

GREAT PREACHERS *of the Past*

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INTRODUCTION

During 1997 *The Messenger* carried a series of articles about great preachers of the past. Brother Alan Highers wrote:

When this series is completed, I wish you would consider placing it in book form and possibly including a picture of each of the subjects. I believe it would be a valuable resource for your students and other young preachers.

Immediately after the article on G.K. Wallace this letter arrived:

*The December 1997 issue of **The Messenger's** article about brother G.K. Wallace by brother Garland Elkins was outstanding. Baxter and I would like twenty copies of that issue.*

Due to the tremendous interest this booklet contains all the articles (sorry that we are unable to provide pictures) It is hoped that all of us will study the lives of these great men of God. They can help us be more useful servants.

James Meadows

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DAVID LIPSCOMB

INCOMPARABLE PREACHER

1831-1917

By J.E. Choate

Historical Background of David Lipscomb

David Lipscomb was born into a pioneer family of the best American tradition. Joel Lipscomb, the paternal ancestor of David Lipscomb, came to Jamestown, Virginia in 1690 from Hampshire, England. A great grandson of Joel moved from Virginia to Franklin County, Tennessee, which was just breaking out of the virgin wilderness. Granville, son of William Lipscomb, was born in 1802.

Granville was the father of William and David, born of his second wife, Nancy, who was his cousin. Granville Lipscomb was a deeply religious man. David Lipscomb was born January 21, 1831 in Franklin County, Tennessee. Little is known about the boyhood of David Lipscomb. His early schooling was such as the rude frontier provided. David traveled horseback with William to Virginia where they lived one year with their paternal grandfather.

When David was fourteen, Tolbert Fanning was preaching in Franklin County, Tennessee. The boy was recovering from the typhoid fever, and Fanning came by request and baptized the boy in a wooden box. Granville Lipscomb was a great admirer of Fanning. He sent his two boys in 1846 to enroll in Tolbert Fanning's Franklin College. David Lipscomb graduated in 1849 with an A.B. degree.

Lipscomb pursued business enterprises at first, and became a prosperous farmer. At the age of twenty-six he had never given thought that he would preach, edit a paper, and establish a school. That changed when an erratic preacher by the name of Jesse B. Ferguson almost destroyed the church of Christ in Nashville, and troubled the churches throughout Middle Tennessee.

Ferguson was the most popular preacher in Nashville at that time. He enjoyed the full endorsement of Tolbert Fanning at first. However, Ferguson went out of control in his preaching when he turned to spiritism. He preached that a person had a second chance for salvation after

death.

Lipscomb as a Preacher

The young Lipscomb was deeply disturbed by the wrecking of the Nashville church of Christ. He responded by building back the shattered churches. He would spend the rest of his life building the kingdom with the “hammer and saw” of the Christian Gospel.

Lipscomb had been taught from earliest memory by his father that Scripture is the only infallible guide in religion. Tolbert Fanning had taught him well from the Bible and his plea for the Restoration of New Testament Christianity. Lipscomb would spend his lifetime reading and studying the Bible as well as reading the leading scholars in biblical literature of the time. He addressed the theory of evolution and the new theology coming out of the Harvard (and other) divinity schools. Lipscomb kept up with current events at home and abroad.

Lipscomb and fellow preachers, in the pulpits and through the pages of the *Gospel Advocate*, stopped the Digressives dead in their tracks in their calculated invasion of Nashville and the southern region to force the organ and organized societies into their churches. It took thirty years (1890-1920) for the Christian Church to realize that they had lost their bid.

Lipscomb’s first attempt to preach was a disappointment. An elderly brother, brother Stroud, arranged an appointment for Lipscomb to preach near McMinnville. Lipscomb stood, read ten verses, could think of nothing to say, sat down, and said, “Brother Stroud, you will have to preach.” The elderly preacher was dumbfounded and could think of nothing to say.

While riding horseback home, the preacher advised Lipscomb that he should not be discouraged because of his failure. Lipscomb wryly replied: “I’ll try not to, but I must confess it is a little discouraging to see one become so confused and leave the pulpit who has been preaching so long.”

Lipscomb soon thereafter began preaching when a sister requested him to send a preacher to their community. Lipscomb came himself, and it was several weeks before Lipscomb’s home folks learned he was preaching. In his lifetime Lipscomb helped start more than fifty churches.

David Lipscomb was not like any other preacher with whom a comparison could be made. He was a plain, unassuming man. There was

nothing about his personal appearance to attract attention. His wife trimmed his beard and cut his hair in such a way that he had a pleasing appearance. He never wore a tie, but was comfortably and decently dressed.

There is not much that could be said about the style and delivery of his sermons. He simply stood before his audience, read a section of Scripture which he had prepared to explain to his audience.

What Lipscomb thought and said about preachers and preaching sums up a description of Lipscomb as a preacher. His conviction was that the way to be a preacher was through the study of the Bible and the great concern to save souls. A person became a preacher in response to go preach the gospel to a neighbor, the poor, the rich, white and black, anywhere, anytime.

In the way of Lipscomb's thinking, a good man who was a good student of the Bible was well prepared to preach the gospel. His style of preaching was "one on one" regardless of the number present in personal conversation, in the pulpit, the classroom, and through the printed page of the *Gospel Advocate*. He captivated his audience with who he was and what he said in both a profound and simple manner.

When old age crept upon him, he continued to preach sitting in a chair with his Bible in his hand. B.C. Goodpasture told me that when he was a student in the Nashville Bible School that he would pass by the Lipscomb home on the campus. The old gentleman in his fading days would be sitting on his front porch holding his beloved Bible in hand often upside down.

One of the best places to go for the evaluation of a man's life is to consult with those who were not in full agreement with his position. What is most impressive are the words printed in the obituary of Lipscomb in the *Christian Standard*:

While Lipscomb has not cooperated with our missionary work, he has been recognized for many years as one of our great men and a godly man...his pen has been facile and vigorous in "contending for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

And I would say that where Alexander Campbell failed the Christian Church, Lipscomb was a great force in making the churches of Christ what they have come to be in our time.

N.B. HARDEMAN

1874-1965

By E. Claude Gardner

Historical Background

Nicholas Brodie Hardeman, 1874-1965. In the space where the “dash” is placed between these two years is the remarkable story of an extraordinary man. Because of his unusual accomplishments he is fondly remembered, although he has been deceased one third of a century.

He was born at Milledgeville, TN, about twenty miles from Henderson, on May 18, 1874, to Dr. and Mrs. John B. Hardeman. For years as I travelled through the village I thought of his birthplace. The approximate location was told to me, but it was uncertain on which side of the road he was born.

His father moved to Henderson to practice medicine. N.B. first thought he would become a doctor. However, he entered West Tennessee Christian College, and under the influence of President A.G. Freed he decided to become a teacher. He was baptized while a student. He taught briefly in the public school in a nearby county.

After earning a B.A. degree in 1895 from West Tennessee Christian College, he took advanced study to be awarded the M.A. from Georgie Robertson Christian College (formerly WTCC). Also, his Bible knowledge was enhanced by a thorough study with the scholarly Hall L. Calhoun. He taught in GRCC from 1897-1905 until he was pressured to quit by the innovators.

Hardeman As A Preacher

Once when A.G. Freed could not fill a preaching appointment at Enville, TN, sixteen miles from Henderson, he asked his prize student to go in his stead. N.B. Hardeman preached his first sermon there on April 18, 1897, using Romans 1:16 as his subject. From that day forward he became in great demand as a preacher. He never looked back and continued to proclaim the same gospel for nearly seven decades.

In the latter eighteenth hundreds and early nineteenth hundreds the church had begun dividing over the introduction of the missionary so-

ciety and instrumental music. In his younger years he worshipped with the Henderson church which used the instrument. I recall hearing the late G.A. Dunn, who was speaking on the Freed-Hardeman Lectureship in about 1950 or 1951, tell that as a student in GRCC he heard N.B. Hardeman leading the singing and his wife, "Miss Jo," playing the piano at church. Soon he took his stand against the innovations and became one of the most formidable foes. His debate on instrumental music with Ira Boswell in Nashville in 1923 brought to a halt the acceptance of mechanical music in many areas. In the last decade a report was circulated that portrayed Hardeman as having regretted opposing the instrument. Based on my knowledge of him I believe this is an apocryphal story originating with the proponents of the innovation.

