



# TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE WITH THE BIBLE'S WAY TO WEIGHT LOSS



**February 2005**

Matthew 6:33:  
But seek first his kingdom  
and his righteousness, and  
all these things will be given  
to you as well.

## FIRST PLACE

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..... Carole Lewis

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..... Kay Smith

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Newsletter Sheila Robbins

## Dear Friends,

I believe there is nothing more special than friendship. When I was a little girl, my mom told me that after you are grown, you will be able to count your really good friends on one hand. As a child, I certainly didn't understand the significance of her statement. As an adult, I know exactly what she meant.



**Carole Lewis**  
National Director  
[Carole@firstplace.org](mailto:Carole@firstplace.org)

All friends are wonderful, and I believe as Christians we should have friendships with non-believers and believers alike. Jesus modeled for us how unbelievers in His day came to Christ because Jesus became their friend. Remember how Jesus told Zacchaeus up in the tree, that He wanted to go to his house for a meal. Zacchaeus' life was changed forever that day and the Bible tells us that Zacchaeus, a tax collector, repaid every dime he had ever stolen from anyone after coming to know Jesus personally.

We have a tremendous responsibility to bring our lost family and friends to Christ. We may be the only Christian they know. I have found it to be true that unless our friendships with non-believers are times of loving them into becoming believers, many times we can be dragged down rather than lifting them up.

Many of you remember that our middle child, Shari, was killed after being hit by an 18 year-old girl who was driving drunk on Thanksgiving night, 2001. As I was driving into the office this morning, I asked God to give me something to say about friendship that would bless you as you read this article. He came through, as He always does, and I received the sweetest e-mail from a high-school friend of Shari's describing their friendship.

Shari has been in heaven for over three years now, and her life is still blessing others because of the kind of Christian friendship Shari freely gave to her friends. Shari came to Christ in a backyard Bible class at the age of eight and she never lost the wonder of knowing Him. I pray you

*(Continued on next page)*





## Carole Lewis

*(Continued from previous page)*

enjoy the e-mail as much as I did, and that you will endeavor to be: first, a friend of Christ and second, a friend to all those He loves.

*My name is Kym Harrington and I was a friend of Shari's all through high school.*

*As we are planning our 25th reunion, I was saddened to learn of what had happened to her. I am so very, very sorry for Jeff, her children and your family. She was a really good friend in school, and I had actually known her from Long Point Baptist School. We shared kindergarten and first grade together before I moved away and came back to school, first at St. Mark's Lutheran School, where I knew Jeff's sister, Yvonne, and then to Spring Branch High School. She was such an amazing friend, and we shared many, many, many laughs together. When she was dating Jeff, I was dating a friend of his and we spent lots of time together during high school.*

*+I read some excerpts from the book, *The Mother Daughter Legacy*, by you and Cara, and I am so happy to read of what an excellent Christian mother and role model she was for her family. I had little doubt it would have been any other way. She was always a bright spot when my life wasn't easy and made me feel like it was never insurmountable. I will always*

*be sorry that when I moved from Houston I lost touch with her. I was really looking forward to seeing her again, and I know that someday I will.*

*Please pass on to Jeff how sorry I am to hear, but that I hope he has found strength and happiness in the Lord's plan for us all. I still remember their wedding day. You just knew how much love and happiness they shared and I will be forever grateful that she was a part of my life. A small time shared, but a lasting impression of a really good person.*

*I wanted to share this with you, because now as a parent of a child who nearly died, I would never miss any of his friends sharing their memories with me.*

*I hope I could bring you a smile. You are an inspiration through your writings, and bless you always.*

Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for His friends." John 15:14.

May we be the kind of friend to Jesus that He has been to us. May we love others as Christ loves them. Remember He laid down His life for His friends.

