

themessenger

a publication of the wv state association of free will baptists
www.wvfwb.org | the.messenger@wvfwb.org



Volume 10 Number 1

March 2010



Bible, Music, & Arts Festival

WV State Association of
Free Will Baptists
Fairdale Free Will Baptist
Fairdale, WV | April 24

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**DEDICATION OF THE NEW SANCTUARY
NEW HOPE FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH
MAN, W.V.**

Our dream of a new church building has been realized. New Hope Freewill Baptist church of Man, WV. moved into its new sanctuary on the new year of 2010. Reverend David Cook started a revival on Jan. 4, 2010 at which time we had our dedication service. Pastor Sherman Grimmatt opened the service with dedicating the sanctuary to the Lord. Pastor Grimmatt recognized all those who helped make our dream a reality. Many people were involved and no small effort went unnoticed. We began construction on June 1, 2009 after tearing down the old building and cleaning the lot where our new church would be built. Dedicated members, with a budget of thirty thousand dollars, worked diligently to accomplish our goal. During this time we had offerings and donations to help accomplish our vision. In a period of six months our beautiful building is now dedicated to the Lord. We are so proud to display the Lord's house as a light in our community and a place for precious souls to find forgiveness, comfort, and peace for all that pass by. Our fervent prayer is that souls will be added daily and our building will always be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. The works that we do now is for a foundation for our future generation that they might not build upon the sand but upon the rock of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, The same yesterday, today, and forever. Pastor Sherman Grimmatt
New Hope Freewill Baptist Church
Man, WV

MCCORKLE ANNOUNCES REVIVAL

The McCorkle Free Will Baptist Church at Sod, West Virginia announces their spring revival with Rev. Billy Poe Jones as the evangelist. Rev. Jones pastors in Mountain City, Tennessee and is a frequent speaker at revivals and other meetings. He is a dynamic speaker and a great preacher. The revival is from March 21 to March 24, 2010. Services begin at 6:00 pm on Sunday and 7:00 pm thru the week. Everyone is invited. There will be special music each night. Rev. Russel Wright, pastor.

**REPORT FROM BROTHERHOOD
CONFERENCE**

Brotherhood Conference reports that Daniel Castle from Good Shepherd was ordained as a minister. Bro. Harold Scarberry and Bro. Arthur Smith transferred to the Brotherhood Conference from the Logan Conference pending a letter from that conference. They both attend Good Shepherd FWB Church. Phil Williamson from Faith FWB Church was licensed for one year to preach.

Rev. Steve Williams and Rev. Ray Williamson were re-elected to the Executive Committee for a three year term.

Bro. Irvin Scarberry resigned as Director of Brotherhood Camp. Bro. Travis Baker was appointed as Director.

The Placement Committee reports the following meeting places and dates for 2010:

April 8 & 10 ----- Central FWB

July 8 & 10 ----- Conference Center

October 8 & 9 ----- Camp Creek

OBITUARY REPORT

Central FWB Church -----Sis. Virginia Smith

Trinity FWB Church -----Bro. George Bicer

Camp Creek FWB Church -----
Sis. Alice Lucas Hawkins

Bro. Charles Holley



**West Virginia WAC
Spring Luncheon**

The West Virginia Women Active for Christ Spring Luncheon hosted by Kilsyth Free Will Baptist Church. All ladies invited!

Theme: What Is Your Focus?

Date: Saturday, April 10, 2010

Registration: 9:30 AM

Speaker: Jeanie Bowman

Location: [Kilsyth Free Will Baptist](#), Mount Hope, WV

Mission Projects: A special offering will be taken for the Beckley Red Cross.

Bring your old prescription glasses. We will be sending them to Africa for the Hanna Project

I WANT TO STUDY THE BIBLE

Recently a lady in our church asked me if I would give her a list of suggested resources for her own personal Bible study. It struck me that others might have the same request. Following is a suggested list of study materials that I would recommend for serious Bible students.

First, I would purchase a really good study Bible. Among those I would favor would be the King James Open Bible published by Nelson Publishing Company. It is available in a softback edition or a more expensive hardback cover. It has a great deal of summary information at the beginning of each book.

Another choice of a good study Bible is the Thompson Chain Reference Bible. It is copyrighted by the B. B. Kirkbride Bible Company in London, England but is available in most Christian Bookstores. Millions of copies have been sold. This Bible is unique for the chain of references that distinguish it. It has many other helps included. Both the above mentioned Bibles have limited concordances which are very important. Keep in mind that there are several other good study Bibles.

