

# GOD'S REVIVALIST

November 2016

*and Bible Advocate*



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# about this issue

## GIVING THANKS

Thanksgiving greetings to all! This issue is packed with interesting items for you. We have included several articles gleaned from various sources, beginning with “A Week of Thanksgiving” (p.5) by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, obviously related to the season. She gives specific ideas for practicing thankfulness.

Then there is “Spotting My Own Hypocrisy” (p.6) by Shannon Popkin. Her personal account of how God had helped her to reframe a problematic event in her past and to effect healing and restoration is powerful. I admit that I am including it because it had such a personal impact on me. Hopefully you will find it helpful as well.

In “The Appeal of the Easy Way Out” (p.8), Jessica Peer gives us a good reason to persevere as we walk through the discomfort and pain of everyday life. There are benefits we can realize as we go through tough times.

There are also two articles specifically related to the topic of holiness. Former *God’s Revivalist* editor Glenn D. Black sounds the clarion call to every follower of Christ to be holy. You will enjoy reading “The Allure of the Holy” (p.18). And finally, in “Holiness in Eclipse” (p.3), President Avery discusses why that which was formerly a passion and a priority throughout the whole Church has now become a secondary matter, even among those who claim the message of scriptural holiness as a birthright doctrine.

Additionally this issue has two very special inclusions. “News from the Hilltop” discusses the service held September 26 in the chapel auditorium for the release of the official history of God’s Bible School, *A Century on the Mount of Blessings* by Larry D. Smith (p.13). After you read the account, I am sure you will want a copy of the book.

Finally, this issue also reports on Homecoming 2016 (pp.14-17), which was indeed special, as it focused on President Michael Avery. During this celebration, an announcement was made of a new scholarship created in his honor: Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders (p.17). Take this opportunity to participate in bringing this endowed scholarship to fruition!

Remember, “Not what we say about our blessings, but how we use them, is the true measure of our thanksgiving” (W.T. Purkiser).

Enjoy the issue! —KF

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*God’s Revivalist and Bible Advocate*, the official organ of God’s Bible School, is a magazine founded by Martin Wells Knapp in July of 1888. We seek to proclaim the good news of salvation; to stir a revival spirit among Christians; to stimulate Christian growth and responsible Christian living; to present the happenings and interests of God’s Bible School.

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God’s Bible School and College seeks to glorify God and to serve His Church by providing higher education centered in Holy Scripture and shaped by Wesleyan conviction, thus preparing faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

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COVER: Michael Avery was honored for 21+ years of service to GBS during the homecoming festivities, October 14-15.

# the president's page



**Why has that which was formerly a passion and priority now become a secondary matter? Why has it disappeared even among those who claim the message of scriptural holiness as a birthright doctrine?**

## HOLINESS IN ECLIPSE

*by Michael R. Avery, President*

**H**oliness is a weighty biblical word! It is the goal of our election and redemption. It is God's basic requirement for us, and the objective of all His dealings with us. The passion for holiness has been deeply implanted in the heart of every born-again Christian and grows in intensity as we mature in our faith and understanding. The Holy Spirit feeds this interest for holiness within us, since one of His main tasks is to make us holy. Healthy Christians are not only praying for it, but also seeking to practice it in their daily lives.

Though I am writing to a primarily Wesleyan audience, holiness is not an exclusive theme promoted only by the Holiness Movement or the broader Wesleyan tradition. Biblical holiness is God's command to and gift for the whole Church! Historically, holiness has been a leading mark of anyone claiming to be evangelical. It was a central emphasis embraced by the Reformers, the Puritans, and the Pietists. The Methodists, under John Wesley's leadership, made scriptural holiness their main message and mission. The holiness revival in the last half of the 19th century was embraced by multiple denominations of varying theological persuasions. The call to holiness has had a global impact through the writings of Oswald Chambers, Andrew Murray, A.W. Tozer, and Watchman Nee. Great 20th-century scholars like John Stott, Dallas Willard, J.I. Packer, and Dennis Kinlaw have left a powerful witness that holiness, and subsequent holy living, is central to a basic understanding of Scripture, crucial to real spiritual formation, and possible in the daily lives of ordinary Christians.

Why then, as we move into the 21st century, is holiness in eclipse? Why has that which was formerly a passion and a priority throughout the whole Church now become a secondary matter? Why has it disappeared even among those who claim the message of scriptural holiness as a birthright doctrine?

**We are in the grip of a self-centered godliness.** Contemporary Christians have made self-fulfillment and

personal satisfaction their primary focus. This self-absorption pays only lip service to the glory of God, the denial of self, and the way of the cross. J.I. Packer points out that holiness means godliness, and godliness is rooted in God-centeredness, and those who think of God as existing for their benefit rather than of themselves as existing for His praise do not qualify as holy men and women. The other form of this distraction is self-absorption. Many Christians are nothing more than pulse-takers rather than others-lovers. They have missed the fact that this Holy God is a self-giving, others-loving Trinity, and that holy people will be the same.

**Doing has trumped being.** It is not wrong to have a strong desire to accomplish something for God. We all want to make a difference. However, God's first concern is not what the Christian does but what the Christian is. What we do will be according to what we are. Jesus does not call us to do what He did, but to be as He was—permeated with holy love. Then the doing of what He did and said becomes the natural expression of who we are in Him.

**There is disillusionment and skepticism with "holiness terminology."** Very often the packaging and language used to describe holiness and holy living strikes the contemporary Christian as sterile, superficial, and irrelevant as they face the complexities and challenges of today's world. The goal of communicating the message of biblical holiness is not to perpetuate a set of treasured phrases and clichés, but to communicate the powerful vision of God to transform every surrendered soul so thoroughly that the last corner of resistance to the will of God is conquered by grace, thus freeing children of God

to love Him "with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their strength and with all their mind, and their neighbor as themselves."

It may also be said that the terms we use to communicate biblical holiness have often created confusion rather than clarity. This is especially so when we use "in-speak" rather than biblical language. An intelligent young woman who did not grow up in the Wesleyan tradition but became exposed to it later in life said this to me: "What has always been a challenge for me in regards to the Wesleyan message is what can seem like its implication of "once-and-doneness." In other words, once you become entirely sanctified—that's it! Yes, you continue to grow and seek to go deeper with God, but you should never have to truly go to battle with sin again; it's conquered. This is an oversimplification of the issue." There is no better way to discredit the truth of scriptural holiness than to exaggerate what it is or is not!

**We are insensitive to God's holiness.** Contemporary Christians don't think much about God's holiness—His unique otherness that sets Him apart from everything else. We don't tremble much, or at all, over the fact that He is a Consuming Fire who will destroy everything that is tainted by sin. We are not in tune with the biblical view of sin as "filth," nor the fact that there are ways of behaving that God positively hates. We are indifferent toward wrong and manifest little abhorrence of ungodly things (Jude 23). Such a spirit of apathy or insensitivity undermines a true passion for holiness.

How can we reverse the eclipse? I honestly don't know, but I do want to add my own mite to the treasury of ideas. You can read my answer in next month's issue. ■

# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202, or emailed to [revivalist@gbs.edu](mailto:revivalist@gbs.edu). Letters reprinted here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor of God's Revivalist nor those of the administration of God's Bible School. Names and locations of writers will be withheld at their specific request or at the discretion of the editor. We reserve the right to edit and condense.

President Avery's article "Those Gray-Haired Giants" [June-July-August 2016] was inspiring! I wrote several quotes in my journal so I can refer to them later. I will celebrate my 58th birthday this month, yet I look forward to what God has planned for me in the next few decades.