**Blessings to you,  
Carole Lewis**

[Carole@firstplace.org](mailto:Carole@firstplace.org)





# Talkin' With Kay

*Dear First Place Friends,*

**F**riendship is the theme for our February e-newsletter, and as I thought about the many friendships I have gained through First Place, I feel so blessed. These friendships offer me support, encouragement and accountability. I also thought about a different type of friendship. I thought about an organization that is a "good friend" to First Place and all consumers, CSPI, the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Founded in 1971, it is an independent nonprofit consumer health group. CSPI advocates honest food labeling and advertising, safer and more nutritious foods. Nutrition Action Healthletter subscribers and foundation grants support CSPI's work. CSPI accepts no government or industry funding. Nutrition Action Health letter, which has been published since 1974, accepts no advertising.

Each month this health letter has great articles that help us protect our health. This year CSPI has been working to:

- Eliminate partially hydrogenated vegetable oils (with their trans fats) from the food supply.
- Get junk food out of schools.
- Keep germs and unsafe additives out of our food.
- Require facts on menu boards at chain restaurants.
- Expose the sometimes-corrupting influence of industry on science and health and environmental policies.

The Healthletter will take an item, such as yogurt or crackers, compare ingredients and let you know which one is the best choice. They often highlight new products, such as the Chicken Selects that were introduced by McDonald's last July, comparing them through advertisement to the premium athletes our country was sending to Athens. We were to think of these new chicken strips as gold-medal winners in the chicken-strip competition. CSPI reported that ounce for ounce they were no healthier than the Chicken McNuggets. A five-strip order had 630 calories and

**Kay Smith**  
Associate Director  
[kays@bigcountry.net](mailto:kays@bigcountry.net)

11 grams of bad fat (saturated and trans). The best choice is still the Chicken McGrill, 400 calories and only 3 grams of bad fat.

They also highlight new products that are good choices, such as this article on Cereal Toppers:

*Nothing beats a handful of fresh berries in your cereal. But once blueberries, raspberries or strawberries are out of season, you're out of luck. Some companies now add freeze-dried to their cereals-Berry Bust Cheerios, for example-and you can only eat so many Cheerios.*

*Enter Cereal Toppers. Now you can toss your own freeze-dried fruit into a bowl of All-Bran, Wheaties, oatmeal, or whatever. Just add milk and you've got scrumptious slices of apples, strawberries, bananas or whole blueberries or raspberries. No more Quaker Instant Strawberries and Cream Oatmeal, which has more sugar and creaming agent than fruit (dehydrated apples pumped up with artificial strawberry flavor, sodium sulfite, citric acid, and Red 40, to be precise).*

*Each serving of Cereal Toppers supplies one to four grams of fiber, depending on the fruit. They need no refrigeration or preservatives. Except for a touch of added sugar in the dried apples, fruit is the only ingredient. But, why stop with cereal? Cereal Toppers can work their magic in yogurt, cottage cheese, smoothies, and pancakes, even salads. Or, you can munch on a handful right out of the (resealable) bag. No muss, no fuss...and no more excuses for that bag of chips.*

Cereal Toppers come from Fresh Field Farms: (866) 762-5461

The cost to subscribe to the Nutrition Action Healthletter is \$24 a year. Their website is [www.cspinet.org](http://www.cspinet.org). The address is CSPI, 1875 Conn. Ave., NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009.

**May God Bless Each of You!**

**Kay Smith**





# Leadership Training

## Friendship Leadership



**Nancy Taylor**

Leadership Training Director

[ntaylor@firstplace.org](mailto:ntaylor@firstplace.org)

**7**n one of the evangelism training workshops that I participated in, the term “friendship evangelism” was referred to as a way to lead others to Christ. The basis to friendship evangelism is to build a relationship with someone in order to open the door to share the gospel. Leadership training should also include the term “friendship leadership.” As a First Place leader, your goal is to lead others to place Christ first in every area of their lives. In order to lead others, a leader must build trust with those he leads. When a leader can be a friend to members, then trust will begin to form between them. Scripture gives us key principles to follow when trying to build friendships with others. Let’s take a look at three specific scriptures that will give direction to leaders in friendship building.