After the Christian Church gained control of GRCC, A.G. Freed and N.B. Hardeman withdrew their connection in 1905. The school continued lamely until 1907 and closed. Hardeman and Freed got a charter in 1907 to begin a school across the street and opened in 1908 in what is now called "old main." It was given the imposing name of National Teachers Normal and Business College. From my reading of A.G. Freed's efforts in promotion and flowery acclaims, I feel confident the name came from him.

With Freed as president and Hardeman as vice-president, they were two powerful teachers. For several years, 1905-1917, Hardeman was also Superintendent of the Chester County Public Schools. His breadth of leadership and self-confidence caused him to comment, "Give me enough secretaries and I can run the whole court house."

The late C.P. Roland, who was a student in the teens under Freed and Hardeman, said brother Freed was stronger in math than brother Hardeman. He said math was not brother Hardeman's greatest strength, but rather his strength was in history and English.

Freed and Hardeman began to have serious disagreements over the operation of the school and consequently both severed their connections in 1923. While Freed was on his death bed in a Nashville hospital, Hardeman went to see him for reconciliation.

In 1923 Hardeman took an extended trip to the Bible lands and Europe. He acclaimed this trip as one of the most important events of his life and helpful in his preaching and teaching. Since he had visited the Bible lands, one of a very small number at the time, I was thrilled to study Bible Geography under him. I recall that students urged him to repeat the course more than once in a school year, but he reneged, saying, "It would give me a gorged feeling."

In 1925, after two years away, he returned to Freed-Hardeman College as co-president with Hall L. Calhoun. From then until 1950 he served as president. During this time he received many honors. When I was a student, I was impressed that he said in class that he had experienced all of the honors he desired. He was not ambitious for more glory.

He was a stern disciplinarian which was not fully accepted with the changing of times and with the enrollment of some mature veterans of World War II. At the age of 75 he experienced strong resistance from the majority of the student body to some disciplinary decisions. The outcome was his resignation in May 1950. The Board of Directors agreed to pay him \$5,000 per year for the rest of his life. For the next several years he was engaged in numerous gospel meetings and special lectures. Several times he was invited to return to the campus and to speak, but he did not do so.

As president he led in raising funds to liquidate the indebtedness, and he made a generous personal gift. He constantly had to raise funds for operations and improvements. He secured a major gift from Paul Gray to build a men's dormitory. During the Depression in the thirties, he built a small science building which is a monument to him in securing funds in those desperate times. In the forties he launched a fund-raising campaign to work toward accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges, but it did not result in the necessary funds. Brother Hardeman was one of the most popular preachers in his day and he was widely known throughout the country. He knew many wealthy brethren. It would have been wonderful if he had motivated them to endow the college.

Although brother Hardeman was a great preacher, he believed his greatest contribution might have been in teaching young people and preparing young men to preach the gospel.

Brother Hardeman was witty and used humor to an advantage in his teaching. I recall in his class he would give a clear discussion of a topic and then ask a student who hailed from Arkansas, "Did you get the point?" Then he said, "If you got it the rest of the class did." He was ever the personification of self-confidence which was instilled in his students. After proving a point in the Bible he would add, "That's it; that's not about it; that's it." He also coined a word "ungetoverable" which he used to clinch a point.

Always he was neatly dressed, clothes pressed and shoes shined which he admonished the students to do likewise. He taught us in Romans 12 not to think more highly than we ought to think, but neither should we think more lowly of ourselves than we should. Also, I recall

he lectured us on paying our debts. I can hear him say, “If a person is not as anxious to pay a debt as he is to make a debt he strictly is not honest.” He stressed 1 Corinthians 14:40, “Let all things be done decently and in order.” Always it was impressive to hear him teach and recite at times an entire chapter of the Bible.

Indeed he was the “Prince of Preachers.” Had he chosen to be a medical doctor he would have been highly successful. Had he accepted the persuasions from politicians to run for political office he would have made a great governor, or an eloquent statesman in the Halls of Congress. Thankfully, he chose to preach the gospel and to serve in Christian education. His five Tabernacle Sermons conducted between 1922 and 1943 had a stabilizing influence in Nashville and in the brotherhood. He dealt with issues facing the church and he called for a return to New Testament Christianity. These were published in book form. Many years after they were out of print I asked brother Hardeman’s grandson, Joe Hardeman Foy, to provide funds to reprint three of them. When I told an admirer of brother Hardeman what I intended to do his response was, “The young preachers will not buy them. Many do not preach these fundamental sermons.”

Brother Hardeman was an orator that stood in the ranks of William Jennings Bryan and others. He rarely wrote articles for the gospel papers. However, he would answer letters and often they were in his unique handwriting. Many times I wrote to him and most always I got a reply, and it was always short and concise.

He was a lover and owner of fine Tennessee Walking Horses. His “Maid of Cotton” was a champion in her class. I heard him criticized for his interest in horses but I thought it was unwarranted. It was a legitimate outlet and recreation for him.

On his birthday, May 18, 1959, at the age of 85, he was honored by 750 friends and brethren at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis. J.M. Powell was the Master of Ceremonies and B.C. Goodpasture was the guest speaker. Several spoke, including Senator Lyndon Johnson, later President. Several other dignitaries attended. I attended this historic event along with H.A. Dixon.

Brother Hardeman had three children— Dorsey, Mary Nell, and Carrie Neal, and they are deceased. After “Miss Jo” died, he married “Miss Annie” who is also deceased.

At brother Hardeman’s funeral B.C. Goodpasture paid this high tribute:

This morning we meet to pay tribute of well-merited respect

to brother Hardeman.... He labored long and faithfully in the service of the Lord. He was truly one of the great men of this century. In native ability and accomplishments he was unsurpassed. He was one of the bright stars in the galaxy of gospel preachers. Indeed, he was one of the tallest cedars in Lebanon.

It behooves us to remember brother Hardeman for his preaching the gospel in purity and simplicity; for showing the difference between the church of the Bible and denominationalism; and for keeping our schools faithful to Bible teaching.

G.C. BREWER

1884-1956

By Alan Highers

I am often saddened by the fact that our younger people never knew such men as G.C. Brewer, N.B. Hardeman, Gus Nichols, G.K. Wallace, and Guy N. Woods. Having had the privilege of knowing all of these, I grieve to think how much they have missed! Yet, there are generations that I never knew. I wish I could have known Alexander Campbell, J.W. McGarvey, David Lipscomb, and T.B. Larimore. Yet, I have known them only in a remote sense, i.e., I have read their works and I have read descriptions by those who knew them. (All who have an interest in the life of Alexander Campbell should read the tribute by Moses E. Lard in Lard's Quarterly in 1866). I commend James Meadows and ETSP for planning this series of articles in *The Messenger*. It is worthwhile to study the lives of great men, and it is also a noble goal to preserve the memory of these faithful servants.

Historical Background of G. C Brewer

Grover Cleveland Brewer was born on December 25, 1884, in Giles County, Tennessee, to Hiram and Virginia Maxey Brewer. He was the fourth of ten children. Brewer's mother was baptized by T.B. Larimore in Richland Creek in Giles County, Tennessee. The family later moved to Muscle Shoals in Alabama, about a mile from the present location of Wheeler Dam, and thereafter to Florence. One may visit the graves of Brewer's parents (as I have) at the Florence Cemetery. His father died in 1901 at the age of only 47. His mother lived another 43 years. Brewer (who was known in his younger days as Cleveland) was baptized at Florence by J.J. Castleberry, who had studied under J.W. McGarvey. Castleberry conducted a meeting at East Florence in which 209 people were baptized.

From early days G.C. Brewer knew that he wanted to be a preacher of the Gospel. After the death of his father in 1901, however, he had to work to help support his mother and family. He had not been able to continue his education. In 1904 his mother encouraged him to attend school. He had no money, but he wrote to Nashville Bible School to see if he could work for his education. The school turned him down. Brother

Castleberry had told him about Ashley Johnson's School of the Evangelists at Kimberlin Heights, Tennessee. E.C. Fuqua warned Brewer that the school was "digressive," but Brewer wrote to Johnson and asked if he might come. Johnson wrote back, "Come on, Son Timothy; we never turn down any boy who wants to be a Gospel preacher. If you don't have any money to pay your way, walk. When you get here, we will take care of you." Today that school is known as Johnson Bible College. It is affiliated with the Independent Christian Churches. I have visited the campus and stood at the grave of Ashley Johnson, and, of course, in my mind, I could see G.C. Brewer studying there as a young man. G.C. Brewer was at Kimberlin Heights only from September to December of 1904 because at that time, the boys' dormitory burned to the ground. Brewer and a friend, C.E. Coleman, transferred to Nashville Bible School (which decided to accept them) and they stayed there until the spring of 1905. They returned to Kimberlin Heights for school they had already worked on, but then came back to Nashville Bible School for completion of their schooling. Brewer was always a student and sought knowledge throughout his life.