GREG WITHROW  
Morrisonville, NY

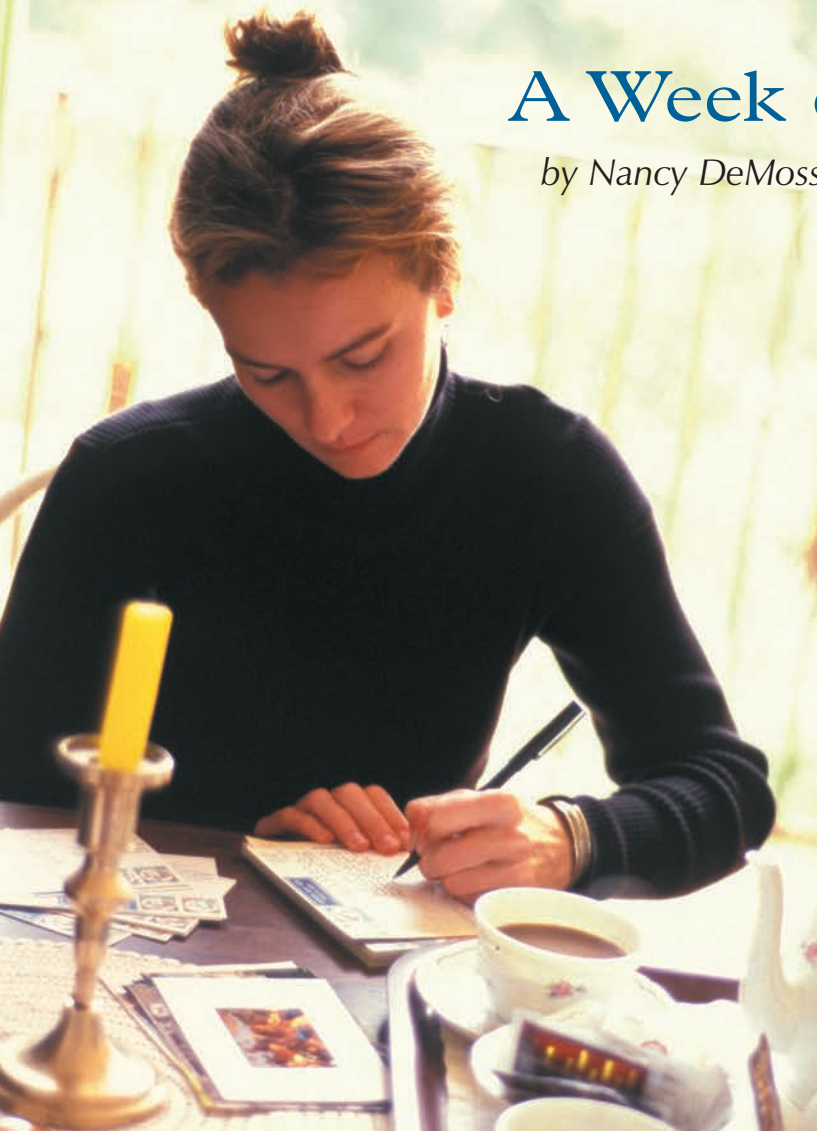
I'm a little bit hooked on proofing *God's Revivalist*. I really enjoy it! And by the way, I love that you are reaching out to bloggers and others.

SONJA VERNON  
Cincinnati, OH

**Editor's note:** Sonja ["Thoughts For The Quiet Hour"] is a great writer and proofer. We thank her for her contributions!

# A Week of Thanksgiving

by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth



Over the years, I've learned that in every circumstance that comes my way, I can choose to respond in one of two ways: I can worship or I can whine!

When we choose the pathway of worship and giving thanks, especially in the midst of difficult circumstances, there's a fragrance, a radiance, that issues forth out of our lives to bless the Lord and others.

Are you a grateful person? It ought to be a way of life. But in the reality of our daily comings and goings, it's much easier to be discontent, to complain, criticize, or even to be bitter.

Cultivating a thankful heart will result in speaking thankful words. But it may require a little practice! Why not start the habit by devoting an entire week to practicing thankfulness?

**Day 1.** Read a chapter from the book of Colossians. You'll find at least one reference to thankfulness in every chapter of this wonderful book. Write down all of them that you find.

**Day 2.** Make a list of all the material and spiritual blessings you can think of that God has given you. Then stop and thank Him for each item on your list.

**Day 3.** Focus on expressing gratitude to and for your family members. Write down each of their names plus one quality about their life you're particularly grateful for. Take time to thank God for each member of the family He's given you—especially the difficult ones to love.

**Day 4.** Have you ever thanked those people in your life who've blessed or touched you in some way? Write down their names, and begin to think of ways to express your gratitude.

**Day 5.** Call or write three people on the list you made yesterday. Express your gratitude for their influence and ministry in your life.

**Day 6.** Paul instructed the Ephesian believers to "give thanks always for all things." As you go through today, try to consciously thank God for all things—small or big!

**Day 7.** Maybe there are some people in your life you're not thankful for—or circumstances where it's not easy to be thankful. Make a list of those people or situations. Then, as an expression of faith and obedience say, "Lord, I choose to give You thanks for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, which You may never give me the privilege of understanding." By doing this, you're acknowledging that God is the "Blessed Controller" of everything that touches your life.

A grateful man or woman is a breath of fresh air in a world contaminated by bitterness and discontentment. As you make a lifetime habit of giving thanks, you'll discover the whole world looks different when you learn to see it through eyes of thankfulness!

Want to develop an attitude of gratitude in your own life? Start right now by sharing seven things that you're thankful for. ■

*Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, speaker and author, has touched the lives of millions through *Revive Our Hearts* and *The True Woman Movement*. This article first appeared on the *True Woman* blog at [www.reviveourhearts.com](http://www.reviveourhearts.com).*

# Spotting My Own Hypocrisy

by Shannon Popkin

There was only one time my mother-in-law and I “had words.” During my second year of marriage, in the middle of discussing an unrelated misunderstanding, my mother-in-law brought up the topic of my wedding. She didn’t have kind things to say.

As she spoke, I felt a spike of self-righteous indignation. How dare she say such unforgiving things about the day I cherished so deeply?! In my hurt and anger I flung an accusation back, saying her heart was bitter and hardened. When she immediately denied this, I zapped her with a verse that I thought settled the matter: “*Out of the abundance of the heart [the] mouth speaks*” (Luke 6:45 ESV).

## WORDS AND HEARTS

It’s true that our words betray our hearts. This verse is tagged onto a mini-parable Jesus told about trees and how there’s no such thing as a hypocritical tree. Fig trees bear figs and only figs. Thorn bushes bear thorns and only thorns. So a thorn bush cannot get away with saying it’s a fig tree because the thorns it produces prove otherwise.

Jesus said there’s no such thing as a hypocritical heart, either. An evil heart cannot get away with saying it’s good because

the words it produces prove otherwise. This is the logic I used on my mother-in-law. But I didn’t realize I used it all wrong.

Years later, when my Bible study group was studying this passage about the trees, I noticed a little connector word “for.”—“**For** no good tree bears bad fruit” (Luke 6:43 ESV, emphasis added).

The “for” links this paragraph to the previous one—which is the story of the guy with the log in his eye who thinks he can see clearly to remove the speck in the other guy’s eye. The log-in-the-eye guy is a hypocrite. He wanted to correct others but not himself.

Then Jesus talked about non-hypocritical trees. By linking the two images together, Jesus was saying, “If you want to avoid being a hypocrite who corrects everyone but yourself, check out your fruit. Listen to the words coming out of your mouth. Then you will know what needs to change in your heart.”



Suddenly, “Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks,” had new meaning for me. Jesus wasn’t giving His people a way to zap each other in judgment. He was showing us how to avoid hypocrisy, how to judge our own hearts before we correct others.

When we think someone else is wrong, often the last thing we’re looking at is ourselves. The last thing we’re measuring is our own motives. The last thing we’re considering is our own heart. But Jesus said that we should look at these things *first*.

## SEEING CLEARLY

Though it’s been almost two decades since I quoted Luke 6:45 to my mother-in-law, I can still picture the scene perfectly—her sitting stiffly in a chair near our guest room window and me perched on the edge of the bed near the door. Always before when I revisited this scene, I only heard the anger in *her* words, revealing the bitterness in *her* heart. I could see with perfect clarity that she was *wrong*! Look at her thorn-bush-type words!