In the second tier of suggested resources would be a Bible dictionary. Bible dictionaries not only give you the meaning of terms as used in the bible but also help you with the proper pronunciation. Then I strongly suggest a good concordance. Although study Bibles contain a concordance, they are limited by space. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible will contain thousands more entries and will be a great help as you look for the location of certain words, topics or phrases in scripture. Additionally, one should have a good bible atlas containing maps of ancient and modern times. How can a person study the missionary journeys of the great Apostle Paul without maps of the areas he traveled? Then a good Bible handbook is indispensable. Both Haley's and Unger's Bible Handbooks are good.

The next resource to consider would certainly be a commentary or set of commentaries. The cost factor may determine the selection of commentaries. A one volume commentary, such as Matthew Henry's, is the most economical route. However, a more complete set of commentaries is desirable if one can afford them. Personally, I have several sets of commentaries since I like to compare what different theologians say about a passage. This way one certainly gets the sense of the issues and different views. I have the Pulpit Commentary, which is my favorite. Free Will Baptists should consider purchasing the Randall House Commentaries since they are written by very fine Free Will Baptist authors and scholars. They are edited by my good friend, Dr. Robert Picirilli. I also own Lange's Commentaries but they are most useful for those Bible students who understand some of the ancient languages. I also own Matthew Henry's six volume set, Barnes Notes, The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary, and the New International Commentary on the New Testament.

Another way to go on Commentaries is to buy a complete set of commentaries and then begin buying commentaries on individual books of the Bible. For instance I have a set of commentaries called the Treasury of David by C. H. Spurgeon. It is a three volume set. I have single commentaries on Genesis and other Books of the Bible.

Then, I would suggest a book on Systematic Theology. For instance, if you wanted to study a topic such as "Angels", or "Perseverance of the Saints", a systematic theology book will be invaluable. These also are available in both single volume and multi-volume sets. I would highly recommend Rev. Leroy Forlines for this resource.

Specific titles such as Arthur Pink's series on "All the Parables of the Bible" and "All the Prayers of the Bible" are very helpful and interesting. I personally would not want to be without the "Treasury of David" by C. H. Spurgeon.

Finally, no Free Will Baptist should be without a Free Will Baptist Treatise. I am sure that as you gradually build your library you will discover many other resources that will interest and help you as you study God's precious Word. The important thing is to study.

By Dr. James H. Cox, Jr.

"In Case You Missed it..."

Doubtless, you've been flooded by now with "emergency e-mails and crisis letters" from missionaries around the world, and from the home office as well. I know all too well (from my own feelings in such cases) that the tendency is to dismiss such communication as useless bulk mailings -- you see, I used to be a postman, and I hated even having to carry the stuff to the doors of the homes I served!

However, please, please, take notice that this isn't just a case of "crying wolf". The newsletter that we have made widely available and created a PRINTER FRIENDLY VERSION in our emails, brings the real picture of what has happened.

Please feel free to read, print, post and distribute these letters to anyone who will be willing to accept it. However, above all, PLEASE PRAY about this situation. Just imagine how embarrassing -- but worse yet, heart rending it would be for someone to miss heaven because one of us was too concerned about doing without a pizza and soft drink to feel like giving to reach that individual for Christ.

God bless you,

And Happy 2010!

Jim & Vicki Sturgill
Belo Horizonte, MG Brazil



Greetings from hot (98 to 100 degrees F.), dry, and dusty Bondoukou. I am well, busy, and blessed beyond measure. In looking back on the year 2009, I can truly say "what a faithful Friend the Lord Jesus has been to me"! Surely He has been that for you, too.

Please help me to especially pray for my Muslim neighbors, for whom my heart is burdened. As I presented them my best wishes for 2010, I boldly added "and may this be the year that you will know and receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior". It's no surprise that each one was shocked and temporarily speechless, but no one became angry with me. And one actually said that he is almost ready to believe. Praise the Lord! His name is Amadou and he has been willing to listen as I've shared with him on different occasions. My heart tells me that he is, indeed, almost persuaded. PLEASE PRAY.

In early January, many of you received the message regarding the financial crisis that Free Will Baptist International Missions is facing. I trust that you have been able to respond to the need. Reports indicate that the response has been slow but

positive. But, the deficit still hasn't been erased. Thank you for praying and giving. This crisis has affected other Mission agencies to the point of workers being recalled from their fields of service. It is our prayer that we can avoid this. And, I am confident that we can, IF God's people humble themselves, pray, and give as God prompts and provides.