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### Proverbs 17:17

*“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”*

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A leader who practices friendship leadership will love their members at all times. That means even when it is hard to love someone, do it anyway! The only way to do this is, first through the will, and then through prayer. We must choose to love and then we must ask the Lord to love through us. We have all had a difficult member in our group. If you haven’t, then you haven’t been leading very long! They will come and they will be difficult. Do not think of it as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to exercise God’s love with others. God often brings people to our classes that are chronically needy. It seems that all of our encouraging words and instruction fall on deaf ears, when we try to encourage these needy members. Often times this leads us to be discouraged and makes it difficult to extend love to them. I found myself in such a situation. I cried

out to God and was honest with Him. I told Him that it was hard to love this person and that I need His love to flow through me. I prayed daily for this person and within just a few short weeks, I realized that I did love this member, and all frustration had given way to love and patience. She has now been in my class for several years and she is still needy, but God continues to give me a love for her that rises above any of the obstacles.

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### Proverbs 27:17

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*

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A true friend will speak truth into your life, no matter how hard the truth may be. A leader who desires to live out friendship leadership will look for those teachable moments in the lives of members. Proverbs 27:17 suggests that friends sharpen one another. To sharpen a knife, one uses a hard flint stone to rub the blade against in order to remove the rough and dull parts, making it sharp and useable. A pencil is sharpened in the same way. In an electric pencil sharpener, you stick the pencil in and a motor turns a sharpening blade that runs over the rough wood, making it smooth and the lead sharp and useable. The leader can speak words of truth to members in regards to specific rough areas that will sharpen them mentally, emotionally and spiritually. For example, a member stepped on the scale and said to me, “Well, you know that my treadmill is broken and I have been unable to exercise.” She was offering an excuse for her weight gain. I had developed a friendship with this member and felt comfortable speaking truthfully to her. I then asked if there were sidewalks in her neighborhood and suggested she walked outside. She paused a





# Nancy Taylor

*(Continued from previous page)*

moment and then just had to laugh at herself and said, "You got me on that one, Nancy!" She no longer offers excuses and has told me she appreciates it when I make her accountable for her actions. We can speak truth into the lives of our members, only after we have loved them at all times. First, we choose to love and this builds trust, which gives us opportunity to speak sharpening words of truth into their lives.

Hebrews 10:24

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."*

Friendship leadership also involves wearing spurs! You do not have to be a cowboy to be a First Place leader, but a good pair of spurs comes in handy! Hebrews 10:24 encourages us to spur one another on in our love and in our behavior. Leaders do not actually jab their members in the sides to get them to love one another or even to fill out their CR, but they look for ways to encourage and motivate their members to live lives of love and discipline. Through loving your members, you will be modeling for them ways to love others. I received a call from one of my longtime members asking if we could enroll one more person in our

class. Our class had already started, but she felt that her friend really needs to be in our First Place class. The member's friend is battling cancer, recently lost her only daughter in a car accident, and was now raising the granddaughter who survived the accident. My First Place member had grown so much through the friendships of her entire class, and knew this would be a safe and loving place for her friend. We try to stick with the rules and do not register new members after the second class, but we also extend grace and never turn someone away who we feel has a real desire to be a part of First Place. Whenever members ask if they can bring a friend to a meeting that we have prayed for as a class, I always say yes. This seems to spur the other members on to also reach out to others in prayer and ministry. As I anticipate this possible new member's arrival, I am anxious to see what God will do in her life and in the life of our entire First Place class.

First Place is not all about weight loss, Bible study or exercise. It is about building friendships that love at all times, sharpen lives, and spur people on to become all God created them to be. It is about friendship leadership!

## Lead On! Nancy Taylor

## Leadership Tip

*Each month we will spotlight leadership tips and ideas from leaders all across the country. Send your ideas to [ntaylor@firstplace.org](mailto:ntaylor@firstplace.org) and she will publish them in this spot each month.*

I found a little pass-along card with a picture of a little boy reaching into a tipped over cookie jar to get a cookie. The writing on the card said "Uh-oh! Here I go again! "The Bible verse was, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." - Matthew 26:41

I had a card for each member, laminated it and put a magnet on the back to make a refrigerator reminder about temptation.