But now, I turned the camera of my memory back on myself. I heard the anger in *my words* and heard the bitterness of *my* heart. Look at *my* thorns! How had I been so blind to myself? I was like the log-in-the-eye guy! I was a hypocrite.

## HYPOCRISY

Luke 6:44 says, “Each tree is known by its own fruit.” Like fruit on a tree, the words on our lips cannot lie. They tell the truth about our hearts. They help us see what our hearts are like. And yes, they help us see what other people’s hearts are like, too. But we need the most help, not with judging others but with judging ourselves.

Even fifteen years later, my words showed me my heart. Once I was willing to inspect my own fruit, I saw my own heart. I saw my own hypocrisy. I saw my own log in my own eye. And I was so thankful! I shared with my Bible study group how God had opened my eyes to the true meaning of Luke 6:45 and how convicted I was over the way I had used the verse to judge my mother-in-law but not myself.

Susan, my group’s leader, said softly, “Are you going to tell your mother-in-law? I think you should.”

Clearly Susan had no idea what she was suggesting. It was one thing to confess my hypocrisy to my Bible study group. But my mother-in-law? My stomach churned at the very thought!

## UPROOTING HYPOCRISY

Especially in the early years of my marriage, I often sensed underlying tension with my mother-in-law. I had to work through many private frustrations and hurt feelings, diligently surrendering each situation to God. After many years, with both of us carefully trying to show kindness and understanding, we had ironed

things out. It hadn’t been easy, but things were finally settled and peaceful between us. The thought of dragging up the single most painful moment in our history and naming my sin from fifteen years prior caused me to seriously cringe.

I cried all the way home from Bible study that day, sensing the Spirit of God prompting me to do exactly what Susan had suggested. Oh, how I dreaded it! It’s quite humbling to say, “Sorry about getting it all wrong. I had a log in my eye.”

Yet that was the point. God wanted me to humble myself. Owning my sin and confessing it is the only way to rid myself of hypocrisy!

I pulled in the driveway and went immediately to my desk. I wrote my mother-in-law a letter, telling her about the discussion in Bible study that morning. Then I said:

*I am so convicted about how I spoke to you. I was so busy pointing out the things that I saw in you, I didn’t even hear how horrible I must have sounded. What an ugly, self-centered heart I had! I didn’t even stop to wonder why you might be so upset...I didn’t take the time to consider your feelings on the matter. I only focused on how ridiculous the situation seemed to me and completely exempted myself from the “log” sticking out of my own eye.*

*I’m very sorry for treating you this way. It’s a decade or so late, but I wish I could take it back. I wish I had been more concerned with evaluating and judging the contents of my own heart rather than yours.*

With the stamped letter in hand, I arrived at my mailbox just as the mail truck drove up. I was thankful I would not be able to snatch the letter back.

A week or so later, I got a letter in return. My mother-in-law opened by saying, “Well, glory be!” It was a sweet note, filled with praise to God for our relationship. That letter is still in my desk drawer. It was the last letter I received from her, for she died just months after she sent it.

Friends, we could spend a lifetime convinced that we see with perfect clarity just how wrong someone else is. But how willing are we to look at ourselves?

Hypocrites point out the flaws in everyone else, but never themselves. Jesus invites us to do the opposite—to first look at the words coming out of our own mouths, and consider the changes that need to take place in our own hearts. ■

*Shannon Popkin* is a speaker and writer who enjoys blending her love for humor and storytelling with her passion for God’s Word. On her blog, Shannon shares “Tiny Paragraphs” from everyday life as a wife and mom—stories which gain significance as they are tucked back into the One True Story of God. This article was posted on the True Woman blog at [www.reviveourhearts.com](http://www.reviveourhearts.com).



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# the Appeal of the easy way out

by Jessica Peer

I have a love/hate relationship with hiking. While I love being out in nature and the fresh mountain air, there's usually a point where I ask myself, "Why did I think this would be fun?" That question is always answered when I get to the end of the trail or the top of the mountain. The view waiting for me always makes the journey feel worth it, and I'm reminded why I do the trails I do.

Two summers ago I got the chance to do Half Dome in Yosemite, and, of course, I jumped at the chance. After looking over the trail and the infamous cables you have to climb to get to the top, I jokingly asked if I could just have a helicopter fly me to the top and drop me off. Unfortunately, that is really expensive and they usually only break out the helicopter for emergencies. So up the trail I went, praying the eight miles to the top would be quick and painless.

But of course it wasn't. About halfway up I started feeling sick from the altitude. My backpack seemed to be getting heavier with each step, and I started getting really hungry. There was a small encounter with a bear, and I remember asking myself if this was really going to be worth it—because at that point, I was ready to be done. Thank goodness for encouraging strangers along the way and snacks to keep me from getting "hangry." (It's a real thing.)

When I finally reached the top I had tears in my eyes. The discomfort, exhaustion, and bear incident all left my mind as I stood on top of the world. Yosemite stretched out as far as I could see, and the beauty erased all my negative thoughts. The adrenaline from being at the top made the trip down pretty quick, and before I knew it I was at the bottom, stuffing my face with pizza.

My experience with Half Dome seems to mirror part of my journey with the Lord. Recently some hard things have come up, and I have been faced with the decision

either to hike through them or shove them down and let them continue affecting me. I jokingly asked the Lord just to give me a ride to the end, to avoid walking through the discomfort and pain that will inevitably come. While the easy way out seems more appealing, it won't bring the healing and growth that walking through it would bring.

Thankfully, I have the Lord as my guide through those hard times. Psalm 23:4 says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (ESV). In those moments when we are feeling worn down, discouraged, and tired, we can cling to the promise of healing and growth in the Lord.

We are told to "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deut. 31:6, NIV). He is not running in front of me or dragging behind me; He is right next to me, loving me and encouraging me to keep going. The mountains we climb in this life are not meant to be climbed alone!

A phrase that's been popping up a lot in my life lately is from a song by Rob Harris: "Don't tell God how big your mountain is / Tell the mountain how big your God is." \*

Nothing we go through even compares to the might and power of our Lord. And by relying on Him, we can reach the top and see the glorious view waiting for us. ■

*Jessica Peer* is the Missions Administrator at the Well Community Church in Fresno, CA. This article originally appeared at [thewellcommunity.org](http://thewellcommunity.org).

\* Staley, Karen. "Tell the Mountain" (Hobo Lizard Music/BMI), Mark Narmore (Oven Music Inc./BMI) and Rob Harris (Identical Songs Publishing/ASCAP and Carpenter's Cup Music/ASCAP) 2011.





## STUDENT EXPELLED FOR FACEBOOK POST

Felix Ngole, a 38-year-old in his second year of study for a master's degree in social work at the University of Sheffield in England, was expelled from the institution because of a Facebook post relating to religious discrimination which quoted Leviticus on the Bible's condemnation of homosexuality.

The private post was brought to the attention of the university and a committee ruled that Ngole "may have caused offense to some individuals" by issuing the post, and that his conservative Christian beliefs about marriage would negatively impact his "ability to carry out a role as a social worker." With the assistance of the Christian Legal Centre, Ngole filed but lost an appeal of the decision.

## MAJORITY OF AMERICANS NOW BELIEVE IN COHABITATION

Societal rules, roles, and expectations are changing in a decidedly secular direction. A recent Barna study determined that the majority of American adults believe cohabitation is generally a good idea. Two thirds of adults (65%) either strongly or somewhat agree that it's a good idea to live with one's significant other before getting married, compared to one-third (35%) who either strongly or somewhat disagree. Christian teaching on pre-marital relationships encourages abstinence and other

boundaries that tend to exclude cohabitation. Therefore it is not surprising that the most religious groups in America are the least likely to think cohabitation is a good idea.