In 1911 G.C. Brewer married Mary Hall of Huntingdon, Tennessee. During his lifetime, Brewer preached at several of the largest churches in the brotherhood, including Cleburne and Sherman in Texas, Union Avenue in Memphis, Broadway in Lubbock, and for the last years of his life, Jackson Avenue in Memphis. He was a staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate*. He was also a prominent debater on a wide variety of subjects (which indicated his broad knowledge and enormous intelligence). He debated Woolsey Teller on evolution and the existence of God; Ben M. Bogard, the famous Baptist debater; and Judge Ben B. Lindsey, who advocated a philosophy called "companionate marriage."

In February 1956, at the age of 71, brother Brewer learned that he had terminal cancer and only a short time to live. Between February and the end of April he wrote his autobiography. Shortly thereafter, he left his home at 1925 Jackson Avenue in Memphis and went by ambulance to Rogers Hospital in Searcy, Arkansas, to be near his daughter, Elizabeth Mason. He died on Saturday, June 9, 1956, at 1:10 p.m.

Brewer as a Preacher

I first heard brother Brewer preach when I was about 16. I attended my last two years of high school at Harding in Searcy. Brother Brewer spoke each year on the Harding lectures, and he also conducted a

meeting at the College church while I was there. The first time I heard him speak, I was completely overwhelmed by his knowledge, eloquence, and power in the pulpit. Although I have heard some of the greatest preachers in the brotherhood, I would have to say that, all in all, G.C. Brewer is the most powerful preacher I ever heard. I will endeavor to note some of the characteristics that made him great:

Brother Brewer was a student. He never ceased to study. On August 2, 1956, about two months after his death, I visited sister Brewer at their home in Memphis. She invited me to go upstairs and to visit his study. I sat down at his desk, and I observed notes in his handwriting which manifested that he continued to work and study even after learning that he had not long to live.

Brewer had a deep, resonant voice that commanded attention. Brother Brewer often spoke of how his father liked to sing. Perhaps he inherited his voice from his father. I sat next to brother Brewer on one occasion during the Harding lectures, and I distinctly remember hearing him sound the low f in the bass cleft during one song. When he spoke, his voice rang out like the roar of a lion; yet he was completely natural in his delivery. He was simply blessed with one of the most distinctive speaking voices I ever heard.

He was an independent thinker and a man of deep conviction. Brewer seemed little concerned about what others thought. He did not flaunt convention nor seek to espouse novel theories, but once he was convinced that something was right he would take his stand, if necessary, against the whole world.

Brewer was a man of deep piety and purity. One could not be in brother Brewer's company without recognizing his faith in God and his utter dependence upon him. He manifested in life what he proclaimed in the pulpit.

G.C. Brewer possessed a simple eloquence. He did not have a contrived oratory or a practiced style, but he had a marvelous command of the English language and an enormous storehouse of information. Speaking largely without notes, he was able to express himself precisely, clearly, forcefully, and emphatically. I would gladly drive many miles today to hear a G.C. Brewer! He was everything that a preacher ought to be.

GUS NICHOLS

1892-1975

By Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions is to be commended in running articles on a monthly basis dealing with great preachers of the past. I am highly honored in doing the one on brother Gus Nichols, a man I loyally loved and ardently admired. He was long a preaching ideal of mine. I counted him a warm and dear friend. He befriended me in many, many ways.

My first time to hear the illustrious Nichols was at the annual Freed-Hardeman Lectureship in 1950. He conducted the Open Forum that year. Brother Guy N. Woods would later conduct it for some thirty years. But that year brother Nichols spoke each day on the book of Philippians and what a rich study it was. I was immediately drawn to brother Nichols. He answered questions with consummate skill which kept me, an eighteen-year-old, spellbound. For the next twenty-five years I heard him preach numerous times and always with spiritual pleasure and enrichment. He was my kind of preacher. His sermons and lectures were brimmed full of Bible and delivered in a powerful, persuasive, and pleasing manner. I NEVER grew tired of hearing him expound the Scriptures and was never ready for him to quit when he concluded. From introduction to conclusion his sermons were NEVER too long for me. I relished what I heard from him.

When I was a student at David Lipscomb College between 1952-54, brother Willard Collins, long-time admirer of brother Nichols, invited him to come to the campus for a week. He lectured on "Difficult Passages of the Bible." He shed more light on so many difficult passages than I had heard in a lifetime. I went home, I was married at the time, and told my wife after each session how tremendous it was. In my preaching, lecturing, and writing I still use material I learned during that week.

Historical Background

Brother Nichols was born in Walker County, Alabama, January 12, 1892. There were ten children born to William Calvin Nichols with brother Gus being the eldest. He was baptized into Christ in August of 1909, by C.A. Wheeler. He came from a Baptist background. On No-

vember 30, 1913, he and Matilda Brown were married. She was not baptized until the late summer of 1917. Eight children were born to brother and sister Nichols—four sons and four daughters. All eight children attended Freed-Hardeman College (now University).

In early life brother Nichols farmed and worked in a coal mine. For twelve hours of work in the mine he made one dollar. He worked hard all his life. There was not a lazy bone within him. He enjoyed working and especially his work of faith and labor of love for the Lord (1 Thess. 1:3).

He began preaching in 1916. The die was cast. He was diligent as a student all the days of his life. Though he never received nearly as much formal schooling as did many others, yet in later years his counsel was eagerly sought by the most educated preachers among us. Almost always he was their superior in real scholarship and practical wisdom.

Nichols: A Preacher and Writer

In 1917 the Nichols' house was blown away by a tornado. While visiting in his home many years ago he related this experience to me. Soon after this he resolved to become a full-time gospel preacher. He enjoyed his wife's full support and enthusiastic endorsement. From the very beginning she encouraged him to be the very best preacher he could become and this is what he became and remained. In his early days as a beginning preacher he lived and labored in Cordova and Millport, both in western Alabama.

During late December of 1932 he and his family moved to Jasper, Alabama, which was to be home to him the rest of his fruitful life. For forty-three years he was the esteemed preacher for the church there, a position he held till his death on November 16, 1975. A prominent part of his work there was radio preaching. I always made it a point to pick up his morning or noon program when traveling near Jasper. He invited me to speak on his program once when I just dropped by to say hello.

Brother Nichols was a great writer and editor. For many years he served on the staff of the *Advocate*. He edited gospel papers along with his local work at Jasper. He was a pioneer among us in School of Preaching work. He conducted one for many years at Jasper, long before that concept caught on during the 1960's onward. Preachers, elders, Bible teachers and those interested in learning more about the Bible came to be instructed by the "Sage of Jasper." For these classes he made hundreds of outlines. I was never close enough to attend his classes but often received outlines from those who did.

He preached in numerous gospel meetings, settled untold numbers of church and personal disputes among brethren, spoke on many lecture-ships all over the brotherhood, conducted many debates, helped people in need, instructed many young preachers who were just beginning to preach or debate and, along with sister Nichols, entertained multitudes of people who visited their warmly gracious home. I was one of that number.

Brother Nichols loved people and it showed. He loved little children and they fully reciprocated that love. He and sister Nichols stayed in our home for a gospel meeting when our children were quite young. Both of our children fell in love with him and sister Nichols. He took time out for them and they never forgot him or her. Brother Nichols encouraged many young people to get a Christian education. For many years he served on the Board of Alabama Christian College (now Faulkner University) in Montgomery, Alabama. He served on the Board of Childhaven, a children's home. He defended ably a congregation's right and privilege to care for homeless children.

Brother Nichols was a very generous man. He and his wife lived frugally and gave much of what he made back to the church and to many worthy works that touched his magnanimous heart when appeals were made.

Brother and sister Nichols lived Christ before their children and taught them the way they should live. It paid off as one-by-one they obeyed the gospel. Most of the sons became preachers and most of the daughters married preachers.

For a number of years brother Nichols edited *Words of Truth*, a large four-page weekly gospel publication. For a number of years he allowed me to write the front page article each week. I wrote well over 200 articles for him during the late 1960's and the early 1970's. I do not now recall he ever turned down any article I sent, regardless of how controversial it was, or made any significant changes in what I wrote.