We also send a summary of each class with the next week's agenda, and a personal note to any member who misses a meeting, so they can be back on track for the next week.

**Janella Chapline/Barbara Mahan, leaders  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
Farmington, NM**





# Bev's Footnotes

## A Sharp Workout Partner

*Iron sharpeneth iron; so does a man sharpeneth the countenance of a friend.*

Proverbs 27:17

You and I are Friends.

You Smile, I Smile.

You Hurt, I Hurt.

You Cry, I Cry .

You Jump Off A Bridge.

I'm Sure Gonna' Miss You!

**B**obbie, one of the ladies in my First Place group, lost 65 pounds and became an ace at power walking. She maintained her weight for over a year, won numerous two and three mile walking races, and then decided to start running.

In the spring session 2004, Bobbie brought her best friend, Kristin, to orientation. Kristin needed to lose about 75 pounds. Bobbie immediately took Kristin under her wing, taught her the First Place food plan, and became her walking partner. Each day at lunch, they would meet to walk. Thanks to Bobbie, Kristin began to lose weight quickly. Unfortunately, after two weeks of walking with Kristin, Bobbie began to gain weight. After a month, Bobbie's weight was going up and Kristin's was coming down. Bobbie had the right heart for helping her friend, but didn't realize the effect it would have on her own workout to help Kristin. Bobbie had slowed down tremendously.

After I got to the root of the problem, the good news is that Bobbie is now back to her goal weight and walking back up to her racing pace.



**Beverly Henson**  
Certified Personal Trainer  
[Bevh1952@comcast.net](mailto:Bevh1952@comcast.net)

Kristin is at her goal weight, but will never walk as fast as Bobbie, mainly because she doesn't want to race; she just likes to walk at a nice pace.

Remember, everyone has their own race and their own pace. If you want to take someone under your wing, keep in mind that the workout you do with them is not your workout. You must do your workout at another time. You must be a good steward over the good health the Lord has given you.

If you choose a walking partner, choose one who will sharpen your workout and challenge your pace.

I have the very best walking Partner one could ever want. My walking Partner is Jesus. "He walks with me and talks with me and tells me I am his own, and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known."

Hope you have a good workout partner.

### Press On! **Bev Henson**

Acts 17:28

*"In Him we live and move and have our being."*

*Beverly Henson is a conference and rally speaker for the First Place ministry. She is also a Bible teacher and certified personal trainer.*





# Being Your Own Best Friend



We find the words “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself...*” in Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 19:19.

It is a command.

It is a statement of truth.

We will love others with the same standard and quality of love that we love ourselves.

- ✦ Selfish
- ✦ Worldly
- ✦ Judgmental
- ✦ Grace-filled
- ✦ Hopeful

To be a friend we have to be made of the stuff that friends are made. Too often friendships seem to be beyond our reach and we think it is because of things “out there” rather than things ‘in here.’

Here is a simple quiz to help identify some **FRIENDSHIP BUSTERS.**

## NEGATIVE SELF TALK

1. I must have everyone’s love and approval.
2. I am not worthy of love.
3. If people knew what I was really like.

## WORLDLY PERSPECTIVE

1. You can have it all.
2. Life should be fair.
3. Your value is in what you do (or have, or how you look, etc.)

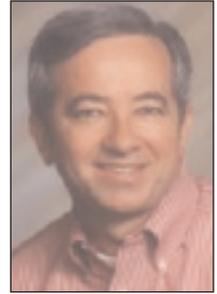
## SHALLOW RELIGIOUS TALK

1. A good Christian doesn’t feel anxious or depressed or even have problems.
2. All of the problems, disappointments and suffering I experience are the result of my sins.
3. God will not use me if I make mistakes. God is disappointed in me.

## WHY ARE THESE PERSONAL ISSUES FRIENDSHIP BUSTERS?

Because they are the way we value life. If we see ourselves by these negative standards, it will color and distort how we see and value others. If we are negative thinkers, then we will relate to others in the same way.