January has been a month for meetings. The Community Health Evangelism Team (Anderson and Smith) had three days of business meetings; I represented the Mission at the Eastern Conference of Free Will Baptist Churches and Verlin Anderson attended the Northern and Southern Conference meetings; and, in Abidjan we met with those whom the Mission hoped to bring to Oklahoma for the National Association meeting in July. Due to the financial crisis, we missionaries won't be able to go and only one of the six Ivorian delegates will be able to go (if he can obtain a visa). Though disappointed, each one received the news with much grace and understanding.

Debbie Anderson and I are excited about beginning CHE training sessions with the Gouméré women. We are now in the planning and preparation stage, with hopes to begin the sessions in March. I know you'll be praying with us about this.

The Hanna Project (THP), headed up by Mike Cousineau and Clint Morgan, will be returning to Côte d'Ivoire in February. Team members will be doing general and cataract surgery; eye exams; a school building repair project; village health care and evangelism, etc. As He has in the past, we know that God will use them to bring HOPE, HELP, and HEALING to a very needy people in the Doropo area. Thank you for praying.

Wow, I've so much more to share but this is getting long, huh? I guess it can wait until the next time. God loves you! I love you! Take care! Jesus is coming soon! Love and prayers,

Alice F. Smith



KANAWHA CONFERENCE REPORT

The Kanawha Conference met on February 19 & 20, 2010 at the Southridge Free Will Baptist Church. Rev. Robert McCallister moderated the Friday session and Rev. Allen Young moderated the Saturday session. Visitors were Dr. James Cox, our state Promotional Director and Rev. Earl White our Assistant Moderator. Dr. Cox had a chart that shows the Co-Op percentage break down and encouraged our churches to start contributing to Co-Op. The conference voted to start paying 10% of its quarterly income to the state Co-Op. The may meeting will be May 14 & 15, 2010 with the Loudendale FWB Church where Rev. E. B. Hall is pastor

GREETINGS TO OUR FRIENDS

We had to cancel several of our services because of snow, icy roads and single digit temperatures. We have had an abundance of snow here in central West Virginia. It started as rain changing to sleet and freezing rain and then “lots and lots of that white stuff.” When we did have a service everyone that was able to attend seemed happy to be there. Maybe they were starting to get “cabin fever, but I

like to think they were hungering for fellowship of God’s people. The snow started melting and then we got another foot on a Saturday night, but spring is just around



the corner, so we hope there won’t be too many more snowy days till next season. While it was snowing, I thought of the old hymn “Whiter Than Snow.” Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Last week Kenneth ministered at the Central West Virginia Outreach Center in Gassaway,. A young couple was saved and they asked directions to the church and said they would be there. Our prayer is that the weather clears up and stays nice enough that they will attend soon. During Thanksgiving week we had 15 deer hunters attend our Sunday school because of deer season. One was a minister and owner of a building construction company in Baltimore, Maryland. He asked if he could bring 20-25 of his workers to work on our building to do anything we needed done, maybe add a class room or a restroom. This spring we would like to have some volunteers for a weekend or a Saturday to help do some visiting here in Glenville. God bless you for your labor. Anyone wanting to help, just give us a call: Glenville New Life Free Will Baptist Church, c/o Rev. Kenneth Cooper, 1443 Spruce Run Road, Glenville, WV 26351 Phone: 304-462-5943

JANUARY CO-OP GIVING

Unity Conference	20.00
Brotherhood Conference Deacons	49.10
Loudendale FWB Church	75.00
Springdale FWB Church	75.00
Carbon FWB Church	50.00
Crown Hill FWB Church	169.00
Victory FWB Church	16.15
Kopperston FWB Church	95.40
Nolan FWB Church	355.20
New Testament FWB Church	500.00
Ward Road FWB Church	92.15
FWB Foundation	44.31
Victory FWB Church	131.38
Emmons FWB Church	194.50
FWB Church of Pierpoint	100.00
Parsley Bottom FWB Church	300.00
Victory FWB Church	57.00
Victory FWB Church	80.25
Good Shepherd FWB Church	420.38
Carbon FWB Church	84.00
Crown Hill FWB Church	131.50

Youth Missions Trip



April 8-11, 2010----Niagara Falls and Buffalo, New, York

Teenagers and chaperones are invited to go with Dr. James Cox to visit Rev. Dan Booth at his mission work in New York. We will take a bus from Charleston, WV to the Niagara Falls where we will spend the day on Friday, April 9, 2010. Then we will proceed about 85 miles to Clifton Springs where we will do visitation the next day. We will spend two nights at the Holiday Inn. On Sunday we will attend the morning worship service. Dr. Cox will preach and our teenagers will sing. After the service, we will have lunch at the church and then leave for home. We should arrive back in Charleston about 10:30 pm.