Brother B.C. Goodpasture allowed me to write the first tribute in the *Advocate* to brother Nichols subsequent to his death. It appeared December 18, 1975, just about one month after he departed earthly scenes. I titled the article, "He Walked Among the Mountains." I listed eight: (1) The Mountain of Powerful Preaching; (2) The Mountain of Steadfast Study; (3) The Mountain of Saintly Service; (4) The Mountain of Courageous Controversy; (5) The Mountain of Family Faithfulness; (6) The Mountain of Prolific Penmanship; (7) The Mountain of Heavenly Hope; (8) The Mountain of Scriptural Similitudes. In the latter point I likened

him to great and godly Bible characters he emulated so well.

Brother Nichols helped to raise gospel preaching to a new dimension during his lifetime. He baptized well over 12,000 people into Christ. The world is better, and surely the church is, because he lived. The words of Shakespeare fit him so perfectly:

*His life was so gentle
and the elements so mixed in him
That nature might stand up and say to all the world,
This was a man.*

Had brother Nichols lived as a contemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the former would have found the real man he sought in Jeremiah 5:1 and the latter would have found the man to stand in the gap he sought in Ezekiel 22:30. We shall not see soon his likes again.

FOY E. WALLACE, JR.

1896-1979

By James W. Boyd

These brief comments are in no way adequate to give record of the noble life and work of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. While it was a blessing to me to know him, I knew him personally only the last twenty years of his life. But I treasure this opportunity to express my thoughts concerning him which focus mostly on my personal impressions, as well as borrowing sentiments expressed by others who knew him longer and better than I, but with whom I heartily concur. He was one of the four most influential men upon my life.

Historical Background of Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

Born in the last century, of the generation of my parents, he died as a result of illness after nearly seventy years of preaching. The very longevity of his service is commendable and noteworthy. He was a genuine and true “soldier of the cross.”

My first knowledge of brother Wallace came like that of many others, through his absolutely tremendous books. How much I learned from his books so documented by Scripture! I still reread them time and again. I met him when H. Clyde Hale, my father-in-law, took me with him to see Wallace when Wallace was nearby in a gospel meeting. As a young preacher, I stood amazed to hear these two veterans of truth discuss matters. From that time forward I considered him my friend, and he returned the friendship to a young but eager preacher. He was a role model, tutor, advisor, and supporter.

He wrote not only his books, but he was editor of the *Gospel Advocate* for several years. Of that period it was said in the GA at his death, “At no time in its (GA’s) long and eventful life...was its influence or its contributions to the cause of Christ more significant.”

Wallace as a Preacher

The work of the pulpit was serious to brother Wallace. Once there he knew no friend but Christ, and was beholden to no man, friend or foe. His father, brother, and other relatives were also gospel preachers. How

other prominent and faithful gospel preachers of his day considered him tells us something of him. For example, N.B. Hardeman said, "Foy E. Wallace, Jr. is the greatest preacher among us." Again, "When the doctrine is under attack, he was as a lion and would be heard to roar from Dan to Beersheba." He was a Bible preacher, with superior knowledge due to study, with long sermons as from a genuine Bible scholar. One meeting brought the comment, "We have had a month's meeting this week." But he was always well organized and his lessons overflowing with instruction from start to finish. He preached positively and negatively as was done in the Bible, quoting Scripture from memory, as well as other compositions. Those who ever heard him preach on the beautiful bride of Christ, or be taken on the journey through the Bible book by book, shall never forget how he exalted Christ, His church, His doctrine, and the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

I never heard him debate, having only read about them, but those who did hear contend he had no peer. He was fiercely independent of thought and action, and more than any other, killed or isolated the heresy of premillennialism among the brethren. Counting his boldness and clarity, one wrote of him, "if the gospel called for it, he would have charged hell with only one bucket of water." I was also so impressed about him. Contrary to what some think, he never liked controversy. But he loved truth more than a superficial peace. Would that all those who preached were as faithful to duty! He gave place, no, not for an hour, to those who proved themselves enemies of the cross. His watchword was, "They shall not pass."

Brother Wallace warned that the introduction of modern corrupted versions of the Scriptures into the church weakened and destroyed the faith of Christians. He rightly warned, against the opposition of all the colleges, that their use in colleges destroyed young preachers. He contended that different books would make us a different people. Many "wise man" scoffed, but how accurately he perceived, and how credible his warnings have proved to be! Today, as digression runs rampantly, we hear the same false doctrines of the perversions coming from pulpits. Yet, some would not be warned, and will not be warned in spite of the glaring, obvious and odious results!

The marriage of brother and sister Wallace, extending for sixty-five years, is one of the more admirable achievements of their lives. His tender care for her for nearly three decades when she was an invalid was and is justly exalted even yet. Back and forth across this nation they went together in his preaching and writing. A motel room was more often their

home and his office was the trunk of his car.

Having been blessed with several hours of one-on-one conversations, I know he was kind, humble, patient, strong, convicted, with tenderness, wit, and humor. Having related once to me a trying period in his life, which touched me deeply, I asked him, "Do you ever cry?" He answered, "I'm crying now. I seldom shed tears."

I did not always agree with brother Wallace, but how well I recall one lively discussion we had on a matter, and I was amazed at the ease with which he refuted my position. I finally said, "Brother Wallace, I believe if we both study this more we will see it alike." With a twinkle in his eye he said, "I believe we will, too." Guess who saw the light! What a benefit he was to me!

Brother Wallace warned how some were hurting the church by what they were preaching, and others by what they would not preach. He was not of that cowardly, self-serving stripe because he preached all the counsel of God. He took battle scars to his grave. But those in his back did not come because he turned his face away from the enemy, but from betrayers of truth who jealously slandered him because of the glorious gospel he preached and defended beyond their ability to defeat. He was viciously maligned by egotistical, elite, sniveling, compromising, spiritual pygmies of the liberal apostasy of our day. In comparison to brother Wallace, they will have to look up with binoculars to even see the soles of his "beautiful feet." I marvel and give thanks that he was in my home, taught me, and loved me.

He respected faithful and godly men who went before him, and I respected him in his life, and do even more today. He once wrote, "I have never compromised with any error and I am too close to eternity to do it now." He was a man of steel and velvet, hard as a rock and soft as a fog, with the paradox of waging battle for truth, yet, with a manifestation of an inward peace unspeakable.

I regret so much that circumstances with me were such that I could not be at his funeral in Hereford, Texas, December 21, 1979. My final visit was with him in the home of Gary Colley in Memphis. Brother Wallace was there in a meeting, but was too ill to preach and Roy Hearn preached for him. But after service, several of us visited briefly with him. He was not long for this world even then.

I shall ever feel the influence of this man upon me, and my family. Would to God that brethren everywhere would also have more respect for his life and labors! We should imitate him as he imitated Christ.

G.K. WALLACE

1903-1988

By Garland Elkins

Historical Background

G.K. Wallace was born on a farm near McKinney, Texas, in Collin County, on September 2, 1903. He departed from this life September 22, 1988. His eighty-five plus years were spent in the service of his God. He was the eighth child of fourteen children born to the J.W. Wallace family. His parents moved to Montague County (Bowie) when he was three months old. There he grew up as a son of a Texas sharecropper—a farmer who worked the land for a portion of what he raised. His grandfather on his mother's side (J.W. Beasley) was a confederate soldier in the Civil War and was with General Lee when he surrendered at Appomattox. His grandfather Wallace (Thomas Knox Wallace) was also a Confederate soldier in the army of Tennessee. Thomas Knox Wallace was a pioneer Texas preacher—carpenter and preacher. He helped to plant the church in Texas. He married Parlee Elkins and she had two brothers who were preachers. They were Edd and Leroy Elkins. Brother G.K. received his middle name from his grandfather. Foy E. Wallace, Sr., was the son of Thomas Knox Wallace.

Brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. (G.K.'s cousin) preached in a schoolhouse in 1916 and baptized G.K. in a cow pond on the prairie of North Texas. Foy took G.K. on his lap after the baptizing and said, "I hope someday to hear you preach the gospel." Brother G.K. never forgot that, and in time to come, brother Foy E. Wallace Jr., did hear G.K. preach the gospel! Brother Wallace married Lillian Higgins Smith of Woodbury, Tennessee, a talented Christian lady, now living in Winter Haven, Florida. At this writing she is almost eighty years old, happy and in good health. My wife, Corrine, and I have always considered it a distinct pleasure to have brother and sister Wallace as guests in our home during gospel meetings. They were wonderful guests. Sister Wallace is from our hometown of Woodbury, Tennessee. "To know her is to love her"; she was always eager to carry out her role as "help meet" to brother Wallace. She always stood with him holding the banner high for truth.