## MODERN CHRISTIAN MUSIC IS "UNRELENTINGLY CHEERFUL"

Nate Silver of the famous website FiveThirtyEight.com, which specializes in analyzing data using math, analyzed how upbeat modern Christian music is by focusing on the last five years of Billboard's year-end top 50 Christian songs and calculated the ratio of positive to negative words, for example "grace" and "sin."

They found that Christian songwriters use "grace" 2.5 times more than "sin," "life" eight times more than "death," and "love" seven times more than "fear."

## CHRISTIANITY RISING IN CUBA

With the help of Christian organizations, Cuban Christianity, which has been growing "in the shadows" for many years, is now growing more openly. Various groups are distributing Bibles and holding gospel training sessions to help Cubans gain biblical knowledge. This month (November), on-site ministry training will be offered to Cuban pastors for free—three days of intensive studies on specific topics of unique interest to Cuban pastors. The courses are expected to reach more than 200 pastors. ■



## student focus

**MATTHEW POTTER**, a senior from Indianapolis, says that when he first came to GBS, he wasn't sure what to expect. However, it turned out to be the best decision of his life. "At GBS I committed my life fully to Christ. I became more mature spiritually, and began loving people more than I ever had in my life!"

Matthew loves dorm life—having a community of guys who can talk about life, stay up late eating Ramen noodles, and grow closer as friends.

He also loves how much the teachers are willing to invest in the students. "They are a great example of why I want to teach. I want to impact people the same way my teachers have positively impacted me!"

Matthew is on schedule to graduate with a BA in Bible and Theology this coming spring. He plans to teach Bible and would love to be a youth pastor. Overall, he wants to teach kids on a regular basis and help to influence their lives for Christ. ■

*Seventy-five percent of our students receive some form of financial aid which enables them to attend GBS. If you would like to support students with financial needs, you may send a gift to:*

**Student Fund**  
**God's Bible School and College**  
**1810 Young Street**  
**Cincinnati, OH 45202**

*or give online anytime at*  
[www.gbs.edu/givenow](http://www.gbs.edu/givenow)

# NEWS

from the Hilltop

## HLC TEAM VISIT

On September 12-13, GBS hosted a site-visit team from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This was the first of two visits that make up the reaffirmation cycle on HLC's Standard Pathway, a visit in



HLC Team (front) with GBS administration

year four and a visit in year ten. The visiting team received self-study materials prior to the visit, then reviewed additional material and conducted interviews on campus in order to verify that GBS complies with HLC's standards and pursues continuous improvement.

The HLC team was chaired by Dr. Georgia Christensen and included Dr. Peter Barger and Dr. Andy Chambers. "We are grateful to the team members for their hard work," reports Aaron Proffitt, Vice President for Academic Affairs, adding, "It was clear to us that they had prepared thoroughly for their time on campus. They asked excellent questions, sought to understand our mission, and affirmed our hard work. Their presence was a blessing!"

## STORY TIME AT THE LIBRARY

The Flexon Memorial Library is hosting its second year of children's



Story Time

story times for the preschoolers in our campus community. This event takes place on the first Friday of each month during the academic year. Stephanie Hoffpauir, the library's Technical Services and Interlibrary Loan Coordinator, has spearheaded the event and organizes a series of themes and volunteer leaders for each story time. The events have been well-attended and are receiving a great response from parents. The most recent event had over 15 children in attendance.

Stephanie reports that the library has seen increased interest in its children's collection as well as com-

# REVIVALIST FAMILY

On these pages, we feature items about GBS alumni, significant events scheduled throughout the "Revivalist Family," and brief news notes from across the Holiness Movement.

## BIRTH



To **Elizabeth (Charlton) (BA '07) and Nathan Dahler (AA '07)**, a son, **Channing Allen**, born September 21 at The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati, OH. Channing was welcomed by sisters: Ava (5) and Reese (3). Nathan is the Director of Enrollment Services at God's Bible School and Elizabeth is a registered nurse at The Christ Hospital.

## DEATHS



**Rev. Joel David Dunn**, 63, of Fort Scott, KS, passed away June 29 at his home. Born in 1952, in Zebulon, GA, to David and Florence Dunn, Joel always had a passion for reading and for learning. He attended GBS where he received his BRE degree in 1977. While there he met Norma Mills (1974-1976) and they married in 1975. Joel also received an MDiv from the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO. A life-long pastor, Joel preached his first sermon when he was nine years old. He was ordained in the Nazarene

munity interest in increasing services for children of various ages. The library is excited for this opportunity to promote a love for reading and learning to all ages!

### PHONATHON: A SUCCESS!

Phonathon 2016 is in the books! A big “thank you” goes out to our students and staff who volunteer many hours to make this yearly event a success, and to our friends and alumni who donate to make a difference in the lives of our students! A total of \$109,880 was raised, 1,592 individual pledges



were made, and nearly 850 volunteer hours were logged. The photo shows student volunteers celebrating the conclusion of another successful phonathon.

### 2016 TALENT NIGHT

Friday night, September 23, saw main campus covered with blankets, lawn chairs, and eager spectators as Talent Night 2016 made its debut. Hosted by Jordan and Matt Potter, the evening was full of vocal and instrumental performances, monologues, skits, and (of course) lots of laughter. Faculty and staff joined students in performing everything from an instrumental featuring eight cellos, a viola, and an upright bass to a one-man skit in which the performer played three different roles. Even the president and president-elect joined in the fun



with a duet. The weather was beautiful, the laughter contagious, and the spirit uplifting. It was a wonderful evening affording a great opportunity to see the unique abilities of our campus family! —*Sonja Vernon*

### NEW SCHOOL NURSE



Jackie (Pearce) Bishop (AA '06), the new campus nurse, is the wife of Brad Bishop, who works in the Information Technology Department at GBS. The Bishops have four children.

Church in 1992. Survivors include his wife Norma; two daughters, Alisha and Sarah; four grandchildren, and a brother, Charles. A memorial service was held at the Cheney Witt Chapel officiated by Dennis Ackerman and Travis Cox.



**Archie Lynn Coons**, 78, of Bedford, KY, passed peacefully on September 11 at his residence. Born in 1936 to the late John and Nancy (Robbins) Coons of Campton, KY, he had a storied career in music. He was a University of Louisville graduate in voice, string music, and music education. He also took advanced piano studies under several renowned pianists. Over the years he worked in public

schools as a general music instructor, was principal violist in the Florida Atlantic University Symphony, and served in music administration at various churches.

However, he was most known for his work with Bible colleges. When Hobe Sound Bible College was founded in 1960, it was Archie who implemented the music department and was the first Director of Music. He served HSBC for 19 years and was honored when they dedicated their new Fine Arts Center in his name. He also served on the music faculty at GBS three different times for a total of 13 years, teaching piano, voice, and music education.

Archie enjoyed music, gardening, genealogy, and studying birds; but most of all he loved spending ➡

**GBS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM  
DECEMBER 9, 10, 11**

God didn't stay way off in Heaven. John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The best part of Christmas is not the presents we receive, but the presence of God with us. While Immanuel's birth was announced to Mary, Joseph, and a handful of shepherds over 2,000 years ago, we too can share in His coming.

"Immanuel: Christ in Me," produced by the Division of Music, will be staged in the Adcock Chapel on December 9 (7:30 p.m.), 10 (3:30 p.m.), and 11 (6:00 p.m.). Festive prelude music will begin sixty minutes prior to each performance. A combined choir, orchestra, and cast of actors come together in the production.

**TICKET INFO: Phone and email orders will not be accepted.**

**For small groups**, each family



may request up to five free tickets for one night only. Such orders may also be placed and tickets printed online by going to [www.gbs.edu](http://www.gbs.edu). Please bring tickets for entry.

**For large groups** (6 or more), after the fifth ticket, the cost is \$5 per ticket. Please send payment by mail along with name of purchaser.

Mail orders and large group payments should be sent to: Christmas Program Ticket Request, God's Bible School and College, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202. Include a self-addressed, stamped

envelope, the date you prefer, and the number of tickets needed.

