



GOD'S REVIVALIST

November 2017

as a humble offering

*So
Much
to be
Thankful
For...*



about this issue

BEING THANKFUL

Being thankful is a choice. No matter how dire the circumstances may be, your attitude toward those circumstances determines how you respond. And how you respond is seen by those around you.

For several years, I worked a second job as a personal aide for an elderly lady. She was very wealthy in the sense that she lived in a large mansion nestled on an expansive wooded property in the middle of one of Cincinnati's elite neighborhoods. When I say "wealthy," I mean that she was rich. Very rich. At least in the "things" and services which money could buy. I was one of those services. I was just around to be of help. I would help the nurses move her in and out of bed. I would also talk to her and periodically read to her. Unfortunately she was mean-spirited. I never remember her showing any appreciation for any of the help given to her by her nurses or us as attendants.

I chose to overlook her nastiness. She had been the lady-in-charge for many years, but now she had to have someone feed, dress, and bathe her. Others were in control of every facet of her life. Her response was to lash out at those around her. I think it allowed her to feel like she was still in charge. She made choices that caused difficulties for those who cared for her. Being thankful was not in her repertoire.

There was another elderly woman I knew—Kate Wallace, my grandmother. When grandpa died in 1964, she came to stay with us while she was adjusting, and she ended up living with us. She was bedfast for the last 25 years of her life, and blind for most of that. She found ways to be contented—on purpose. She would listen to Christian radio and fit herself into the schedule that others had for her. She enjoyed talking with family and visitors.

The way she grew old with the limitations of her disabilities was a gift to us. I have many memories of her conversations with my mother as she would take in something for Grandma to eat. Often it was just a snack—coffee with a piece of toast and jelly. Grandma would say, "Betty, you are so good to me. This is really delicious." When she prayed in the evening, she usually would let the Lord know that she was ready for Him to take her whenever He was ready. She was ALWAYS thankful. She chose to be that way.

The choice is also yours to make. Choose to be a thankful person. Make that your year-round goal. Be thankful! —KF ■

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the president's page



ARE YOU THANKFUL?

by Rodney Loper, President

In her book *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home*, Emily Post covers everything from using proper grammar to decorum at weddings and funerals. Among a long list of how “proper etiquette” is employed in various settings, she weaves the need to express gratitude: “Saying thanks is one of the key hallmarks of civility.”

However, expressing thanks is about more than manners. For a Christian, thankfulness is a way of life. Scripture makes this very clear. “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” This is a duty that comes to us in the form of a command. But if you are like me, you look at this verse and say, “Everything? Surely it doesn’t mean everything!” But if you explore the Greek behind this word, you will discover that it indeed means everything! No limits. No boundaries. No confines. No qualifiers. No expiration date.

I don’t believe this means that once we are converted we walk around with a smile for the rest of our lives. Hardships come. Life happens. Disappointments arise. Tears will flow. Dark days do come. Diseases are diagnosed. Death comes calling. Any or many of these realities can clutter and cloud our hearts. An attitude of thankfulness doesn’t negate these things, but it does provide an underlying framework that doesn’t disappear in the day of trouble. As Christians we are thankful in spite of and in the midst of whatever life throws our way.

The early church understood this and made thanksgiving an essential part of their fellowship. It was more than just an event they celebrated with turkey and dressing the third Thursday of each November. A brief study of the New Testament reveals that thankfulness was an integral part in the life of the early church (Acts 2:46, 2 Cor. 4:15, 9:11-12, Col. 3:15, 4:2, Phil. 4:6, 1 Tim. 4:4, Heb. 12:28).

If you take the time to study thankfulness in Scripture, you will discover that thankfulness is not based on circumstances, it is based on Christ's forgiveness, acceptance, and grace! I understand that these words are easy to write but difficult to apply when "life happens." There are many things that hinder the spirit of thankfulness in our life.