Brother Wallace's grandmother was an Elkins, from my home county of Cannon in Middle, Tennessee. She was on the Wallace side of his family and was the former Margaret Parlee Elkins. Our relation would be so distant that he would not have had to claim it. However, he did recognize it, and in 1986 he requested me to serve as the Chairman of a committee of seven to select Gleanings from his sermons, lectures, debates, etc., to put into a book, which was done and the book is indeed superb. When the book was printed he sent an autographed copy to me, and wrote, among other things: "Dear cousin, you did a good job." In the book, which he dedicated to Mary Lois and Baxter Forrester of High Springs, Florida, he said, among other things, about the Forresters:

The Forresters have made it possible for this book and my autobiography to be printed. It is a real pleasure to dedicate this volume to this fine Christian couple.

GK. Wallace as a Preacher

Brother Wallace was a faithful and able gospel preacher (2 Tim. 2:2). He preached the word (2 Tim. 4:2). He was always well prepared (1 Pet. 3:15). His preaching always showed great balance. No faction could ever claim him as one of them, but rather, he opposed and exposed factions. His depth and wealth of knowledge on many Bible subjects were amazing. He was a scholarly preacher in the proper definition of the term. He also instilled confidence in others. He knew the truth, and he knew that he knew the truth (John 8:32). He handled it right, rightly dividing the truth (2 Tim. 2:15).

He was extremely happy to devote his life to preaching, which he considered the most important work in the world. As was characteristic of the Lord and His apostles, brother Wallace said, "The Bible says." He believed that truth was both absolute and attainable (John 8:32, 6:66-70). He believed in the inspiration, totality, and finality of the Scriptures. He taught the terms of pardon, and that New Testament worship must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Some preachers, still claiming to be in the fellowship of the church, preach in such a way that their sermons could receive endorsement from most any of the denominations. Brother Wallace's preaching was not of that type, but rather it was always distinctive. Like Paul, he could say, "Who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Cor. 4:17). He never perverted the gospel, mixing it with error. The gospel is God's power unto salvation, and when one heard

brother Wallace preach, it was evident that he believed the gospel. His sermons were filled with truth, and yet he usually preached relatively short sermons. I have heard him say, "A sermon does not have to be eternal in order to be immortal." Brother G.K. Wallace followed brother N.B. Hardeman's advice to, "Stand up, speak up, and shut up."

G.K. Wallace as a Debater

Brother Wallace conducted many debates. He was always well prepared. As a debater he excelled in the ability to see through a fallacious argument, and to show the error, which many thought to be only the size of a "mole hill," was in reality the size of a "mountain." Brother Wallace's unique use of humor at the proper time, and in a proper way was always one of his outstanding assets. He was kind and courteous in debate in personal matters, but when it came to exposing his opponent's error he did so with a withering attack. He always remembered and imitated his Lord. He knew that it was said of him, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity..." (Heb. 1:9). Brother Wallace, whether preaching or debating, usually began in a very low voice, but, when the occasion demanded it, though he began like a lamb, he would roar like a lion.

After brother Wallace had preached for forty years he wrote:

During the past forty years I have heard and conducted many debates. Debating is major surgery. Many brethren have been called upon to defend the truth in a public way from time to time. This was because necessity was laid upon them. No true gospel preacher seeks to be known as a debater. The brethren have called me to represent them in debates many times, but I never did want to be known as a debater. I am simply a gospel preacher and have helped the brethren in debates only when I felt that the cause would suffer unless someone came to their defense.

Demands for debates are not very great now, but they will come again. When the older generation passes on and young preachers come along "who know not Joseph," there will be need for such again. Brother Wallace also wrote,

I have held many debates, and I consider them a part of my evangelistic work. I held my first religious debate in 1928, and from that time on I was often called by my brethren to defend

the cause of Christ.

Other great debaters considered brother Wallace to be one of the best of debaters. Brother Will Totty said, "Brother Wallace is one of the best debaters it has been my privilege to hear." Brother Guy N. Woods said: "I think there is not a preacher among us that has brother Wallace's ability to deal with the inconsistency of an opponent. I believe that he has more debates in print than any man living or dead." Brother Woods also said, "G.K. Wallace is one of the truly great debaters of all time."

G.K. Wallace as a Teacher

Brother Wallace followed very effectively the Master teacher (1 Pet. 2:21). It is said of Jesus, "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it" (Mark 4:33). His practical insights to the Bible were always interesting and often unique. He was a master at taking the profound, complex, and the difficult, and reducing it to simplicity so that everyone could understand (2 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:17). This characteristic is reminiscent of our Lord, for the Bible says, "And the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37). Brother Wallace's use of visual aids (particularly cloth charts) was always very effective, and he often used them both in his evangelistic preaching and in his debates. He often stamped the principles of truth upon the hearts of his students with the use of appropriate illustrations. He instilled in his audience a desire to learn more. The church is much stronger, and the world a better place to live because of the preaching, teaching, and debating of brother G.K. Wallace.

G.K. Wallace as a Lecturer

When the lectureship was begun at Freed-Hardeman College in 1937, it was conducted for an entire month. In 1940 it was cut back to two weeks. The announcement stated "brother Wallace of Wichita, Kansas, has been added to the regular teaching staff this year because of his expert knowledge of his subjects." From that time, and as often as he spoke, brethren gratefully acknowledge his "expert knowledge." This writer heard brother Wallace numerous times and under many different circumstances, but I never heard him present a poor sermon, lecture, or speech, on any subject. His lessons have been of inestimable value to me and countless others as well. He covered a wide range of subjects, from diligently teaching the truth and exposing error, to lessons on Christian

living, and also many lessons of encouragement.

Brother Wallace served as lectureship director of the Freed-Hardeman Lectureship for a number of years, and it was during that time that I was invited to speak on the lectureship. He was very generous in encouraging other gospel preachers, especially young preachers. I never detected the least bit of jealousy in him. One of his outstanding characteristics was his support of both the message of truth, and the faithful messenger. During a forty-two year period of lectureships at Freed-Hardeman he spoke almost every year. About thirty volumes of his sermons and debate notes have been given to Freed-Hardeman University. While teaching at Freed-Hardeman he served as Executive Assistant to the President, and he served as Vice-President Emeritus until his death.

G.K. Wallace as a Writer

The same characteristics of preaching the truth in love in a simple, direct approach also carried over into his writings. The following statement from his pen serves as a fine illustration for the style and content of his writings:

We need more than ever to press the true gospel with zeal and persistence; worldly prudence will suggest that we be more quiet and unobtrusive in the propagation of the faith. We have observed a change of policy in the last few years. This time-serving expediency has become the disgrace of our age; we need to be instant in season, out of season, and to keep in mind that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Let us not permit the house of God to become a wolf sanctuary.

As we look back over brother Wallace's writings, spanning a period of more than sixty years, it is very clear that he has always been on the side of truth, and his name was always synonymous with the scriptures and sound doctrine. When truth was at stake he never hesitated to enter the fray, and having done so, he always left his mark for truth in a powerful way. This accounts for the fact that even though most of his preaching and writing have been of the non-controversial type, yet due to his powerful apposition to error, his writings on controversial subjects are likely the best remembered.

Conclusion

Brother Wallace was a man of unusual talents, dedication, and accomplishments. He possessed a vast storehouse of knowledge. His wide variety of work is reflected in a lifetime of preaching, writing, and debating. In fact, so much could be written about him, it is difficult to describe him with few words.

Brother Wallace kept his eye on the goal of heaven (Phil. 1:21). Like Josiah, he “did that which was right in the sight of the Lord—and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left” (2 Kgs. 22:2).

I, along with numerous others, held brother Wallace in high esteem, and it is an honor to pay tribute to one who so richly deserves it. It was at Freed-Hardeman College (now university) that I first became acquainted with him. I immediately realized that he was truly a great gospel preacher. As time continued I learned that he was a multi-talented man. He excelled as a preacher of the pure gospel of Christ, a debater, a writer, a teacher, a lecturer, a fund raiser, a business man, an administrator, and above all, as a Christian gentleman. Literally thousands owe him a debt of gratitude, and generations to come, if time continues, “shall rise up, and call him blessed.”