We have room for 47 people. Younger students may go only if they have a chaperone, parent or sibling 16 or older. The cost of the trip will be \$ 185.00. This will pay for transportation to and from Charleston, WV, room, based on four persons to the room, and some meals. Bring your own spending money.

Make checks and send form to: Dr. James Cox

Rt. 4 121-A

Hurricane, WV 25526

--Registration Form (first come basis)

Names and ages _____

Name of Church _____

Telephone # _____

Address _____

Amount included: \$ _____ Payment is nonrefundable unless the seat can be resold. Further directions will be sent to you upon receipt of payment or call 304-562-6808. Checks due no later than March 15.

Report of the West Virginia Bible Institute

West Virginia FWB Bible Institute

The West Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptists in their annual meeting in June, 2009 discussed having a Bible Institute with branches in different areas of the state. So far we have two branches, one in Mingo County and one in Huntington. In the fall we had about ninety students and eight courses. Currently, we are teaching the courses below. Our people have really been excited and are being trained for the Lord's work. We would like to have a branch in Beckley and another in Logan or the Parkersburg area. If you are interested, please call Dr. James Cox and he will help you start an institute in your area or church.

Laurel Creek FWB Church
Lenore, West Virginia

February 9--March 16, 2010 (Tuesday evenings)

6:30—8:30	Old Testament Survey II	Fred Coleman
6:30—8:30	Sunday School Ministry	James Ed Baisden
6:30—8:30	Growing Toward Spiritual Maturity	John Preece
6:30—8:30	Your Ministry of Evangelism	Earl White

Sunshine Free Will Baptist Church
Huntington, West Virginia

February 9--March 16, 2010 (Tuesday evenings)

7:00—9:00	Teaching Techniques	Jodi Fortner & Tom Dyer
7:00—9:00	New Testament Survey	Claude Holly
7:00—9:00	Understanding Music and Worship	Ivan Asbury
7:00—9:00	Understanding People	Eddie Hay

MARCH FOR MISSIONS REVIVAL SERVICES ANNOUNCED

DATE	CHURCH	SPEAKER
Monday, March 1, 2010	Evergreen Hills	Rev. David Crowe
Tuesday, March 2, 2010	Mt. Hope	Rev. David Crowe
Wednesday, March 3, 2010	Hope	Rev. David Crowe
Thursday, March 4, 2010	Veto Lake Tabernacle	Rev. David Crowe
Friday, March 5, 2010	Bonds Creek	Rev. David Crowe
Saturday, March 6, 2010	Maple Lane	Rev. Allen Whitt
Monday, March 8, 2010	Beach Run	Rev. Roy Roach
Tuesday, March 9, 2010	Good Hope	Rev. Ivan Asbury
Wednesday, March 10, 2010	Emmanuel	Rev. Rickie Holstein
Thursday, March 11, 2010	New Life	Rev. Tom Blake

All services start at 7:30 and there will be a free will offering each night for missions. Plaques will be given to the top three churches giving the most money on April 10, 2010 at the Bonds Creek Church. Food will be served.

CLASSIFICATION OF SERMONS

In the last issue of the Messenger I wrote about the "Preparing the Heart to Preach". In this issue I want to discuss the types of sermons that one may preach. Many of us may not even be aware of the types of sermons we are delivering and this is a fault that should be corrected. We should be masters of our craft. I do not believe we will ever come to the point where our preaching cannot be improved. With this statement in mind, let me begin by defining the first type of sermon to be discussed.

I. TEXTUAL SERMONS

Textual preaching is announcing and taking a text. The main points are taken from the text and some application is made. The main points are centered around a theme. Sprinkled throughout the sermon may be some illustrations, but at the end of the sermon the listener still has not been fully informed about the meaning of the text.

II. TOPICAL SERMONS

The second type of sermon with which we are most familiar is the topical sermon. In the topical sermon we may read a passage of scripture and then may barely refer to it again. In a textual sermon we jump from one passage to another. For instance if we are preaching on the topic of "Grace", we may briefly go from one part of scripture to another spending little time at each stop. Sometimes this may work fine and is popular with many in our congregations. The problem is that one can "prove" many erroneous points by taking verses out of context to say what we want to say. Preachers must be careful that they do not link verses from different passages in the Bible in an erroneous fashion to prove their own ideas..