What then are some hindrances to a thankful heart? First, doubt about God. Does He really love me? Is this really what's best for me? Does He care about me? Does He know what I am going through? All of these questions find their source in doubting God. Thankfulness is fleeting because you don't trust God.

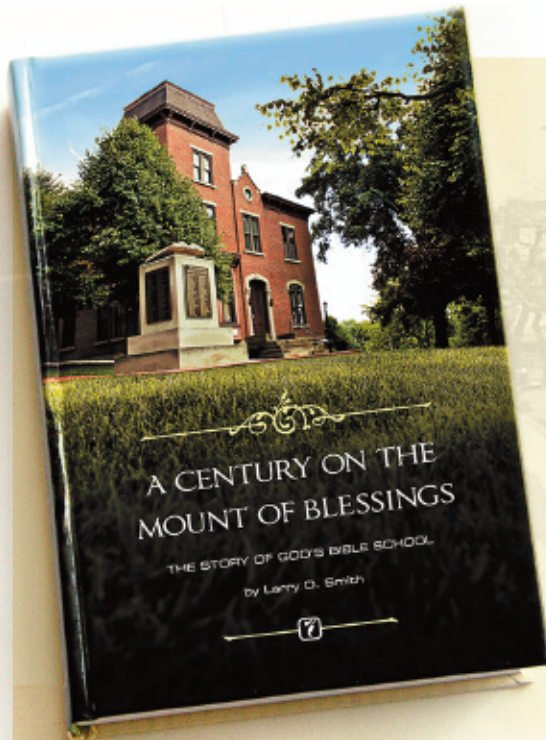
A second hindrance is selfishness. It expresses itself in many ways: "God, this hurts! This is painful, so I don't want it in my life, even if You want it there." "I want this now." "I don't have time for this detour of life." At its root, this is saying what I want and what brings me pleasure is more important than what He wants. Basically, it is the inability to pray as Jesus did, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done."

A third hindrance to thankfulness is worldly-mindedness. This hindrance buys into the lie that life is about pleasure, possessions, and pursuits of this present age—and anything that hinders me from achieving these goals is negative and, therefore, should be eliminated from my life. One writer said, "When I get my eyes on the world and I begin to measure out my life in terms of what in the world I get or don't get, my gratitude disappears."

Lastly, a critical spirit is a hindrance to thankfulness. A critical, judgmental, condescending, condemning, or bitter spirit will corrode you from the inside out! Scripture says that without love, you are "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." This spirit will rob you of thankfulness!

If these are hindrances, then the opposite will bring thankfulness. If I trust God, regardless of the circumstances; if I give my self-rights to God; if His kingdom becomes my focus; if love, forgiveness, and graciousness mark my life, thankfulness will abound!

I pray that thanksgiving is more than a seasonal thought for you. I pray that it will mark the way that you transact your life. "In everything give thanks!" ■