I conclude these comments with a quote from brother Wallace:

We should not allow the problems of today, nor the history of yesterday to dampen our spirits in fighting a good fight.

H.A. DIXON

FAITHFUL PREACHER OF THE WORD

1904- 1969

By William Woodson

For now many years, a picture of H.A. Dixon has held an honored place in my office where study, prayer, and writing go on; his picture, along with those of such men as Gus Nichols, C.P. Roland, Franklin Camp, and others, serves to remind me of those who have helped form my life and convictions. Even now, the writing of these words stirs pleasant memories and recalls great moments I shared with him as first a student and then as a teacher at Freed-Hardeman College.

Historical Background of H.A. Dixon

Hubert Allen Dixon (October 3, 1904 - November 8, 1969) was the president of Freed-Hardeman from 1950 until his death. He was blessed with many talents: song leader, teacher, college president, shaper of youth, but primarily I remember him as a preacher and teacher of the gospel.

Brother Dixon was a song leader of great ability, one who led with the knowledge of the technical dimensions of music, but even more with the depth of love for God and his worship which lifted the heart and blessed the soul of those who were drawn by his leadership into the genuine outpouring of reverence and praise to God. He led singing at the Union Avenue church in Memphis during the mid-1930s, where brother G.C. Brewer served as the regular preacher. Later, brother Dixon preached for the Highland church of Christ in Jackson, Tennessee; the Central church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; and the Poplar Street church in Florence, Alabama. When he became President of Freed-Hardeman, in 1950, brother Dixon was a well-respected gospel preacher and his influence grew with the passing years.

Brother Dixon loved preachers and preaching; his resolve was that he would serve as president as long as he could also teach and preach, but if he could not do both, he would leave the presidency and do the teaching and preaching he loved.

One Saturday morning, in the mid-60s, he talked with me for several minutes—just the two of us outside Old Main, near his office. Among

other things, he said he thought I had one of the best jobs on the FHC campus; that is, I could study the Bible all the time, teach it, and preach it without having responsibilities of administration, etc., to discharge. He loved not the administration the less; he loved preaching and teaching the more. I have cherished that thought now these many years.

All who studied Romans, Hebrews, Revelation, Acts, etc., with him were impacted by his love of the Lord and of Scripture; his clear analysis of each book, chapter, and verse; his rapport with students; his desire to bring the truth of God's word into the mind and life of the students; and his graciousness and courtesy as a gentleman and friend. Even now, more than a quarter century after his death, we former students remember his classes and regard them as among the best we knew. My own study of Romans, which I studied three times under his guidance (once for credit, twice more without credit to learn more from his wisdom), has continued along the lines of analysis and exegesis he marked in the 1950s, and later, for me and so many others. His abundant knowledge of the Bible was incorporated into and evidenced in and by his preaching. He was, indeed, a faithful preacher of the Word of God!

Dixon as a Preacher

Among the qualities I cherish most concerning his preaching are these:

He knew, loved, and followed our Lord Jesus. There was an evident love for Christ in H.A. Dixon's life and work. Whether he was expounding a chapter, exegeting a passage, preaching a sermon, discussing a problem, even administering a rebuke when needed, one just knew here was a man who loved God with all his heart, soul and strength. This underlying principle was the secret of his greatness.

He knew the Bible extremely well. In some ways, H.A. Dixon stood in the shadow of brother N.B. Hardeman whose "Special Bible" studies at FHC had long been praised by students and whose preaching was of the highest order. Aware of this, as a minor theme, and fully devoted to the exposition of the Bible in lesson and sermon, Dixon prepared his studies very well—each verse was fitted into its context, the outline was complete in unity and balance. When questions arose, as they so often and so properly did, the answer was given with a simplicity and thoroughness which made it look to be easy. Now, after many years in my own ministry, I realize those few minutes of explanation for student questions reflected many hours of his personal study and prayer.

H.A. Dixon loved the church of Christ and was pleased to discuss its uniqueness and its heritage. In the last article he wrote [printed in the memorial issue to him in the *Gospel Advocate* (January 15, 1970), pp. 34, 43-44], Dixon pondered the impact on our brotherhood of “A New Breed of Preachers” and observed:

Have we not overlooked that the past generation had its well-trained and well-educated men who nobly defended the faith against sectarianism? They did not defend it as ‘Church of Christ doctrine.’ Not one of them believed ‘Church of Christ doctrine’ but all believed that God’s word is the truth that makes free (John 8:32; 17:17). Not one was interested in anything except determining what that word taught. They believed that the only right way is the way set forth in the Bible. They believed that a person could be a Christian without being a sectarian and that he could and did belong to the church of the Lord by the same process that he belonged to Christ. They believed that he could be a member of the church without being a member of any denomination—and many still do. They believed that the only true worship is that which is done ‘in spirit and in truth.’ By ‘in spirit’ they understood that it must be sincere, springing from the heart and in tune with the great Spirit, God, whom we worship. By the phrase ‘in truth’ they believed it must be in harmony with the truth and always directed by it. These men believed in the plan of salvation set forth in the New Testament by which one is brought to an understanding of the will of God and upon that believes that Jesus Christ died for his sins. Upon penitent confession of Christ he is baptized into him. Then he arises from the waters of baptism a child of God, unbranded save into the name of Christ, his Lord and Master. They believed that all such ‘born-again’ people belong to Christ and belonging to Christ they belong to his church.

H.A. Dixon preached with conviction, firmness, clarity, and with great consideration and rapport with his audience. You just **knew** he believed what he preached, was obedient to it, and was urging his hearers to believe and obey the truth of God; but you also **knew** he loved your soul and wanted you to become a Christian, to become a better Christian.

On November 17, 1975, and shortly after the death of brother Gus Nichols, sister H.A. (Louise) Dixon wrote these words to me:

I also wanted to tell you (and you may be aware of this) that brother G.C. Brewer was to my husband in many ways what brother Nichols has been to you. At the time of brother Brewer's death, he told me that he determined more than ever to fight the good fight of faith; he never swerved from that determination. I am persuaded that brother Nichols' death will affect you in the same way and I shall pray for you to that end.

In H.A. Dixon, God's workmanship was evident. After all these years, I still cherish his memory and am grateful he was my teacher and friend. We still need the likes of him and those who shaped his life. May we renew our resolve to live and serve after the example of our Lord as reflected in the life and service of such great Christians!

GUY N. WOODS

1908-1993

By Richard England

Historical Background

Brother Guy N. Woods was born in Vardeman, Mississippi, September 26, 1908. While he was quite young, the family moved to Holladay, Tennessee. On August 24, 1926, he was baptized into Christ by J.W. Grant. He died December 8, 1993. Funeral services were conducted on December 11, 1993, and this writer was honored to be the speaker. Brother Woods' body is buried in the graveyard there in Holladay.

Preacher-Writer-Debater

During brother Woods' life of eighty-five years he wrote probably as much or more than any man living. Among his writings are the *Gospel Advocate Quarterly* lessons which he meticulously prepared for more than one-third of a century while in various homes and motels around the country where he was engaged in Gospel meetings. His practice was to keep a particular folding table and chair with him at all times in order to create the same atmosphere for study and writing in any location. He carried with him his own typewriter so as to maintain an ease of operation without distraction. Familiarity with one's surroundings at time of study and meditation was a point he often urged on others who would ask for information on how to be most effective in Bible study. In addition to the *Quarterly*, he wrote one *Annual Commentary* for the Gospel Advocate Co. in 1946 related to a study of the church. This particular work was again published as the 1994-95 *Annual Lesson Commentary*. Literally hundreds of his articles appeared in various periodicals published by the brethren through the years. He wrote detailed commentaries on the New Testament books of John, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude which are a permanent part of the Gospel Advocate Commentaries. A number of his sermons and lessons were published in books such as: *Sermons on Salvation* (1959, R.B. Sweet Co., Inc.); *The Second Coming and Other Sermons* (1948, reprinted in 1978 by Win-More Publications); *How To Read the Greek New Testament* (1970,

Guy N. Woods); *Shall We Know One Another in Heaven* (1988, Gospel Advocate Co.); *How To Study the New Testament* (1992, Gospel Advocate Co.); two volumes of *Questions and Answers* (Vol. I published by Freed-Hardeman College in 1976. Vol. II published by the Gospel Advocate Co. in 1986); and *Biblical Backgrounds of the Troubled Middle East* (1991, Gospel Advocate Co.). A few of his public debates were also published. Not long before his death he had just completed a revision of *The People's New Testament with Notes*, which is a brief commentary of the New Testament by B.W. Johnson that is widely circulated, especially among members of the churches of Christ.

