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# TRIPtych: Three glimpses of where Furman folk have gone, and why

Furman University

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## e-Pulpit

*The Furmans, father and son, have had their sermons and letters digitized by the university's archives, giving fresh insight to their views and vision.*

**I**n the fall, Furman's archives launched a digital collection containing more than 700 letters and sermons from Richard Furman (1755–1825), who was not only considered the most important Baptist leader before the Civil War, but also credited with the denomination's endorsement of education as a formal element of its program. The collection also contains 602 letters and nine sermons from Furman's son, James Clement Furman (1809–1891). James, a leading voice among secessionists, joined the Furman faculty in 1845 and later became its first president in 1859, serving until 1879. Though the university closed during the Civil War, it reopened largely because of

James's commitment. The letters in the collection deal with the university's early struggles and triumphs, as well as father's and son's spiritual observations—some powerful and some prejudicial. We've excerpted a few here:

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**ON RELIGION:**

“In a word, persons may be members by profession of the most pure and regular Church on earth; attend on all the Ordinances of divine worship, public and private, common and special; possess much knowledge; be eminent for intellectual endowments, and even for spiritual gifts; be very confident of their interest in

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## TRIPtych



## TRIPtych

*Three glimpses of where Furman folk have gone, and why*

**A**s part of a three-year, National Science Foundation grant, assistant professor in communications studies Janet Kwami is investigating how populations “marginalized from the global economy attempt to achieve development for themselves” through digital connectivity. These three images were taken by professor Kwami on one of her recent research trips.



### OPEN MARKET

The Ghanaian “market woman” and her trading activities involve the use of information technology for negotiation and coordination of livelihood activities. Open markets are one of the most economically dynamic and gendered spaces where such exchanges have socioeconomic implications.

the Divine favour; and be very zealous in religion—and yet be strangers to regenerating grace.”

—Richard Furman, a sermon before the Religious Tract Society, June 10, 1816, Charleston, South Carolina

**ON SERVICE:**

“Should any pupil...be found at the end of life to have lived a useless life, and in another world be adjudged to have been a mere cumberer of the ground, such a pupil will grievously disappoint the hopes of parents, of teachers, and of friends.”

—James Furman, an address to the students of Johnson Female Seminary, August 1850, Anderson, South Carolina

“We are open and [we are] positive in assigning to human agency, in this work, or service, no higher rank than that of instrumentality: for we have already seen that the renovation of a sinner is the work of God. A man cannot change his own heart: How then can he effect this necessary, important change in the soul of another?”

—Richard Furman, a sermon before the Religious Tract Society, June 10, 1816, Charleston, South Carolina

**ON WOMEN’S RIGHTS:**

“[When we would study the subject of female influence]... We do not follow Semeramis to the field of victory—nor do we go to the seat where

Deborah sits as Judge in Israael: we do not peer into the tent where Jael drives the nail through Sisera’s temples, nor do we visit the halls where Queen Elizabeth drills her cabinet.

Women’s sphere lies within the limits of private life. The idea of a youthful female figure in a class of medical students...is almost shocking. We hope the time is far... when our Demonstrators of anatomy shall be called on to introduce female classes into the dissecting-room; and when the rights of women shall be so understood that feminine forms shall be seen elbowing their way through the crowds which surround the ballot-boxes.

The Southern matron ought to have a well cultivated intellect...as the vine, which growing in a dark place, stretches its tendrils to the light.... Put forth all your power to acquire all the valuable knowledge which you can.”

—James Furman, an address to the students of Johnson Female Seminary, August 1850, Anderson, South Carolina

**ON JUDGMENT:**

“Bear in mind that those who are most ready to discover the faults of others are those who have most of their own.”

—James Furman, an address to the students of Johnson Female Seminary, August 1850, Anderson, South Carolina **F**

**TRIPtych**



**BILLBOARD WOMEN**

Esoko provides mobile phone applications for agricultural markets in Africa. Studying mobile phone appropriation among Ghanaian market women allows an examination of how such communities self-organize with digital tools.



**UPWARD MOBILITY**

Mobile phones are embedded in Ghanaian daily life. This young man sells mobile phone units and mobile accessories, repairs phones, decodes phones, and transfers phone credits for customers in Makola market in Accra.