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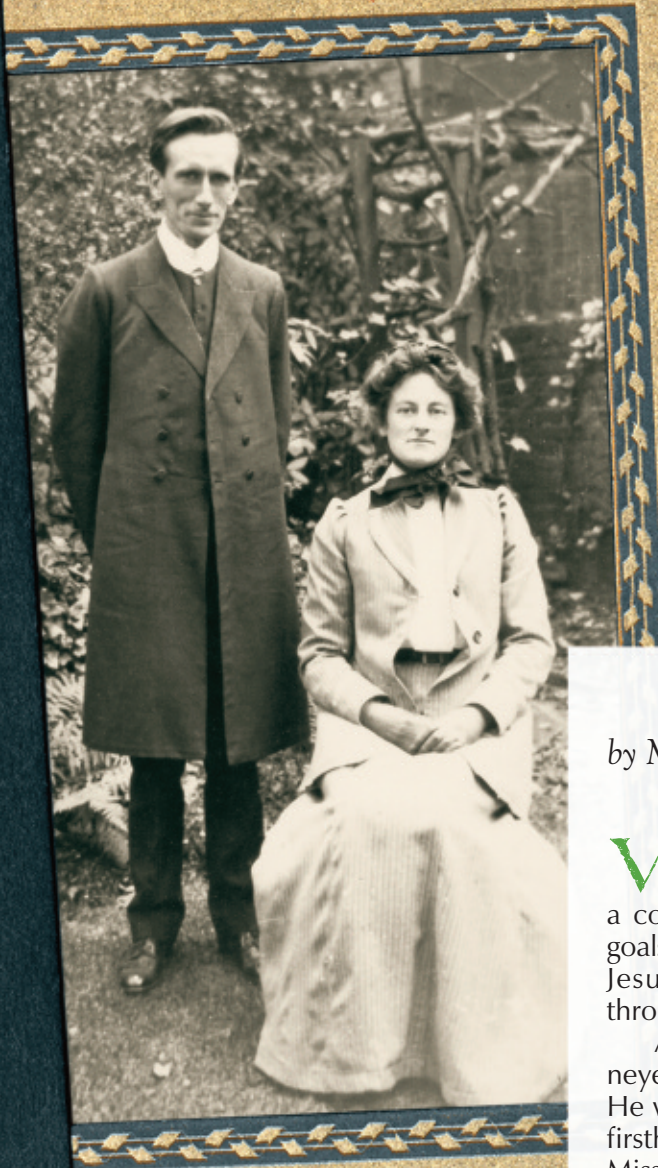
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Oswald and Biddy Chambers: *Missionaries*

by Michelle Ule

When Oswald Chambers first visited God's Bible School in 1906, he found a community whose vision matched his own goals: "to prepare faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world."

After seven months at GBS, Oswald journeyed on to Japan with his friend Juji Nakada. He went to observe international missions work firsthand through the ministry of the Oriental Missionary Society. What he saw of the work run by Ed Kilbourne, Charles Cowman, and Lettie Cowman impressed Oswald and gave him much to pray and think about.

When Oswald returned to GBS in the summers of 1907-1910, an idea lodged in his heart about some day running his own Bible school. "Our training for both home and foreign work is all too slight," he wrote in the June 13, 1907, *God's Revivalist*.

From his experiences at Dunoon College in Scotland and at GBS, Oswald saw how well people learned the Scriptures and about Christian living when studying in a communal setting. He believed the gospel is easier "caught" than "taught," and for that reason felt a residential college could best serve students.

*Oswald and Biddy saw
their calling as preparing
men and women for life
on the mission field.*

Oswald began to pray and discuss the idea with the leadership of England's Pentecostal League of Prayer, for whom he served as a speaker. As he wrote to Biddy, his fiancé at the time, "My whole soul is full of thoughts and prayers and waiting and working for what God is preparing for us in the near future. My idea of a Bible Training School for about ten years will yet come about. Four years—the country. Four in a city and two in a foreign field. Keep these schemes in your mind and heart."

THE BIBLE TRAINING COLLEGE

Six months after their 1910 marriage, Oswald and Biddy Chambers became principal and lady superintendent of London's Bible Training College (BTC). With the backing of the Pentecostal League of Prayer, they began their collaborative effort to proclaim the gospel and to help missionaries do the same—throughout the world.

While classes were open to all—and filled with many part time students—Oswald poured time and teaching into those aiming for the

mission field. Among the classes taught were "Missionary Matters" and a devotional class on Wednesdays limited to enrolled students.

Oswald used the Wednesday hour to discuss heart issues and answer their individual spiritual questions. He probed their souls with special attention to those desiring to serve on the mission field, challenging them to examine God's activity in their lives. In particular, Oswald encouraged the students not to allow circumstances to hinder their pursuit of God's plans. The students referred to it as "Spiritual Surgery."

Missionaries regularly visited the BTC and included those recently returned from the field, as well as a Zulu native, Brother Petros, sent by friends at God's Bible School. Local organizations like the Salvation Army and the West London Mission Soci-

ety regularly visited and recruited students to serve with them.