His preaching history covers nearly two-thirds of a century and extends from coast to coast, Canada to Mexico and a number of engagements outside the country. During the most active part of his life he was probably one of the most visible and well-known preachers among the churches of Christ. In his latter years, as more and more of the younger people did not know who he was, he often said with a smile on his face that he had "outlived his popularity."

Guy N. Woods is said to have participated in as many religious debates as any other man in modern history. Many of his debates are not, and never were, in print. These discussions involved practically every subject that has challenged the thinking of members of the churches of Christ and many doctrines which have fostered and perpetuated the gross errors of denominationalism, infidelity, and atheism. The intensity with which he would press the points he earnestly believed to be true caused many to think he was merciless. Such is certainly not the case. He was a humble, reserved individual. There was never an ounce of personal animosity on his part toward any opponent.

Brother Woods studied law, passed the bar exam and was licensed in both Texas and Tennessee. However, he never practiced law.

Most people who heard him preach a number of times, heard the same sermons over and over. Yet, as listening to a great musical composition, one never tired of hearing them. One time, when he was in a meeting where I was the preacher, I told him that if he faltered any in the midst of his sermon, I could just stand up and complete it almost word for word even as he would finish it. After the lesson, he sat down beside me, poked me with his elbow and, with a grin on his face, said, "Ha, you never heard that one before because I've never preached it before. I put it together as I preached it." Nevertheless, it was a masterpiece of teaching, as were all his sermons.

Among the sermons that he considered to be of greatest importance were: The Authority of the Bible, Prayer, The Rich Young Ruler, The Security of the Believer, and Tests of Faith. All of his sermons were void of excess verbiage. Except on lecture programs, his lessons normally were presented in thirty minutes or less. His sermons, while occasionally containing an illustration from a source outside the Bible, were entirely explanations of Bible teaching. He would often expound on a text, one word at a time, and then give the overall meaning of the entire passage.

Brother Woods was a faithful gospel preacher because he preached the gospel faithfully; that is, he never ceased to preach it and that is all he preached. His faithfulness to the Word in the midst of controversies within the church such as helping orphans, congregational cooperation, the operation of the Holy Spirit, modern innovations in worship, and denominational doctrines from without, stands singular in an era of vacillation among preachers who are more interested in popularity than purity.

Brother Woods was a loved and loving man. Those who were privileged to know him personally will long remember his gentle, humble attitude. He had no children in the flesh, but was like a father to many, providing guidance, advice and encouragement in whatever noble endeavor they would launch. It would be a blessing if God were to raise up another prophet like brother Guy N. Woods.

CLEON LYLES

July 1, 1914 - September 3, 1989

By Carroll C. Trent

Historical Background

Cleon Lyles was born July 1, 1914 at Rector, Arkansas. He was the youngest of four brothers and one sister. Two of his brothers, Christian and Robert, became gospel preachers also. Cleon was baptized by J. Harvey Dykes, Jr., at Rector in 1930. He began preaching at Rector in 1931. Will Slater and James E. Laird persuaded him to come to Fort Smith, work at the children's home dairy, attend school, and learn Bible preaching.

He preached by Sunday appointments and gospel meetings in west central Arkansas, which included Coal Hill. The Coats family lived at Coal Hill and their daughter was Neva Maxie Coats. Cleon entered Harding College, Morrilton, in the fall of 1933. He often said that all he could remember of that experience was that he entered Harding, he was in love, and that he and Maxie married. They were married November 12, 1933.

Lyles as a Preacher

At the end of the fall quarter of school they moved to Oklahoma, where he preached. Soon they settled in Talequah, where he preached for the church, and he and Maxie attended Northeast Oklahoma State College. In 1937 the Lyles moved to Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Cleon preached for the Central church. In 1941 they moved to Paris, Texas, and he preached for the Lamar Avenue church.

In 1945 they moved to Little Rock where he began preaching for the Fourth and State Streets church. Later the congregation built a new facility and became the Sixth and IZard church. Their numbers increased steadily and they soon became the largest congregation of churches of Christ in Arkansas. In addition to his pulpit preaching, brother Lyles conducted a Sunday radio program, held many gospel meetings, spoke on many lectureships and did considerable writing. He conducted his radio program live; he developed a Sunday noon television program with

the help of a group of singers from Sixth and Izard.

After a tenure of twenty-three years with Sixth and Izard, he entered into full time evangelistic preaching and held meetings in a great many states.

At the end of his full time evangelistic work, he was asked to preach for the Downtown church in Morrilton. At the end of December 1978, he retired from full-time work.

Brother Lyles served many years as a member of the board of directors at Southern Christian Home at Morrilton. He resigned from that position in January of 1979 when his son-in-law, Jerry Perrin, was chosen to be superintendent. He was co-founder and co-editor of the *Pulaski County Christian*, a newspaper among churches of Christ. The paper is now known as *Arkansas Christian Herald*. Cleon resigned from the paper when he began his full-time evangelistic work.

Brother Lyles was the author of seven books: *Bigger Men for Better Churches*, *God Knew He Needed Her*, *Make Way for Happiness*, *Rich Without Money*, *Wish I Had Said That*, and *Baseball, Baptism, and Apple Pie*. In the late spring of 1979, he began preaching for the Northside church (which met at Southern Christian Home). His love and concern for the spiritual nurture of the boys and girls knew no bounds. He loved to bring the gospel to their troubled hearts. He often encouraged them by saying that he intended to go to heaven and he wanted them to go there too.

The last sermon brother Lyles preached was on Sunday, August 27, 1989, at the Northside church in Morrilton. He was preparing to go to church services on Sunday morning, September 3, when his strength failed and the ambulance rushed him to the hospital. He passed away about 7:00 that evening after a long and valiant struggle with cancer. He is survived by his beloved wife Maxie Coats Lyles, and two daughters, Janis Ann and Kerri Sue. He was survived by his brother Robert and sister Rubye Lyles McNickle. Also included in his survivors were three grandchildren and one nephew.

Funeral services were held at the Downtown church in Morrilton on Tuesday afternoon, September 5, by John Gipson, Carroll Trent, Weldon Hatcher, Tom Chapin, and singers from Sixth and Izard. Graveside services were held by Luther Hodge at Srygley Cemetery at Coal Hill, Arkansas.

FRANKLIN CAMP

1915-1991

By Bobby Duncan

Historical Background

If one travels from Munford, Alabama to the top of Cheaha Mountain, about halfway up the mountain he will pass through the Hopeful community. It was here that Joseph Franklin Camp was born in 1915. A few years later the Camp family moved down the mountain to Munford, the community where Franklin was reared, and a community still made up largely of members of the Camp family. Franklin's grandfather Camp was named Joseph; his father was called Frank, hence the name Joseph Franklin.

I do not know the circumstances under which Franklin's ancestors learned the truth and became Christians. I have heard that some preacher came to Hopeful and preached, and the church was started in that community. According to sister Lois Rivlin, who lives in Talladega, Joseph Camp used to ride a gray horse (or mule) across the mountain to Horse Creek or to Campbell Springs, both in Clay County, to preach on Sunday. Sometimes he would spend the night, returning on the next day. His pay at Horse Creek was whatever was contributed that day.

Simple New Testament Christianity was something with which Franklin grew up. The Christianity of Frank and Sudie Camp was very evident to all who knew them. It was a known fact that if a person came to Munford and needed a meal or a place to spend the night, the place to go was the home of Frank and Sudie Camp. No request for hospitality was ever denied anyone.

Frank Camp was a gospel preacher, though he always supported himself and his family of seven children in secular work. He did not accept any pay for the preaching he did. He and his brother Nathan owned and operated a cotton mill and a company store in Munford. These brothers were faithful and devoted Christians. Each year during the summer gospel meeting they would close down the mill and the store so their employees could attend the meetings. It is said that the people over the community would carry their New Testaments in their pockets, and could be seen from time-to-time opening them and discussing some

passage or some Bible subject. It was this kind of family background that produced Franklin Camp.

