

# The PLUMBLINE

a publication of Virginia Free Will Baptist

September

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2014

The following articles are written by the promotional director unless labeled otherwise.

## Congratulations Edition

### CONGRATULATORY EDITION OF THE PLUMBLINE

The emphasis of this *Plumblin*e is that of congratulations. Wonderful things are happening among us as Virginia Free Will Baptists, and it is encouraging to see it. Let us rejoice together for the great things He has done!

#### ASSOCIATION CLERK SERVES 50 YEARS

Congratulations goes to Brother John Calhoun. He is now serving his 50th year as clerk of the John Wheeler Association, Southwestern Quarterly Meeting. John is a member of Shiloh Free Will Baptist Church and currently serves as deacon and Adult Bible teacher in Sunday school. A self-employed electrician, he also served in the Tennessee Army National Guard for many years. In time past, he sported a “handlebar” mustache which friends report was always trimmed, waxed, and curled to perfection. He has two children (John and Chris) and four grandchildren. John’s wife, Lois, passed away in 2010.

What a great milestone as well as testimony of faithfulness to his Lord and to his brethren! This is the consistency being seen all across Virginia as people serve the Lord without much notice or fanfare. But for folks like John, it has never been about the applause; it has been about God’s glory. Thank you John for your faithful service!



John Calhoun

#### BOB BROWN RECEIVES DOCTORATE

Bob Brown—pastor of Heritage Free Will Baptist Church, Fredericksburg, VA—has successfully completed and was awarded his doctorate July 14, 2014. His degree is a Ph.D. from Trinity Theological Seminary with his studies focusing on the Pastoral Ministry. He also graduated with honors (4.0).

The title of his dissertation is “When the Bride of Christ becomes the Pastor’s Mistress: An Exploration of Ministry Involvement with Respect to that of the Family.” His advisor, Dr. Roy Harkness, had the following to say about Dr. Brown’s work. “Your depth of knowledge, drawing from primary sources, analysis, and conclusions represent in-depth critical thought and evaluative ability. You have integrated knowledge and understanding in the operational Christian worldview.”

Congratulations to Dr. Bob Brown for the completion of this long road of faithful and consistent study!



Dr. Bob Brown

### TWO VIRGINIA MISSION WORKS REACH SELF-SUPPORTING STATUS

Congratulations to both Free Will Baptist Church of Roanoke and CrossPointe Free Will Baptist Church upon their self-supporting status. Faithful work among the members as well as the faithful giving of God’s people makes this blessing possible.

Free Will Baptist Church of Roanoke became self-supporting on May 3, 2014 as the Northern Virginia Conference met with the church for this special occasion. The retiring pastor, Dr. Roger Bevens, saw this ministry through to this status. Upon its organization, the church called Rev. Mark Lewis as the pastor. Brother Mark had been working with Dr. Bevens for the past several years. A video highlighting the organizational service can be found online at the state website video page.

CrossPointe Free Will Baptist Church in Suffolk will organize as a self-supporting church during the evening service September 14. Rev. David Sexton is the founding pastor and working with him through these years as an associate is Rev. Marc Nepl. Established in the fall of 2008, CrossPointe has done a wonderful job in reaching self-supporting status in six years. Representatives from Free Will Baptist North American Ministries and the Virginia Home Missions Board will be present for the organizational service.

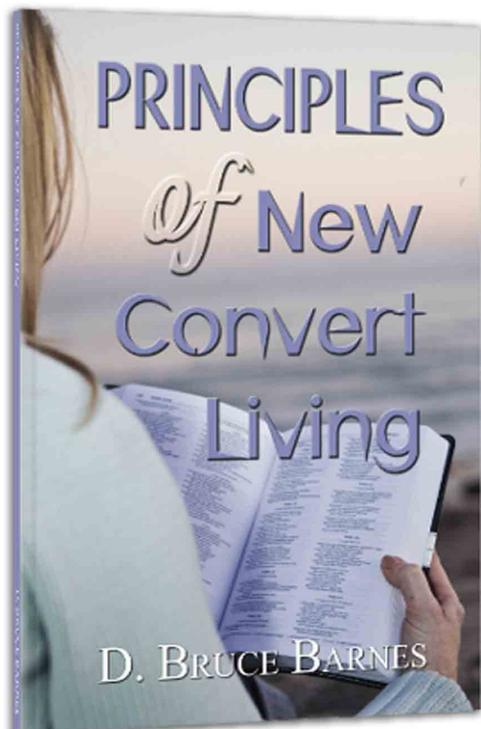


Pastor Mark & Tammy Lewis (w. Elizabeth)



Pastor David & Charity Sexton

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- Chapter 5: Witness of Salvation through Christ
- Chapter 6: Give of Your Means for His Cause
- Chapter 7: Turn from Wrong to Right

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Multiple paperback book orders for Sunday schools or new-convert lessons can be purchased directly through the promotional director. When doing so, all the proceeds go to help support the promotional office.