Oswald and Biddy wanted their students to understand missionary life. He emphasized students' choices for service were God's appointments, not his. "We undertake to find no sphere of labor for our students," Oswald said in his 1914 report to the Pentecostal League of Prayer. "Our duty is to see that this house [the BTC] maintains the honor of God and that each student is put into a right spiritual atmosphere. His clearly discerned will always follows."

The end result? By July, 1915, forty of the 103 residential students served as missionaries around the world. Seven journeyed to Egypt during World War I to serve with the Chambers family or the YMCA.

WITH THE YMCA AT ZEITOUN

Oswald Chambers joined the YMCA as a chaplain a year into World War I. He subsequently received permission to bring Biddy and their two year-old daughter Kathleen to join him at Zeitoun army camp north of Cairo.

Zeitoun provided their opportunity to live as missionaries in a foreign land, in keeping with the plans he anticipated years before. Biddy and Oswald both worked hard, pushing themselves to minister to Australian and New Zealand troops preparing for battle—in most cases with the soldiers' physical lives on the line. As a couple and individually, Biddy and Oswald taught classes, performed acts of hospitality, and even ministered in difficult conditions along the Suez to provide spiritual teaching and encouragement. Their ministry was so effective, one soldier

*"The missionary is one in whom
the Holy Ghost has wrought this realization—
'Ye are not your own.'"*



Chambers' Wedding Day, May 25, 1910. Standing, left to right: Percy Lockhart, best man; Biddy's sister, Edith Daisy; Oswald's sister, Gertrude; Biddy's brother, Herbert Hobbs; Oswald and Biddy, seated with his niece, Doris, in front.

commented, "It was worth enlisting to attend these classes."

The work continued after Oswald's death, but shifted to Biddy's strengths: compiling, editing, and presenting Oswald's ideas in written form. As the YMCA director William Jessop explained, "Mr. Chambers has gone to the Father, but his work still goes on, for Mrs. Chambers is publishing his sermons and talks as leaflets for distribution among the troops, and they are exerting a wide influence in spiritual upbuilding."

BIDDY'S COMMITMENT TO MISSIONARIES

Biddy returned to a demoralized England in 1919, an impoverished widow with a six year-old. Her experiences with the leaflets (the YMCA distributed 10,000 each month) since Oswald's death left Biddy convinced God had called her to a publishing ministry. She sifted through seven years of her notes and began compiling Oswald's words into book form.

But before Biddy could begin, friends offered her a position at Ridgeland Bible College, a new school focused on women desiring to serve on the mission field. She wrestled with the offer—the job would provide a home for her child, a stipend, and meaningful spiritual work with people Biddy knew well and liked. Yet, Oswald's words beckoned for publication. Biddy chose to trust God with her life, turning her back on a seemingly obvious opportunity and embracing what God would do with the books. It wasn't easy.

Within a few years, Biddy ran a boarding house as a "licensed lodging house keeper" for four Oxford students. In her free time, she compiled 366 devotionals (from as many as four different Oswald talks for each reading), into *My Utmost for His Highest*.

Oswald and Biddy saw their calling as preparing men and women for life on the mission field;



TOP: League of Prayer, circa 1911; Biddy seated, front left; Oswald standing, rear row, second from right. BOTTOM LEFT: The B.T.C. Camel Corps in front of Sphinx, 1915-17; Biddy, Oswald, and Kathleen on left two camels. BOTTOM RIGHT: Biddy, Kathleen, and Oswald in Egypt.

nearly ten percent of *My Utmost for His Highest* devotionals mention the missionary life. Or, as the September 4 devotional notes: "The missionary is one in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought this realization—'Ye are not your own.'" Certainly Biddy and Oswald believed God controlled their lives.