According to sister Rivlin, Frank Camp said if he was not a better preacher than his father, then his father had not done as good a job in training him as he should have done. Years later he said that if Franklin was not a better preacher than he, then he had not done as good a job in training his son as he should have done. There was a bond between father and son that made Frank's sudden death unusually difficult for son Franklin. Franklin had taken his father to see the doctor in Anniston. They stopped in Oxford to get a prescription filled. Franklin remained in the car while his father went into the drugstore. Frank Camp died of a heart attack as he was leaving the store.

Camp as a Preacher

Franklin was baptized by S.P. Pittman during a gospel meeting at Munford. In the fall of 1934 he entered David Lipscomb College, where he first met Willard Collins. In 1972 brother Collins wrote in the Foreword to brother Camp's *Old Truths in New Robes* (Vol. II):

We roomed together for several months during the freshmen year and from that time until this day I have counted him one of my best personal friends and one of the most sincere Christian men I have ever met.

He wrote also:

It is my opinion that there is no person in the church, in brother Camp's age group, who knows the Bible as well as this man.

Camp married Hazel Howell, and this was one of the best things he ever did. She was an ideal wife and mother. Down through the years she patiently stood beside him and supported him in his work. To Franklin and Hazel were born three sons and a daughter, Vivian, who died at age seven from a fire accident while they were living at East Gadsden. She was looking forward to entering school on Monday. She was burned on Sunday, and died Thursday morning at 4:30. In a bulletin article at the close of that year, brother Camp wrote the following:

I have learned that faith is more precious than gold. It is the eye of the soul. By faith I can look beyond the veil. By faith I can see every grave made empty. By faith I can see the city of

God filled with the redeemed and among them an angel that was once a blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl. When I see this, gold becomes cankered. I only want enough to pay my fare through this world. But faith, give me more. "O lord, help thou my unbelief."

Franklin had great admiration for brother Gus Nichols, whom he heard preach at Munford in several meetings. He heard brother Nichols say that he studied five hours each day. Franklin concluded that if brother Nichols needed to study five hours a day, he would need to study at least six, and this he did as long as he lived. He was up by around four o'clock each morning, and was in his study shortly thereafter.

These things all help us understand the man. He was first and foremost dedicated to right living, and if he mentioned his study habits at all, he would make it plain that he studied to learn more of God's will for him, not merely that he might preach it to others. He had a rather large library, and from it he studied freely, but he believed the Bible was written for every man to study and understand for himself. He approached each difficult passage as if no man had ever studied it before. No man can be my standard, and I did not always agree with brother Camp on every passage, but if I had to accept some man's interpretation of a difficult passage, I would rather trust Franklin Camp's interpretation than that of any other man I have ever known. He had an amazing concept of the Scheme of Redemption and of how each book of the Bible and each verse related to the whole.

Franklin Camp did the kind of preaching one would expect from his background, his study habits, and his brilliant mind. He knew the value and necessity of preaching first principles, which he did in plain language, challenging the errors of denominationalism. A fine Christian lady on Sand Mountain told me she never would have learned the truth if Franklin Camp's preaching on the radio had not been so plain. She became angry with him, and decided to study her Bible and prove him wrong. But he was at his best when dealing with those passages which encourage and inspire children of God to greater dedication, perseverance, and faith. He was truly a gentle man, both in his preaching and in his life.

While he never thought of himself as such, most of us would think of Franklin Camp as being original in his preaching. He did not hesitate to use good ideas from whatever source, but his preaching reflected his own personal serious thought and study. He never preached a sermon from which one got the idea he had said everything about the subject he

knew to say; it was obvious there was more where that came from.

Brother Camp did not enjoy controversy; however, his faithfulness to the truth and his love for the church often forced him into it. But one could never say he was unfair or unChrist-like in dealing with those who differed with him. He was reluctant to publish his book, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, because he feared some brethren might make differences over the subject a test of fellowship. Time and again he emphasized that one might differ with his conclusions and still be faithful to God, so long as he did not claim some leadership of the Spirit other than that contained in the Bible.

An article about Franklin Camp could not be complete without mentioning his sense of humor; he knew how to laugh. He could see the humor in almost any situation, and he enjoyed laughing. To him, life was to be lived to its fullest and enjoyed. He enriched the lives of all who knew him, and his contribution to the Cause we love will be measured only in eternity.

BATSELL BARRETT BAXTER

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF HIS LIFE

By Willard Collins

Batsell Barrett Baxter was born in Cordell, Oklahoma, September 1916. He spent a great deal of his life in Texas, Oklahoma, and California, but lived the last years of his life in Nashville, Tennessee.

Batsell Barrett felt very close to his mother and he told me that a custom that his mother had was very influential in his becoming a productive gospel preacher. It was customary for Batsell Barrett to have an afternoon nap, and each day, according to Batsell's memories from his childhood, his mother would take him and tell him a Bible story as he went to sleep. Batsell mentioned to me that he thought his desire to become a preacher was due to his training. His father was the president of three Christian colleges during his lifetime. He was the founding president of Pepperdine University.

Baxter was a very productive preacher. For over 20 years he was the regular pulpit minister for the Hillsboro Church of Christ in Nashville where he had a regular nightly broadcast to a very large audience over WLAC. While he was preaching at Hillsboro, he was also head of the Bible Department at Lipscomb and guided the Bible faculty very well. During a part of this same period he was the full-time radio and television preacher on a nationwide basis for the Herald of Truth. During a part of this time he was editor of *Upreach* magazine which was printed under the leadership of Herald of Truth and Highland Avenue Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas. He engaged in a number of large city-wide campaigns, including the very successful Campaign for Christ in the Coliseum at Lubbock, Texas. He preached in many gospel meetings sponsored by just one local congregation.

He was married to Wanda Baxter from Taft, Texas, and they were the parents of three sons. Baxter was author of the book, *Every Life. A Plan of God*, and was also author of *Yale Lectures*, where he studied 66 volumes of this out-standing lectureship and prepared a dissertation for his doctor's degree from this study.

During the later years of his life, he had a very active part in training

many well-known gospel preachers at Lipscomb. Carroll Ellis was head of the speech department and Batsell was head of the Bible department and the two of them worked together in recruiting and training outstanding young men to become gospel preachers. A number of these are now full-time pulpit preachers across our land. Batsell Barrett Baxter was a regular writer for the *Gospel Advocate* and was a very close friend to B.C. Goodpasture, *Advocate* editor, during a big part of Batsell's life.

Batsell Barrett Baxter is still loved by the Hillsboro church in Nashville and by thousands of people who heard him preach in person and by radio and television. His widow, Wanda, still lives on Mayfair street in Nashville.

Baxter's Style of Preaching

Ira North, Batsell Barrett Baxter, and I developed a very close friendship in our work at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, and in our preaching work. It was customary for us to have a luncheon about once each month. Ira referred to these as "crisis luncheons" and we discussed many subjects as brethren and reached many conclusions at these luncheons. When television teaching was beginning in Nashville, Batsell Barrett and I had a luncheon at my home near Lipscomb campus to determine the idea for a local television program which led to the beginning of Know Your Bible, which was finally made into a program for the Madison Church of Christ. Since Ira wanted the entire television program, we thought with his experience he should be the Master of Ceremonies for Know Your Bible. Ira accepted this and it became a very popular program for WSIX TV. Two of us had a personal friend in Springfield, Tennessee, who owned WSIX and this friend was very instrumental in getting the program on the air and in keeping it there. This program is still being broadcast from the Madison congregation. The regular program Know Your Bible was a kind of beginning point for it all.

Batsell was a persuasive preacher. He delivered his messages in love. To me he was a fine example of a preacher who was truly interested in reaching the lost and edifying the saved in every audience. He was a fine example to young men in showing them how to be persuasive in preaching. He lived it and, as young people put it today, He Walked the Talk. He preached Christ and he tried to walk in his steps. Two of his typical sermons were "Neither Catholic, Protestant, Nor Jew" and "What is the Church of Christ?" This last sermon was prepared for publication

in *Look* magazine when *Look* was very popular and had a big circulation. [Both sermons have been widely circulated in tract form.]

He was a person of sound character and lived what he preached. He loved the church. He told me one day while we were driving down Lealand Lane, "I believe I am ready to die for Christ and the church if need be." Batsell created a desire in people to love Christ and to long for heaven. These were great ideals of the gospel he preached and without change. He greatly admired the apostle Paul and he believed in forgiveness and was a dedicated, praying Christian who loved the message of salvation.