- ✦ If we see life’s goals as only about ourselves, we will use people and assume that they only want to use us.



**Dr. Bill Heston**  
University Chaplain,  
Howard Payne University  
Brownwood, Texas  
[Bheston@hputx.edu](mailto:Bheston@hputx.edu)

- ✦ If life is suppose to be fair (which usually means that it always goes in my favor), then we will think we deserve the good and blame others for the bad.
- ✦ When we beat ourselves up (even if we do not admit it to others) because of mistakes, we will be equally brutal to others who also fail.

## HEALTHY “SELF-LOVE” IS THIS:

*“For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.”* Romans 12:3

- ✦ Don’t think too high – arrogance
- ✦ Don’t think too low – self-pity

## WOULD YOU WANT YOU FOR A FRIEND?

Give your friends the best gift of all – the benefits of healthy self-love.

Be the kind of person you would like to spend time with, instead of trying to make better friends (either with new people or by trying to “fix” the ones you already have). Give up negative self-talk and:

- ✦ See yourself clearly as God sees you – good and bad – but worthy of love and investment of time and energy.
- ✦ Have sound judgment about what really matters and really doesn’t!
- ✦ Let faith be the measure of the friendship – what can God do in this person’s life through me?

## BE THAT BETTER FRIEND!

### Bill Heston

Dr. William Heston was minister of pastoral care at Houston’s First Baptist Church; clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and a marriage therapist licensed by the state of TX. He has also led seminars at First Place Conferences.”





# Hints & Pinches

## Kid Friendly Recipes



**Scott Wilson**

First Place Food Consultant  
[firstplacechef@hotmail.com](mailto:firstplacechef@hotmail.com)

Scott Wilson is a certified executive chef with the American Culinary Federation. If you have any questions regarding food preparation, you may write him at 7075 Red Fox Lane, Cumming, GA 30040.

**S**o, you have started eating on the First Place “Live-it” plan and your kids say, “Not me”!

What do you do? For many moms and dads, it is a challenge to get kids to eat and to make smarter food choices. Here are some guidelines for putting a kid’s wants front and center when it comes to eating.

### 1. GO FOR COLOR AND SHAPE

Kids simply prefer colorful foods. They also like the food to be in kid friendly shapes, think chicken strips, and bite-sized portions.

### 2. AIM FOR VARIETY

Gives kids a more interesting and appealing diet that also helps achieve maximum health. When you go to the grocery store, let your children pick out what vegetable they want to try that week. Try it every time you go to the store and their veggie-eating repertoire can continue to grow in variety and frequency.

### 3. FOCUS ON THE PLEASURE OF FOOD

Allow kids to experience food through all their senses. The textures, smells, and tastes can add up to a ton of food for even the most finicky eaters.

Kids can be in the kitchen! The following recipes are “kid-friendly” and with some adult supervision, you’ll have the kid in your life excited about cooking. Who knows, maybe they’ll even clean up and set the table too!

### TEX-MEX CHICKEN FINGERS

Serves 4

- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 pound chicken tenders
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 3/4 to 1 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 cup mild salsa
- 1/4 cup reduced calorie sour cream

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Coat a non-stick or parchment-lined baking tray with the olive oil spray and set aside. Place the buttermilk in bowl. Add the chicken and toss to coat. Combine the breadcrumbs, salt, chili powder and cumin on a wide, sided plate. Coat the chicken in this mixture, gently pressing it on. Place the chicken on the baking tray. Bake 10 minutes, then turn over and bake 5 minutes more. Serve the chicken with the salsa combined with the sour cream alongside for dipping. Serves 4.