Please contact the ticket coordinator at (513) 721-7944 if you do not plan to use your tickets.

No seats can be saved at any time. Late- and re-entries will be allowed with the assistance of an usher. Child care and a designated nursing mothers room will be available. A freewill offering will be received at the close of each performance. A complimentary coffee bar will be offered in The Commons following each performance. ■

# REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ time with his family and loved ones. He was a member of the Milton Wesleyan Church, Milton, KY.

Archie leaves to mourn his passing his loving wife of fifty-eight years, JoAnn Blakely Coons; three children, John, Latricia, Faith; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; two sisters, Elizabeth and Ann. The funeral service was held at the Bedford Baptist Church in Bedford, KY, with Rev. Ben Colburn officiating. Interment followed at the Bedford Cemetery.



**Ellsworth C. Porter**, 88, of Wheelersburg, OH, passed away February 18, 2015. Born in 1927, Ellsworth was a World War II veteran. After his discharge, he attended God's Bible School from 1950-1953. When his G.I. Bill ran out, he returned to Wheelersburg where he and his wife JoAnn raised eight children. He worked as a carpenter for the former Detroit Steel Corporation. He enjoyed reading

God's Word, loved gardening, and generously shared his produce with family and neighbors. He remained a Bible scholar his entire life.

Ellsworth is survived by his loving wife, JoAnn (Mahan) Porter; five sons, John, James, David, Philip, and Kevin; two daughters, Bonnie and Ruth Ann; brother, Paul; and sister, Phyllis. He was a kind and patient papaw, relishing his role with his 22 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren. One grandson described him as "a man you tried to be like; one that you knew was special. A man who taught us what a Christian man looks like and what it meant to work hard and love God."

A Celebration of Life was held at the Brant Funeral Service in Sciotoville, OH, Scott Rawlings officiating. Interment followed at Sunset Memorial Garden with military honors by the James Dickey Post of the American Legion. ■

New Book

# A CENTURY ON THE MOUNT OF BLESSINGS

THE STORY OF GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL  
by Larry D. Smith

464 pages, hardbound, indexed, and lavishly illustrated

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order online – [www.gbs.edu/century-mount-blessings](http://www.gbs.edu/century-mount-blessings)

As the visitors began arriving at GBS on Monday, September 26, they were met by “historical guests,” faculty and students portraying Martin Wells Knapp, Mom White, Nettie Peabody, Meredith Standley, and a dozen other GBS historical figures.

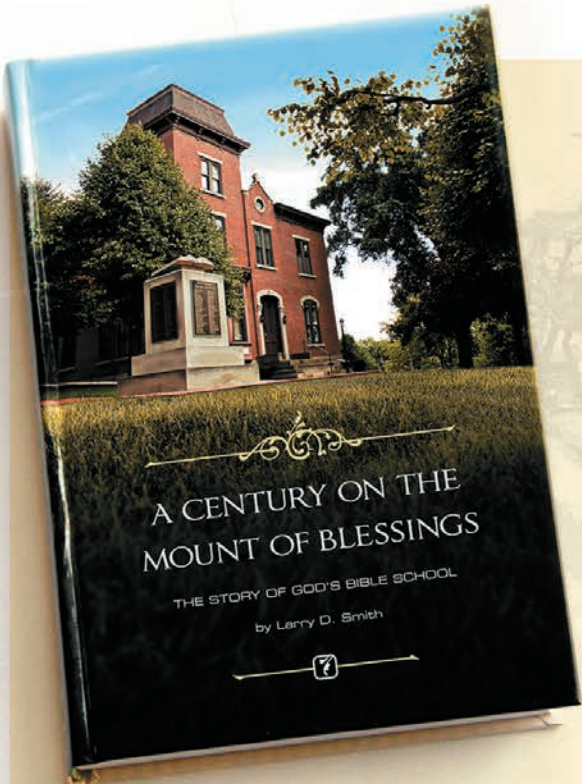
The prelude music began at 6:30 p.m. with an introduction by Professor R.E. McNeill (David Hartkopf). The music featured songs from the early years of GBS, with performers dressed in period costumes. Of particular interest were Widemeyer’s little known “Back to the Bible” and his well known “Come and Dine.”

At 7:00 p.m., President Avery welcomed guests and introduced former *God’s Revivalist* editor Glenn Black, who prayed the opening prayer. After a congregational song, the sixth president of GBS, Bence Miller (Don Davison) introduced all 16 of the “historical guests,” giving a brief account of their time and contribution to the Hilltop. For example, Nettie Peabody (Karen Olson) was honored for her “faith walk” and for her more-than-60-year tenure at GBS, longer than that of any other person. One of two quartets performed Martin Wells Knapp’s “Tears and Triumphs,” taken from his best selling camp meeting song book of the same title. President Avery gave brief remarks concerning the history book project, the vision and development of which began in the late 1990s with the intention of the book’s release during the GBS Centenary Celebration in 2000. However, various difficulties precluded that from happening. Later, in the summer of 2013, *God’s Revivalist* editor Larry Smith was asked to carry on the project, while Ken Farmer assumed the role of managing editor of *God’s Revivalist* and guided the production of the history book.

Larry Smith spoke of his appreciation for the opportunity to work on this project, mentioning some of the struggles as the book finally began taking form. With booming voice, he read the vignette that serves as the book’s preface, “In Judge Lueders’ Courtroom,” which gives the account of the 1901 court case against Knapp for disturbing the peace of Mount Auburn. With the audience having its appetite whetted for more, Larry encouraged them all to buy the book. Larry then officially presented a copy to President Avery and the school.

After the benediction by President-elect Rodney Loper, all were invited to the cafeteria to purchase *A Century on the Mount of Blessings* and have it signed by the author while enjoying light refreshments. ■

photos top to bottom: A quartet dressed in period attire sings one of Knapp’s songs; Larry Smith reads an excerpt from the book; Tim Crater impersonates the GBS founder; first ladies: Melissa Arender Loper, Bessie Queen Standley (Laura Byler), Minnie Ferle Knapp (Alyson Stitt), and Ruth Vernon Avery.





GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE  
**HOMECOMING**  
 OCTOBER  
**14-15**

Homecoming 2016 was special indeed—a celebration of the presidential tenure of Michael R. Avery. While the April 2017 issue of *God's Revivalist* will give broader coverage to the 22 years of the Avery presidency, the coverage here will focus solely on the events of Homecoming.

### Homecoming Dinner

The festivities began with a scrumptious Homecoming Dinner at 5:00 p.m. in the campus cafeteria. It was a delight to see people greeting each other, sharing old stories, and enjoying the good food. Afterwards, the people gravitated toward the Adcock Chapel for the main service.

### Keynote Service

Everything was in place. Excitement was building. Many of those present had attended or were employed at GBS during the Avery administration, 1995-2016. Parents dropped their youngsters off at the children's program area before taking their seats in the chapel and enjoying the beautiful pre-service music that began at 6:30 p.m.

At 7:00 p.m., the service opened with an informational and encouraging video tribute to each of the school's presidents. Keith Waggoner I, President of the National Alumni Association, gave the welcome; and Robbie England, Chairman of the GBS Board of Trustees, made acknowledgments and reviewed the accomplishments of the Avery administration. After a song by alumni quartet Assurance (1997-98), Robbie England conducted an interview with the Averys.

Describing his first year in office, President Avery said that it was "marked with all sorts of surprises and blows, but it was also marked with unbelievable miracles—I mean one miracle after another." It was a blessing to hear him recount several of those miracles. Questions to his wife Ruth and sons Josh and Jon showed a strong family system of support and love.





A song by alumni trio Hope (2001-05), was followed by a video of tributes to President Avery from board members, fellow administrators, coworkers, family, and friends.

President and Mrs. Avery were then awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of their notable lives of service, and their steadfast loyalty, faithful support, and earnest prayers for GBS.

