

THE PLUMBLINE

a publication of the Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptists

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

by D. Bruce Barnes

Ripley gets attention by using the "Believe It or Not" slogan for their bizarre collection of oddities. Even Ripley Museums have opened displaying replicas of the unusual. But obviously, that's not what this article concerns. That which is essential concerns the church's belief in evangelism: its commission to do it, the power that enables it, and the effectiveness of its efforts. But do we "Believe It or Not"?

Okay, that sounds like an indictment. Understood! But it does seem that some ministries have been unsure how to approach evangelism over the last two years because the known and comfortable methodology has been somewhat interrupted. Not knowing what to do in evangelistic outreach, some ministries are just waiting for things to change back to what was before.

None of this is meant to be uncaring or discouraging. Still, we must admit that previous norms may never return to what we thought was typical in church or personal evangelism. The actual effectiveness of the body of Christ is not measured by what is natural, but rather, above the natural: supernatural! Evangelism is our commission, but its power has never rested on human ability or comfortable availability. The Spirit of God fuels the fire within the hearts of those who will burn with obedient fervor to complete the Lord's calling to go into all the world.

Cont'd. p. 4

Other articles:

Special Emphases - 2

Upon What Foundation? - 3

Believe It or Not, Cont'd. - 4-5

NORVA Men's Retreat - 5

Churches Seeking Pastors, Youth Pastors, or Associates - 5

VAFWB on the Calendar - 6





GRACE Outreach

This is a program whose time has come. The local church can still organize and reach out into the community through non-conventional methods.

Find out more at the picture link above!

Worried about the future?

The future can be uncertain; however, an estate plan with **Free Will Baptist Foundation** and our partner, **Cornerstone Estate Planning**, grants you and your family peace of mind that your estate will be taken care of the way you want and can benefit the ministries you want.

Learn More About Estate Plans:

Facebook: Free Will Baptist Foundation
fwbgifts.org | 877-336-7575 | foundation@nafwb.org



GO THE EXTRA MILE

+ Forgive someone who mistreated you (Matthew 5:39-41).

+ Be kind to someone who was rude to you (Matthew 5:41).

+ Give to those who cannot or will not give back to you (Matthew 5:42).

NAFWB



A Bible study for new converts (and old ones too!). Includes 7 chapters, plus a question-answer guide in the back.

**Available on Amazon
\$8.99**

Revelation Sunday

This is a one-day emphasis bringing better understanding on this most important book!

Call Dr. Barnes at 757-407-1183 or email dbrucebarnes@nafwb.org.

UPON WHAT FOUNDATION?

Part 1, D. Bruce Barnes, Promotional Director



In last week's article, I addressed that worship is the adoration of God for who He is. Additionally, true worship is one's knowledgeable and willful response to the truth brought out from God's Word. The act of worship and the feeling that comes with it must rest on a firmer foundation than emotional reactions to a manufactured atmosphere.

Just so, the significance of the proper foundation for everything is of the greatest priority for the believer. Such is the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. Even sound human reasoning cannot be trusted to lead to the truth because, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). Jesus also addressed those who would not follow His teaching, likening them "unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:26b-27).

The foundation upon which people build their lives is eternally crucial. The Great White Throne Judgment will declare the fate of those souls who built lives on the sinking sand of human reason. The Judgment Seat of Christ, on the other hand, will be the analysis of what believers have built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. Some will face the burning up of potential rewards because the works were for self-glory or selfish motives: i.e., wood, hay, and stubble. Others will realize eternal rewards for the labor done for Christ in pure motive.

Foundations are critical. It's true for the stability of physical structures here on earth, and so it is for the lives we build day after day. The building of a life founded on Christ and the Scriptures is the one that will pass the test of time, both here and for eternity. Upon which foundation are you building your life? If your feet are shifting a little on the sands of the temporary, step away to the One and only Foundation Stone: Jesus Christ!



Next week's article continues considering the impact of foundations on Christian ministries.