**Exchanges: 3-1/3 meats, 1 bread, 1/2 vegetable**

## Scott Wilson

[firstplacechef@hotmail.com](mailto:firstplacechef@hotmail.com)





## EASY BROCCOLI QUESADILLAS

Serves 4

4 8-inch low-fat flour tortillas

2 cups frozen chopped broccoli, thawed

1 cup shredded 2% mild cheddar cheese

olive oil cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine broccoli and cheese in a small bowl. Divide mixture evenly and spoon the mixture over 1/2 of the 4 tortillas that have been placed on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Fold the other half over the mixture. Bake until cheese begins to melt, about 7 minutes. Remove from the oven and carefully flip the quesadillas and bake an additional 4-5 minutes. Cut into wedges to serve with reduced fat Ranch-style dressing. Serves 4.

**Exchanges: 1 meat, 2 breads, 1 vegetable, 1/2 fat for one quesadilla**  
(Bread exchanges will vary with brand used)

## BANANA-YOGURT AMBROSIA

Serves 4

2 medium bananas, sliced

8-ounce can unsweetened pineapple tidbits, drained

1 large pear, peeled and diced, tossed in a little lemon juice and water to prevent browning

1/2 cup small red seedless grapes

1/4 cup dark or golden raisins

1/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

1/4 cup toasted shredded coconut

16 ounces (2 cups) vanilla low-fat yogurt

Place all the ingredients except the yogurt into separate, small bowls. Divide the yogurt among 4 individual serving bowls. Let everyone take a little of whichever ingredients they'd like to dress up their ambrosia.

**Exchanges: 2 fruits, 1/2 milk, 1 fat**  
(if divided evenly)



# Coming Events

## First Place Area Leaders Meetings

### February 5, 2005

9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon | Inland Community Church | Chino, CA  
Contact: Mark Gutierrez | Phone: (909)627-5240 |  
Email: [mark@gosrock.com](mailto:mark@gosrock.com)

### February 5, 2005

9:30 AM | Bethel United Methodist Church | Mascoutah, IL  
Contact: Patty Ward | Phone: (636) 296-8563 | Email:  
[wward@nightowl.net](mailto:wward@nightowl.net)

## First Place Workshops

### February 19, 2005

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM | Southeast Baptist Church | San Antonio, TX  
\$25 registration fee (Includes lunch)  
Contact: June Chapko, Email: [chapkoJ@aol.com](mailto:chapkoJ@aol.com) or  
phone: (210)359-8493  
Special Speaker: Carole Lewis, Director of First Place

### February 25-26, 2005

Christian Life Fellowship | Baton Rouge, LA  
Contact: Beth Serpas, Email: [Ekserpas@aol.com](mailto:Ekserpas@aol.com) or  
phone: (225)767-5554  
Special Speakers: Beverly Henson and Kay Smith

### February 25-26, 2005

First Place Retreat  
Mt. Lebanon Baptist Encampment | Cedar Hill, TX  
Contact: Mary Lansdell at (972) 617-0455 or email: [clml@ev1.net](mailto:clml@ev1.net)

### March 19, 2005

8:30 AM - 12:00 Noon  
Faith Community Bible Church | Bremerton, WA.  
Contact: Jean Wall, Phone: (360)782-2284 or  
email: [jean.wall@comcast.net](mailto:jean.wall@comcast.net)

## First Place Rally

### February 5

New Hope Baptist Church | Loveland, OH  
Contact: Janet Kirkhart, email: [janetfirstplace@fuse.net](mailto:janetfirstplace@fuse.net) or  
phone: 513-677-5377  
Special Guest Speaker: Vicki Heath, Body and Soul Ministries

### February 25-26

Christian Life Fellowship | Baton Rouge, LA  
Contact: Beth Serpas, Email: [Ekserpas@aol.com](mailto:Ekserpas@aol.com) or  
phone: (225)767-5554  
Special Guest Speakers: Beverly Henson and Kay Smith

## First Place Conference

### April 1-2, 2005

Franklin Avenue Baptist Church  
2515 Franklin Avenue | New Orleans, LA 70117  
Go to the First Place website for registration form and additional  
information, <http://www.firstplace.org/conferences.html>

## First Place F.O.C.U.S. Week

*Focusing on Christ's Unlimited Strength*

### October 6-13, 2005

Round Top Retreat | Round Top, Texas  
Mark your calendars. More information to come later.