Keith Waggoner then introduced the *Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders*, established by the Alumni Executive Council to be awarded to students who demonstrate outstanding leadership qualities and potential. The scholarship will be awarded to students from any division who are at least sophomores. Leadership in Christian ministry or proven willingness and ability to lead must be evident in the recipient. He encouraged the entire GBS family to give toward the \$100,000 goal for funding this scholarship.

Following an offering and a song by alumni mixed quartet Harmony (2002-05), Board Chair Robbie England presented a portrait of President Avery, painted and framed to match the portrait he has of his wife Ruth. Additionally, he was given a large, framed picture of the city of Cincinnati. Finally a much larger portrait of President Avery was unveiled by Ruth Avery and the president's Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Watters. This portrait will be displayed in the Administration Building.

Board member Leonard Sankey then invited current and former board members and administrators to gather around President Avery and his family for a prayer of thanksgiving and consecration. Afterward the congregation sang "To God Be the Glory" and was dismissed.

### Graeter's Ice Cream Social

Following the keynote service, everyone descended to the Student Center dining hall where all were treated to ice cream from Graeter's, a Cincinnati company established in 1868, famous for its hand-crafted ice cream.





### Best of GBS Talent

Friday night festivities closed with the Best of GBS Talent. Building on the excitement from the inclusion of this event at last year's homecoming, Kent Stetler and Anthony Webb served as hosts to a program that featured acts from the students, staff, faculty, and alumni alike. It was a perfect way to close out the first night of Homecoming!

### Reunion Breakfast Buffet and Fellowship

Homecoming day two began with a reunion breakfast buffet at 8:30 a.m. All were welcome, but especially honored were those from the Class of 1966 (50-year reunion) and the Class of 1991 (25-year reunion) who gathered exclusively in the Martin Dining Room. Following the breakfast, the alumni representing the two specifically honored classes made brief remarks about their lives since graduation, and each was given a special reunion gift. The 50-year grads shown left to right are Donna (Hayes) Handel, Sharon (Schwanz) Thompson, Rachel (Cope) Gardner, Elaine Nicholas, Beverly (Hayes) Trouten, Judy (Voss) Shelton, and Carson Scarbrough. The 25-year grads are Jackie Dinkins; her son, Larry Dinkins, Jr.; and Joanna (Potter) Russell.

### 1810 Street Festival

Young Street between Channing and Ringgold was teeming with people visiting the booths of various college and high school organizations. GBS supplied hamburgers, but a wide selection of other food was available for purchase at various booths: roasted Mexican corn, quesadillas, tacos, caramel apples, deep fried Oreos, funnel cakes, pulled taffy, pies, doughnuts, and various drinks. Other booths offered specialty photos, Japanese origami, and Christian literature. The festival began at 10:30 a.m. and ended at 2:30 p.m.







### Campus and City Tours

Meanwhile, campus tours took place between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m. Nathan Dahler, Director of Enrollment Services, led the group around campus to the various locations critical to the history of GBS, such as the main parlor in the Administration Building where the school began and where, a few years later, Oswald Chambers taught. The tour ended at the Flexon Memorial Library. At 1:00, the bus departed with those who wished to participate in the Cincinnati bus tour hosted by Zach Crater. Downtown, Zach drew special attention to the new Smale Riverfront Park, noting how it has brought a new excitement to the riverfront, and he pointed out "The Banks Project," another recent addition. Tour participants also observed the brand new downtown streetcar system. Other points of interest were Fountain Square, where students frequently minister by manning prayer stations and participating in sketch-board ministry and personal evangelism, and Main St. Chapel, an inner-city ministry involving GBS students for decades. ■



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**Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders**

Please partner with us by donating to this scholarship fund that will benefit future generations of leaders.

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Holy living is a happy and joyful life finding emotional and spiritual fulfillment in Christ and the reality of His teachings. A devoted follower of Christ who exemplifies true holiness does not endure a dull, sour lifestyle which exists in a mood of morbid bondage to people and their opinions. Holiness is not a joy-destroyer; rather it is a joy-creator.

The preoccupation of the New Testament is not with defeat or frustration in the Christian life. On the contrary, the preeminent emphasis of the New Testament is with Christ—Christ our righteousness and holiness, Christ our power and our adequacy, Christ our triumphant Lord.

The clarion call of God to every follower of Christ is: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16). God is holy, and everything He involves Himself in is holy.

The word “holiness” appears 43 times in the King James Version of the Bible. The phrase “beauty of holiness” occurs four times in the Scriptures, and equivalent phrases occur many times. We are admonished to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chron. 16:29; Psa. 29:2). In 2 Chronicles 20:21 Jehoshaphat, the fourth king of the Kingdom of Judah, appointed singers to “praise the beauty of holiness.”

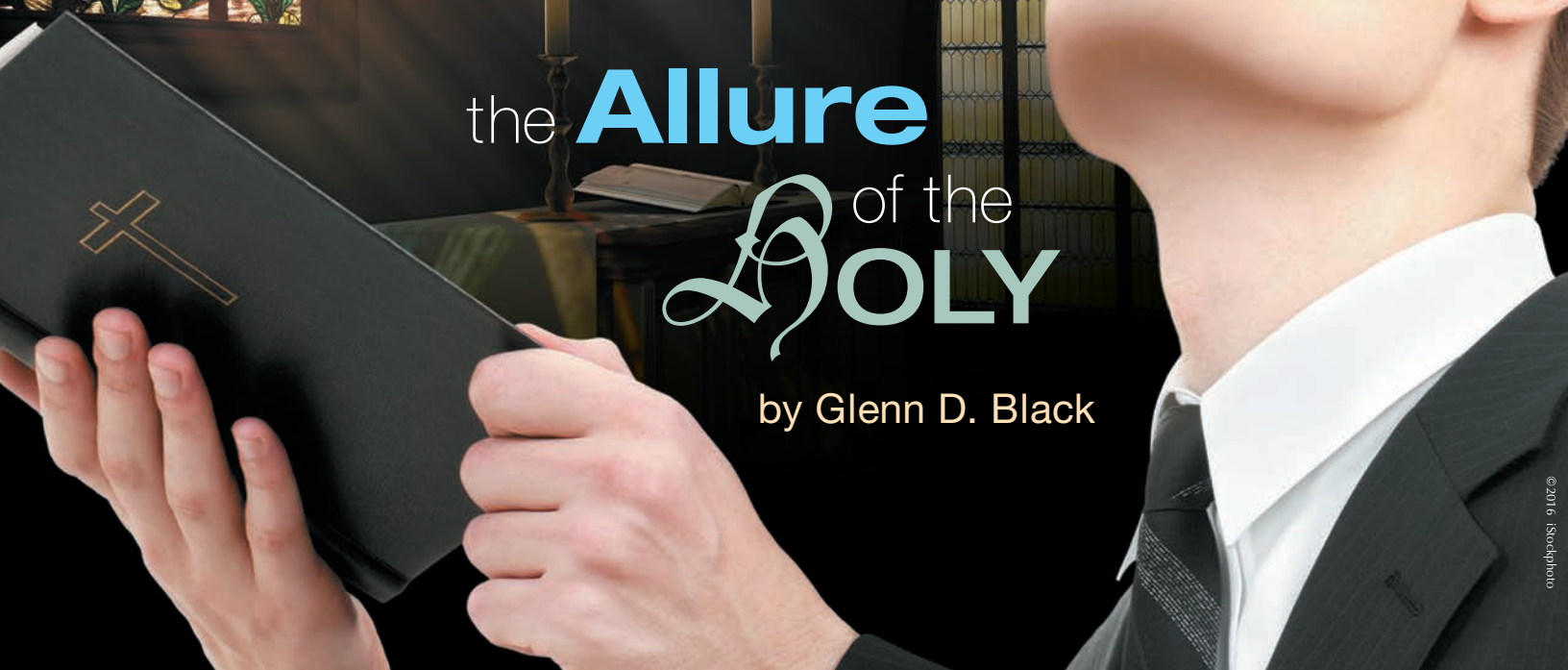
It is my lingering conviction that there is something truly beautiful about a sanctified saint of God who fully pursues, possesses, and practices Christian holiness. Too many

who talk about personal holiness are negative, judgmental, and harsh in their personal attitudes and actions. Holiness is the antithesis of sin, and the beauty of holiness is in direct contrast to the ugliness of sin. The fully sanctified saint of God radiates with kindness towards others.

