma City helped us as we worked with local officials to determine whether it would be possible to have a convention in Oklahoma City.

My first service after the onset of COVID was at Ozark Family Church (MO) on May 31. What a relief to speak to people in person! The next day I joined Missouri for a pared down state meeting. As I drove away, I thought how great it felt to be around people once again, that perhaps we were getting back to normal. The following week, when I traveled to South Carolina for a television interview, I was reminded COVID was still with us. A cameramen had lost an uncle to COVID, and the interviewer's mother was battling COVID. In many ways it felt we were taking two steps forward and one step back.

Throughout much of June, we were busy getting ready

for the General Board meeting and the virtual convention. Sometimes, I wondered if it were more difficult to have a virtual than in-person convention. As the date approached, COVID cases in Nashville spiked, and COVID began to impact many of our departments. We still held the General Board meeting. It is a testament to our people who carefully followed recommended guidelines; otherwise, we undoubtably would have had people become ill. As I drove away that Tuesday after the meeting, I thought of what had happened in the previous few months and said, "What a ride!"

In August, we began talking with state leaders and coaches about what has become the Jeremiah 29 Initiative. We believe we will continue to be impacted by the pandemic for another year, possibly longer. We were reminded that Jeremiah instructed the exiles to build, plant, and pray. We have encouraged our people to do the same through Bible reading and prayer time with family and small groups, and focus upon community. I sometimes wonder if God isn't actually using COVID and the social unrest that surrounds us to return our focus to Him and His Word and the needs of others.

In 2021, we will focus on the *3 for 30 Plan* adopted at the General Board Meeting. In a nutshell, the plan is to *reach* people for Christ, *train* our people to minister (and reach others) and to *give* all of our resources (money, talents, spiritual gifts) in service to the Lord.

The Executive Office plans to equip our people to fulfill these goals by promoting our agencies and educating our people about how to more effectively utilize their services. We hope to equip our people by providing written resources and training (podcasts, webinars, seminars) and coaching (Refresh with NAM). If we effectively use the resources the Lord has provided, we can increase the health and retention of our churches and pastors. It is our hope when we reach 2030, Free Will Baptists will look back, see that God helped us meet these goals, and exclaim, "What a ride!" **ONE**

About the Writer: Edward E. Moody, Jr., Ph.D. is executive secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

We Need God

BY EDDIE MOODY

We need God! We hear that often today as we consider our circumstances. Throughout history, people have said this when experiencing famine, mistreatment, impossible obstacles, and all types of danger. Romans 15:4 tells us "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." As we read our Bibles, we find hope. For example, we learn God used Joseph to save many from a famine. God used Moses to lead His people out of oppression. Joseph and Daniel helped people with impossible problems. Nehemiah, Esther, and Mordecai saved their people from those who meant to harm them. In the Bible we see that when people cried, "We need God!" God sent His people to bring them through. What are some of the characteristics of the people God used?

Spirit of God

God used people noted for having the Spirit of God. After observing Joseph, Pharaoh asked, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" (Genesis 41:38) The queen of Babylon recalled the same characteristic in Daniel when the writing on the wall appeared (Daniel 5:11). In both examples, people consulted the magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers of that day but found no help for their problems (Genesis 41:15, 24; Daniel 5:8). In desperation, they

finally turned to people who had the Spirit of God in them.

Biblical Perspective

All these individuals had a clear, biblical perspective on life. Consider Joseph's perspective on the abuse he received from his brothers. He consoled his brothers about their guilt regarding his mistreatment. Rather than becoming bitter, Joseph noted their intended harm was used to save lives (Genesis 45:5, 7). Joseph probably used this perspective to cope with the treatment received by Potiphar and his wife (Genesis 39:11-20) and perhaps his disappointment in being forgotten by the chief butler (Genesis 40:23). You might say this perspective was "baked in," as Joseph mentioned it again in Genesis 50:19-21 which sounds much like Romans 8:28.

Concern for Others

These biblical heroes were more concerned about others than themselves as seen by Joseph's dealings with the butler and the baker (Genesis 40:5-6). Moses demonstrated concern in his intercessory prayer for Israel (Exodus 32:32). Daniel expressed concern in his counsel to the brutal (Jeremiah 29:22) King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:27). Nehemiah's concern is reflected in his response after learning of the suffering of the survivors (Nehemiah 1:3-4). When these people saw others in distress, they were moved to action.

Sacrificial Lifestyle

Many people today see the pain and anguish of others, but few are willing to sacrifice to allow God to work through them. This was the point of the interaction between God and Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3). Moses knew the cost of helping Israel. You could argue he'd already tried to deliver them but was rejected (Exodus 2:13-14). Nehemiah walked away from his prestigious position as the king's cupbearer (Nehemiah 1:1) to battle with the likes of Sanballat and Tobiah (Nehemiah 2:10). Mordecai risked his life to save the king (Esther 2:21-22), and Esther risked everything (Esther 4:14) to save her people. You can't help others until you are willing to sacrifice yourself.

So, when you hear people say, "We need God," what they are really saying is "We need you to allow God to work through you." They need a servant (1 Corinthians 9:19-27), an ambassador of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), a real neighbor (Luke 10:37) who has the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22-23), a biblical perspective (Romans 12:2), concern for others (Philippians 2:4), and the willingness to sacrifice (Philippians 2:3), if necessary. They need you. **ONE**

Eddie Moody

Executive Secretary,
National Association of
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