III. EXPOSITORY SERMONS

The final type of sermon in this list is the expository sermon. The great Apostle Paul said to Timothy "preach the word". Most Bible scholars will agree that the expository sermon is generally the most effective and safest type of sermon for a preacher who really wants to follow Paul's advice. An expository sermon usually involves reading a longer passage of scripture and then giving the sense to it. All the points come from the text, although other passages may be used for illustration. It is explaining what the passage has to say. The Puritan would say that he who preaches from a text should labor to "open it" to bring out of the text what is there. For instance, when preaching on one of the parables of Jesus, the expositor would read the entire parable and then fully discuss every major point in the parable. When finished a careful listener should understand what the parable really is all about. It usually takes more study and labor on the part of the minister to develop and present good expository messages because the whole aim of the preacher is to present what the text is saying about God and to God's people. Expository preaching is not about "rambling" through a passage. It is desirable that any type of sermon be appropriately illustrated for interest sake and for clarity. However, that is fodder for a future article in this series.

Here are a few tidbits of advice from various preachers:

- A. The sermon must not be too long.
- B. It should not be delivered in a monotone.
- C. Good preaching demands hard work and much study.
- D. There must be a further aim than just to deliver information.
- E. The basic reason for poor preaching is lack of time spent in preparation.
- F. The scripture should be read accurately and clearly.

Perhaps in the next issue I will discuss the "Parts" of a sermon.

What an honor and joy it is to be a herald for God!

By Dr. James H. Cox, Jr.



**2010 West Virginia
Bible, Music & Arts Festival**
(State Youth Competitions)

Date: Saturday, April 24, 2010

Registration: 8:30 AM (Competition begins at 9AM)

Location: Fairdale Free Will Baptist Church

The competition will last from 9AM to noon. Lunch will be served, then awards ceremony following lunch. Anyone may come to observe.

Participants must mail in their registration form & registration fees to Jim Hutchison no later than Saturday, April 17.

Registration fees:

Single Entry: \$25

Groups of 2 - 4: \$45

Groups of 5 or more: \$75

Mail registration & fees:

Jim Hutchison

527 Lower Terrace

Huntington, WV 25705

National Youth Conference

July 18-21, 2010 – Oklahoma City, OK

2010 NYC Theme: Wherever

“Be witnesses of Me” Acts 1:8

These May Be Ordered Online

Competition Guidelines, Updates and Changes

Truth and Peace 2010 Manual

NYC Related Downloads

Bible Competition Information

To order study materials for Bible Competition call 1-800-877-7030

Bible Study CD - all Bible competition events

NYC Competition Guidelines - for detailed information about all competitive events

Official Competition Bible

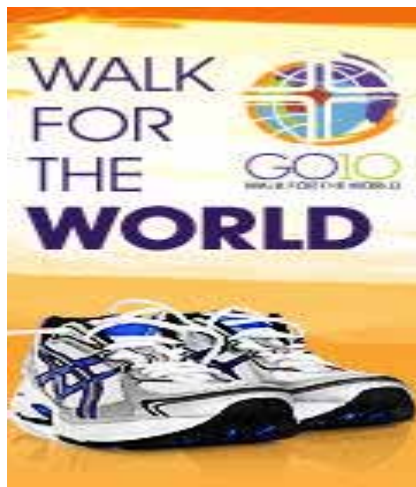
Entry Deadlines

All entries for national competition must be postmarked by June 15, 2010, and mailed along with the appropriate forms and fees to:

National Youth Conference

P.O. Box 17306

Nashville, TN 37217



What is Go10 Walk?

The purpose is to challenge young people (and adults) to consider their role in reaching the nations with the gospel in their generation.

The year 2010 is the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of our modern missions program. Laura Belle Barnard was sent out as our first missionary to India in 1935 and, to commemorate this event, we are challenging FWB young people and adults to a life-changing commitment. They will be asked to commit to walk a 10-mile segment of a 2,500-mile course and to a 40-day prayer and devotional journey in preparation for the walk.