Andrew Murray subtitled his little book on “Humility” with the words “The Beauty of Holiness.” He states: “The chief mark of counterfeit holiness is its lack of humility.” The fully sanctified saint will exemplify sanctity through the beauty of holiness of heart and life.

Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936) was a Commissioner in The Salvation Army and a leading author, teacher, and preacher on the doctrine of sanctification and holiness. He exemplified the life of the beauty of Christian sanctity. Listen to his testimony of personal holiness:

“On January 9th, 1885, at about 9 o’clock in the morning, God sanctified my



the **Allure**  
of the **HOLY**

by Glenn D. Black

soul. I was in my own room at the time, but in a few minutes, I went out and met a man and told him what God had done for me. The next morning, I met another friend on the street and told him the blessed story. He shouted and praised God, and urged me to preach full salvation and confess it everywhere. God used him to encourage and help me. So the following day, I preached on the subject as clearly and forcibly as I could, and ended with my testimony. God blessed the word mightily to others, but I think He blessed it most to myself. That confession put me on record. It cut the bridges down behind me. Three worlds were now looking at me as one who professed that God had given him a clean heart. I could not go back now. I had to go forward. God saw that I meant to be true to death.

“So two mornings after that, just as I got out of bed, and was reading some of the words of Jesus, He gave me such a blessing as I never had dreamed a man could have this side of Heaven. It was a Heaven of love that came into my heart. In that hour, I knew Jesus, and I loved Him until it seemed my heart would break with love. I loved the sparrows, I loved the dogs, I loved the horses, I loved the little urchins on the street, I loved the strangers who hurried past me, I loved the heathen, I loved the whole world.

“Do you want to know what holiness is? It is pure love. Do you want to know what the baptism of the Holy Ghost is? It is not a mere sentiment. It is not a happy sensation that passes away in the night. It is a baptism of love that brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus; that casts out all fear, that burns up doubt and unbelief as fire burns coal; that makes one meek and lowly in heart.”

Samuel Logan Brengle’s testimony and his life and ministry give credibility to the allure of the holy. The holy life is a radiant and reasonable reality.

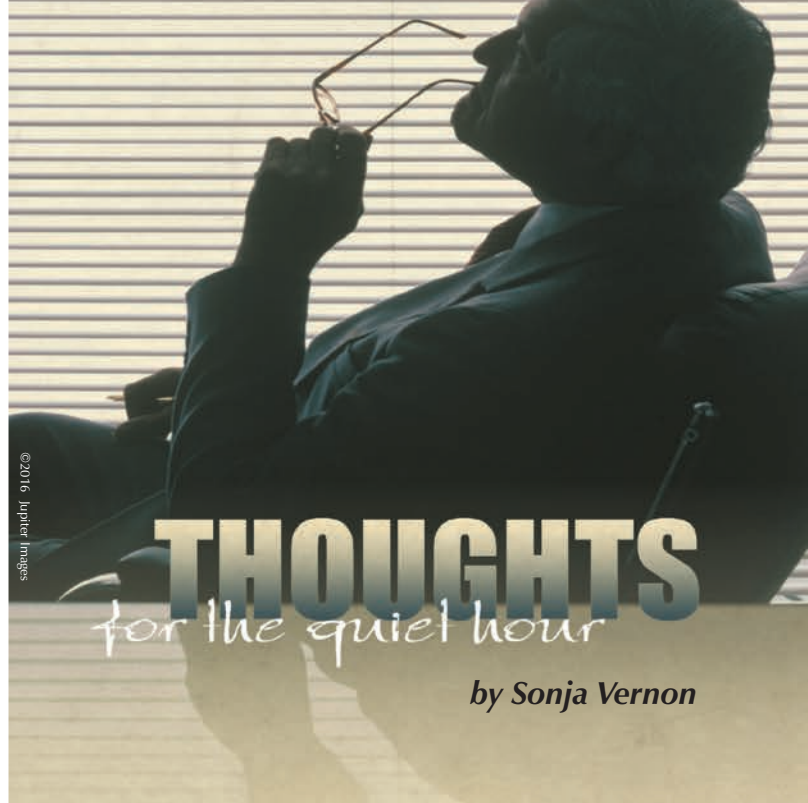
The fullness of the Holy Spirit in His sanctifying purity, power, and presence will create a sense of unity in our lives. There will be a joyous absence of conflict and strain. It will be easy to love others, and to be forgiving, unresentful, and unsuspecting.

The natural fruit of the Spirit of Christ is a winsome constellation of graces with love at the core: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). Only lives so governed can demonstrate the allure of the holy and the reality of Christ-like holiness.

*“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,  
All His wonderful passion and purity,  
Oh, Thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine,  
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.”*

—Albert Orsborn ■

**Glenn D. Black** (HS '60, BRE '74) is a long-term pastor and retired district superintendent of The Wesleyan Church (Kentucky district). He was editor of *God's Revivalist* (1976-85) and now resides with his wife Sharon (Jackman) (BA '70) in Westport, IN.



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# THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

## WATER OF LIFE

*“...Everything will live where the river goes.”*

—Ezek. 47:9c NASB

Some time ago I read about Ezekiel’s vision of the Millennium Temple. There are many details, and it can be easy to get lost in the measurements—although, I do love that God is a God of detail! But in the midst of all the talk about the temple layout, I read about the water that trickled down from the temple and became a mighty river. And these are the words that caught my eye: “...Everything will live where the river goes.” The river brings life. My mind then went to the words of Jesus in John 7:37-38, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” And I began to do some deep thinking. I came to Jesus. I drank of that living water. As a result, the Holy Spirit lives in me and should flow out of me as a life-giving stream. Will you join me in asking yourself the following questions? And don’t be afraid to answer them honestly. When I’m around, do I bring life? Do I bring refreshment to the parched and nutrients to the hungry? Am I a conduit of the water of the Holy Spirit that can bring the dead to life and make the desert blossom? We can’t manufacture this water or bring it on our own. But, oh, God, help us to carry Your water of life wherever we go. May many be caught in the overflow of grace that pours from us because of the presence of Almighty God within us. ■

**Sonja Vernon** is Dean of Women at God’s Bible School and College.

NOVEMBER 2016

Dear Phil

EXPOSING CHILDREN TO EVIL

*How much evil should I expose my children to? What does it mean for us to be “simple concerning evil?” —Judy*

Dear Judy,

This is certainly a concern I have. Most of us have scars from exposures to evil which we wish we never had. We want to preserve our children from such unnecessary and harmful exposure. On the other hand, most of us have probably encountered the “hot house” argument as well: kids that aren’t exposed to the “real world” will be unprepared to function in it properly.

There are two main reasons why I don’t buy the “real world” argument. First, Scripture provides examples of young people who flourished in the world despite their “hot house” upbringing. For example, Joseph went from a sheltered shepherd’s life to the immodesty, immorality, and corruption of Egypt; David went from being a sheltered youngest child to a conniving king’s court; Daniel went from sheltered Jewish orthodoxy to polytheistic, hedonistic pluralism. Yet, all of them succeeded at what counts most: loving God, loving others, and sharing His light.

Second, the “real” world is where God reigns sovereign over all that transpires (Psa. 99:1; Psa. 115:3), where nothing escapes His

eye (Prov. 15:3), the prosperity of the wicked is ephemeral (Psa. 73:19), and the reward of the righteous is indestructible (1 Pet. 1:4). The world where there is no God, where we’re all the product of time and blind chance, where you only go around once and then you die like an animal—that world is the figment of wicked imaginations (Psa. 53).