Cont'd., "Believe It or Not"

This commission to world outreach is not for a few but all who follow the Lord. It is not qualified by geographical area or worldly norms. It is a work of the Lord through believers, or not at all. And if God is the one who empowers outreach—and He is!—then neither is its success dependent on anything else but Him! Do we believe it or not?

And this brings us to an essential item for consideration. Souls cannot wait to return to social norms or what the church might consider a standard methodology to reach them. Eternal destinies hang in the balance right now, and the urgency of the hour is critical. It is for those who are our neighbors and for our loved ones. Dare we wait another minute? But how can we when what we've known has changed or at least become more difficult?



First of all, evangelism concerns the church, but even more, the believers who are personally dedicated to sharing Christ with others. Of course, that can and should take place regardless of a church's organized visitation program. In fact, the local church will naturally realize the effect of more believers personally sharing the gospel than even administrating outreach. However, helping organize those committed to outreach will be even more effective.

As it relates to the church "getting it done," innovation can play a deciding role. Innovation is working around problems, and it's something necessary throughout life. It's true in the world as well as in church ministry. I suggest that we concentrate more on adjusting our approaches to our present situation than waiting for our current situation to return to our methods! Changing methods does not mean compromising the truth. But within the commission to evangelize, God-honoring biblical approaches are undoubtedly warranted and available.



When the pandemic began in March 2020, the VAFWB promotional office had just received our operational online software for GRACE Outreach (GO). Over twenty-five churches were already using the GO approach previous to this but now these have available online tools enhancing the organization and administration of the church's evangelistic program.

There's much more to learn about this; however, the point is that we offer a unique and timely aid for local-church evangelism. GO

Cont'd. p. 5

Cont'd., "Believe It or Not"

allows more people to become involved through various opportunities of outreach not found in conventional programs. YES, times are different than what we've known before, and YES, outreach still takes a lot of work. But doing something to reach out to people is certainly better than waiting for "things to change."

We invite pastors and churches to consider looking into the GO program. This or any other program itself is not a magic success formula. However, a program that meets the current need as well as those beyond brings the church one step closer to achieving its goal. This is certainly worth considering. Even in this climate, evangelism can still be successful, and the church's efforts in evangelizing can be rewarded. "Believe It or Not!"

Click the GO link on page 2 to find out more!



NORTHERN VIRGINIA MEN'S RETREAT MARCH 18-19, 2022

Jim McComas is this year's special speaker. Make plans now to attend. Registration information will be available here soon.

**RAPIDAN BAPTIST CAMP
559 BAPTIST CAMP DR.
ROCHELLE, VA 22738**

CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS, YOUTH PASTORS, OR ASSOCIATES

- **Pastoral Search:** First Free Will Baptist Church, Richmond, VA; call Bruce Barnes: 757-407-1183 or email dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org.
- **Pastoral Search:** Genesis Free Will Baptist Church, Kingsport, TN; call Newl Dotson: 276-502-4684 (cell) or 276-546-4400 (work).
- **Youth Pastor Search:** A Virginia church is seeking a fulltime youth pastor. Call Bruce Barnes: 757-407-1183 or email dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org.
- **Associate Search:** Unity Free Will Baptist Church, Chesapeake, VA; contact Pastor Earl Sutton at 757-639-5088 or email suttonle45@gmail.com.

VAFWB On the Calendar

	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4
	8	9	10	11
	15	16	17	18
	22	23	24	25
1	29	30	31	
28				

**FEB. 6: PR-DIR. at Free Will Baptist Church
Roanoke, AM Service**

**FEB 7-8: VAFWB All-Board's Meeting,
Free Will Baptist Church, Roanoke**

**FEB. 13: PR-DIR. at Great Bridge FWB
Church, Chesapeake, VA, AM
Service**

**FEB. 20: PR-DIR. at First FWB
Church, Richmond, VA, AM
Service**

Concentrate more on adjusting the church's evangelistic approach to our present situation than waiting for our current situation to return to our methods!

Read more from the article, "Believe It or Not"