Contact the promotional director either by phone or email.

## WAS I DREAMING, OR WHAT?

Let me tell you about a real dream I had just a few days ago. In the dream, I was talking with a friend of mine from years past, and he introduced to me to someone who had become interested in the work of Virginia Free Will Baptists. I enjoyed sharing with him the vision I had as well as the hopes of our pastors, churches, and associations for advancing the cause of Christ in Virginia and around the world.

In my dream, I had to step out for a moment and when I returned, my friend began to tell me that the gentleman had to leave early; however, there was something he wanted me to know. He told me how challenged the gentleman was with what was going on in Virginia and how he wanted to be a part of it. He went on to tell me that this man was a multi-millionaire and that he was making a generous gift to Virginia Free Will Baptists. He told me that the man was going to fund all aspects of the promotional office *and* that he was also going to add enough funding to hire six assistants full time to advance the work even more.

My response was amazement, and I kept repeating, "Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me?" That's when I woke up! Have you ever had a dream that you thought in a moment afterward, "Did that have to be a dream?"

Would such have been nice? Of course! (*In fact, if you know this man, please let him know my contact information and that six assistants are not necessary, in case that is a problem!*) Even though awakening to a reality that did not include such huge gifts, I was immediately thankful for all the churches in Virginia who have placed the promotional office in their budgets and for all the individuals who are sacrificing personally to make this ministry possible. We are not all the way there yet, but because of the faithfulness of God's people across this state, the work is getting done.

I once again want to say "THANK YOU!" to everyone involved in this great work. We all have a great vision of things ahead, and together, we will see it through to the glory of our Heavenly Father. With your help and support, we will reach the goal of supporting the promotional office full time.

## MARY'S CHAPEL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF MINISTRY

Congratulations to Mary's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church for 100 years of faithful ministry. In 1912, a lady named Mary Collins (affectionately known as Aunt Pop Collins) "walked and collected donations for the erection of the church that bears her name, 'Mary's Chapel.'" It started as a community church with all-day preaching by the Methodists, Missionary Baptists, Primitive Baptists, and Free Will Baptists. The groups later began to take one Sunday each month and rotate among them. "As the years passed, the only remaining active denominations were the Missionary and Free Will Baptist. Russell and Myra Ellen Puckett became the sole remaining members of the Missionary Baptist Church" and they began discussion about "bringing the church under one denomination"—Free Will Baptist.



Pastor Marty Puckett led various events during the month of August, culminating in a two-day celebration on August 30-31. On Saturday, there were inflated, bouncy houses for the kids, corn hole tournament, and cookout. The highlight of Saturday's event was when Pastor Puckett took the seat in the dunking booth. Children through adults enjoyed "baptizing" Brother Puckett again and again. What a good sport he is! More pictures are on the state Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/vafwb](http://www.facebook.com/vafwb)).

On Sunday, there was a gathering and singing of all choir members past and present as well as special music by one of the old quartets. Pastor Puckett preached a great message, "O Come All Ye Faithful." It was a message reminding that the faithful are still needed to carry the gospel just as it has been done in the past.



Go online at [www.vafwb.org](http://www.vafwb.org) and see the video presentation of this new organizational approach to church outreach.

The promotional director is scheduling GRACE Outreach revivals, services, and training. Schedule services now!

Call for more information at 757-407-1183. You can also check for available dates online by going to the "state events calendar" on the information tab.

## 50 YEARS PREACHING

Congratulations to Vergel Maness who celebrates his 50th year of preaching the gospel. To God be the glory for the faithfulness of this man of God, his heart for the work of the Lord, and his love for people. Brother Vergel serves as an associate at First Free Will Baptist Church, Richmond. He has been a pastor as well as a church planter through the Free Will Baptist National Home Missions Department.



Vergel & Alyne Maness