Romans 16:19b says, “...yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” In context, Paul is addressing adult believers and seems to mean that they are to be wise enough to spot false teaching and teachers (16:17-18) so that they remain inexperienced in evil, i.e., uncorrupted by false teaching. God wants His people, including our children, to know the good well enough to detect the bad. The old story about how federal agents are trained to detect counterfeit money comes to mind. It is true that counterfeit specialists spend time studying the characteristics of real currency so they can detect the false. However, they don’t study only good currency. They also study past and present counterfeits. Counterfeiters work hard at getting as close to the genuine as possible, so it is important

for agents to know the latest tricks being used.

In the same way, we must know God’s word well enough that we are not deceived by the multitude of false teachings that swarm the internet and airways (Eph. 4:13-15). A classroom, not the jungle, is the best place to learn about poisonous snakes. You don’t have to be bitten by a cottonmouth to know the dangers of its venom or recognize its shape and likely habitats. Children don’t need to see murder or immorality, seduction scenes or robberies, to know they are evil.

I find it instructive that God filled the book of Proverbs with verbal warnings about and descriptions of the appeals immoral men will use to entice the innocent (Prov. 1:10-19). Solomon describes the virtuous women well (Prov. 31:10-31) but warns repeatedly against the wiles of the immoral woman (Prov. 2:16-19; 5:3-23; 6:24-35; 7:5-27; 23:26-28; 30:20).

The home should be a controlled environment in which parents teach their children the truth while gradually and carefully helping them learn to discern bad from good, true from false, shyster from trustworthy. God commands parents and grandparents to use every opportunity to teach young people the truth (Deut. 6:7), so that they’ll recognize and avoid the enemy’s lies which they are sure to encounter. Supper time was when this happened most for me and my brother. I am doing this with my sons. I teach what Scripture says first and then check their understanding with small exposures to false worldviews, theological errors, or deceptive ideas. The goal is inoculation not infection. ■

Blessings,  
Philip

*A. Philip Brown II is a member of the faculty in the Division of Ministerial Education at God’s Bible School and College.*

[pbrown@gbs.edu](mailto:pbrown@gbs.edu)



## CHRISTIANS, LEAD THE "THANKSGIVING PARADE!"

by *Allan P. Brown, Chair*  
*GBS Division of Ministerial Education*

**Scripture:** *"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18).*

Of all God's creatures, Christians are the most thankful. As a result, we set the example for the rest of the world to follow by our thanksgiving and praise to God.

Why are Christians so thankful? First, Christians are thankful because of God's kind gift of grace, love, and mercy to us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. It was His grace that created within us the desire to repent of our sins and to put our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. As a result, God made us alive together with Christ (Eph. 2:1-5). Then He raised us up with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6). He also sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13). We now have a living hope of sharing in Christ's resurrection and receiving "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for us (1 Pet. 1:3-4).

Second, Christians are leaders in giving thanks because of what God is presently doing in their lives and through their prayers. As a matter of fact, Christians make thanksgiving a primary ingredient of each day. As Paul reminds us, Christians are to "rejoice ever more" (1 Thess. 5:16). We are to give thanks "always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Christians understand that thanksgiving is not based upon a feeling of thankfulness. Rather, it is the exercise of our will in obedience to God's Word. We give thanks

always because God commands us to do so. David understood this when he said, "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psa. 34:1). Again, the Psalmist reminds us that "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the LORD's name is to be praised" (Psa. 113:3).

The writer to the Hebrews urges Christians everywhere to give audible expressions of their praise: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

If you are not one of the leaders of the "thanksgiving parade," read carefully and prayerfully the following Scriptures and ask the Holy Spirit to kindle a thankful attitude within you.

**1 Timothy 2:1** — I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.

**1 Chronicles 16:8** — Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.

**Psalms 30:4** — Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

**Psalms 79:13** — So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

**Psalms 92:1** — It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High:

**Psalms 105:1** — O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

**Psalms 106:1** — Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

**Psalms 106:47** — Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.

**Psalms 119:62** — At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

**Psalms 140:13** — Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

**1 Corinthians 15:57** — But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 2:14** — Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place.

**Colossians 3:17** — And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

**Revelation 4:9** — And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever...

**Revelation 11:17** — Saying, We give thee thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

One of the major events the Apostle John reveals about the angels, the living creatures, and the elders who are around God's throne is their enthusiastic singing and praising of God. Listen to what John tells us he saw: "And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing'" (Rev. 5:11-12). Let's join with the heavenly hosts that continually offer praise and thanksgiving to God!

Here are some suggestions for the focus of our continual thanksgiving:

**God is our burden bearer (Psa. 55:22)**

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

**Thank God for His wonderful work in your life. The list of things for which we can be thankful, and ought to be thankful, should be growing daily.**

**God is our protector (Psa. 23:4)**

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

**God is our counselor (Psa. 16:7)**

I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

**God is our defender (Psa. 5:11)**

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

**God is generous (Psa. 13:6)**

I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

**God is our leader and feeder (Psa. 23:2)**

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

**God heals our broken hearts (Psa. 147:3)**

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

**God is the source of our joy (Psa. 16:11)**

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

**God is our rest (Psa. 37:7)**

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

**God is our sustainer (Psa. 3:5)**

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

Give thanks for what God has done in the past and what He is presently doing. Thank God for His wonderful work in your life. The list of things for which we can be thankful, and ought to be thankful, should be growing daily. Remember, Christians are to take the lead in the "thanksgiving parade!"

A final note: If that list becomes faint in your mind when the devil tries to bring in discouragement, make a written list and keep it on the fridge or on your desk. Since God inhabits the praise of His people, He draws near in encouragement when we praise Him! ■



## BIG-GOD FAITH

by President-Elect Rodney Loper

On Convocation Sunday, President Avery spoke of our rich heritage of alumni who have accomplished great things for the kingdom of God. Pondering our graduates, I wondered what motivated some to do great things for God while others never rose to their God-given potential. The answer seems simplistic, yet I believe it is profound. Their view of God determined the difference. If we serve a God who is limited, a God who we can tuck nicely into our box, we not only limit God, but we also limit what He can do through us. The view you have of God greatly impacts what you are willing to venture for God.

When God placed a vision on the heart of our founder to establish “a training-school for gospel workers,” it was a full decade before that was realized, yet Martin Wells Knapp walked forward trusting a big God. When Charles and Lettie Cowman answered the call to go to Japan and Korea, they set sail with the assurance of Matthew 20:4—“Go...and whatsoever is right I will give you.” In retrospect Lettie wrote, “God has never failed.” What compelled them to leave the comforts of their homeland? Their view of a big God! When 10 “boys” heard the call to evangelize Japan, in four months they shared the gospel with every home on the Island of Kyshu—representing over nine million people. This task was greater than any of them. They walked into the unknown trusting a God who was big enough to overcome any darkness and difficulty they might encounter.

A quick tour of the Hilltop reminds us that our predecessors served a big God. From the purchase of the property in 1900 to the erection of the Knapp Memorial building in the middle of the Great Depression, the campus itself indicates big-God faith.

When I was contacted about being the next president of GBS, my immediate response was, “I’m not smart enough. I’m not qualified. There is no way I could ever fill that role.” Yet, as the process unfolded, it became abundantly clear to me that God was calling, and I walk forward into the arena of God’s calling with great confidence. Not confidence in my abilities or intellect, but confidence in a big God.

Does this diminish the challenges ahead? No. Is it overwhelming at times? Yes! I know that there are many questions about what we will face in the future. But I also know God! He is bigger than the darkness of our world. He is stronger than all of our opponents. I know that we can trust Him! Why? Because He is a big God! ■



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Dear GB&C family,

Thank you for your generous support of our annual Phonathon! Your gifts enabled us to raise \$109,880. These funds help provide student scholarships and facilitate the Work-Study Program - making it possible for many of us to attend God's Bible School & College. Thank you for investing in a worthy cause!

Sincerely,  
GB&C Students