Our Regional Coordinator is Jeff Bennett. If you plan to participate, please email him at: jeffb98@aol.com

The dates we are encouraging West Virginian's to walk are:

Friday, June 4

Saturday, June 5

Monday, June 7

All participants must register online. If you need help, please email Jeff Bennett and he will walk you through the process.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE ASSOCIATION

The West Virginia State Association meets on June 11 and 12 at the Heritage Free Will Baptist Church at Inwood, WV. The theme of the meeting is Sharing God's Love and Might with Our Friends. For those who are coming from southern West Virginia they should travel I-81 through Winchester, VA. Continue to Exit 5 at Inwood. Turn right onto WV-51 for one-half mile. Then turn right on US-11/WV 51 for 0.2 miles. Then WV-51 will turn left, go 2.5 miles and the church will be on the left.

The pastor is Rev. Thomas Hoffmaster. The telephone number is 304-229-2210.

Preachers for the annual meeting are: Rev. Luther Morgan-Friday morning. Rev. Daniel Kelley -Friday night

On Saturday morning there will be a guest speaker from our National Association.

Some of the places to stay include:

Holiday Inn
301 Foxcroft Ave.
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-267-5500

Super 8, Martinsburg
2048 Edwin Miller Blvd.
Martinsburg, WV 25402
304-263-0801

Hampton Inn
975 Foxcroft Ave.
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-267-2900

Days Inn
209 Viking Way
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-263-1800

Roadway Inn
94 McMilliam Court
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-263-8811

Comfort Suites, Martinsburg
St. Rt. 9 E and Short Rd.
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-263-8888

INVITATION TO ALL

Everyone is invited to meet the Sounds of Praise Ensemble from Southeastern Free Will Baptist College at a morning service and afternoon meal at Springdale Free Will Baptist Church on Sunday, 6/27/10 at 10:00 AM.

Sunday school, and 11:00 a.m. worship service. In our Sunday school hour, the college students will be teaching the children's Sunday school class. Southeastern's promotional director, Brother Heath Ferguson,



will be bringing the morning message and the Sounds of Praise will provide the music. Youth interested in pursuing music ministry are especially encouraged to attend and will have a great opportunity to socialize with the ensemble. The focus and heart of Southeastern is the training of future pastors, missionaries, Christian school teachers, youth directors, music directors and business workers. Brother Ferguson and the Ensemble will be happy to provide information to youth and families interested in furthering their education in a fundamental Christian atmosphere. All are welcome to attend and share in the joy of good Gospel singing and preaching! Springdale Free Will Baptist Church is located 2.5 miles off Rt. 34 on Cow Creek Road, Hurricane, WV. Please contact Pastor Larry Cooper at (304) 562-5389 for directions.

Former FWBBC President Receives Educational Leadership Award

NASHVILLE, TN – Dr. Charles Thigpen, former president of Free Will Baptist Bible College, received the prestigious Biblical Higher Education Award on February 19 during the 63rd annual meeting of the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) in Orlando, Florida. Thigpen is one of only eight recipients in ABHE history to receive the award that recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in advancing and assuring quality biblical higher education.

Dr. Randy Bell, director of the Commission on Accreditation, presented the Biblical Higher Education Award on behalf of the Board of Directors and said of Dr. Thigpen: "He was a true pioneer of the Commission on Accreditation, one of the people whose shoulders we stand on tonight."

Thigpen was a charter member of the Commission on Accreditation when it was launched in 1974 by the American Association of Bible Colleges (now ABHE). He served as commission chair (1977-1978), member of the Board of Directors (1980-1985), and served on more than 30 accreditation teams (15 as chair), far exceeding the award requirements as one of the "long-time contributors to the association that are stellar and substantial." In addition to his extensive work with the Commission on Accreditation, Thigpen was elected president of the American Association of Bible Colleges (1984-1986).

Accepting the award during the annual banquet Friday evening, Dr. Thigpen said, "My heart has always been in the Bible College movement." He was accompanied by his wife Laura and daughter-in-law Yvonne, president of the Evangelical Training Association (ETA). His son, the late Dr. Jonathan Thigpen, was president of ETA nine years before his death at age 49 in 2001.

Dr. Thigpen served 12 years (1979-1991) as the third president of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He and his wife joined the college faculty in 1948 and served in numerous roles until 1991, except for a brief Michigan pastorate in the mid-1950s. Prior to his presidential years, the South Carolina native held four major positions with the college: dean of men (1948-1953), registrar (1949-1953), dean of students (1957-1967), and academic dean (1957-1979). He also served as chancellor (1990-1991).

His broader responsibilities included six years as moderator of the National Association of Free Will Baptists (1954-1960), 15 years as promotional director for the Tennessee State Association of Free Will Baptists (1991-2006), seven years as a member of what is now the Randall House Board (1961-1968), and president of the Tennessee College Association (1990-1991).



THE MESSENGER

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