AFTER MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST

While *My Utmost for His Highest* has never been out of print

since first published in 1927, Biddy did not personally benefit from its sales. Biddy never kept the profits from any of Oswald's books for herself. As friend Reverend Stephen Pulford explained, "Mrs. Chambers, left homeless without means of support and with a small daughter to educate, started absolutely from scratch. Yet nothing daunted her in her enthusiasm to get her husband's message circulated. She would not take any funds from the books lest that cripple her ability to publish the next one."

To be able to produce the books, Bidy needed to use any profits on one book for the next book. To determine which material to use next from Oswald's notes, Bidy relied on what the Holy Spirit indicated.

In 1930, Bidy published *So Send I You: A Series of Missionary Studies*. With a foreword written by American missionary Samuel Zwemer, the book examined how missionaries could recognize their call, how to prepare for the mission, and what missionary life entailed.

Shortly thereafter, a letter from a missionary with the African Inland Mission lodged in her heart: "Out on the field we are like a lot of hens scratching for ourselves."

She knew what Oswald's (now unfulfilled) dream had been for after the war ended. Besides leading another Bible training college, he wanted to visit mission stations, or places where missionaries vacationed, to refresh and teach them. He desired to refill the "spiritual wells," as it were, of those who spent their lives sharing the gospel.

Bidy decided to fulfill his dream in 1932 with *The Bible Training College Journal*. As a type of "continuing education" for missionaries and alumni of the BTC, the journal went out monthly. Bidy used previously unpublished messages Oswald gave at the college, along with reports from former students and missionaries in the field. Circulation soon reached 700 copies sent world-wide.

She compiled and published *The BTC Journal* for 20 years. Bidy never forgot that missionaries in remote areas looked forward to it every month, and "that alone was reason for its continued existence."

In 1932, friends gathered to form the Oswald Chambers Publication Association (OCPA), a small group who helped Bidy with the business end of preparing and selling "the books."

Bidy agreed to their assistance, asking only to be allowed to

give away as much material as she liked. Over the years when the committee questioned the number of books donated, she reminded them their mission was not to sell books, but to help people.

Her daughter Kathleen estimated Bidy gave away more than 500 books some years, mailing them around the globe. She frequently sent books to Amy Carmichael's Dohnavur mission in India, to aid Brother Andrew behind the Iron Curtain, to a fledgling Christian bookstore in Nigeria, and others who wrote or simply knocked on her door.

The OCPA minutes regularly report Bidy suggesting donations to a variety of people and organizations, including Lettie Cowman of the Oriental Missionary Society, the House of Praise in India, Spezia Mission in Italy, and the China Inland Mission. Whenever the OCPA received fees for translation rights, Bidy suggested they give the funds to a missionary.

Some of Bidy's closest friends from the BTC served as missionaries, including Vyvyan and Gladys

Ingram Donnithorne in China. As encouragement, Bidy allowed her name listed as secretary to their West China Evangelistic Society, undoubtedly an honorary position. The small Lebanon Bible College in Scotland also claimed her as secretary in their marketing material.

Bidy's final thoughts on what it meant to be a missionary can best be summed up by the October 16 devotional in *My Utmost for His Highest*: "The purpose for which the missionary is created is that he may be God's servant, one in whom God is glorified."

By this definition, Bidy Chambers and Oswald both were successful missionaries. ■

Michelle Ule is the biographer of Mrs. Oswald Chambers (*Baker Books*, October 2017). To learn more and to read her many Oswald and Bidy Chambers blog posts, visit www.michelleule.com.

All photos accompanying this article are courtesy of Special Collections, Buswell Library, Oswald Chambers (SC-122), Wheaton College, IL.



Bidy Chambers with daughter Kathleen



This installment in our special series of favorite quotations from Oswald Chambers is from Susan M. Myers' unpublished manuscript, A Candle in the Darkness: Excerpts from the writings of Oswald Chambers. —KF

The Vision of the Long Way

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10).

When we are busy with our own outlook on life, it seems as if God were indifferent. Our human patience—as well as our impatience—gets to the point of saying, "Why doesn't God do something?" Redemption is complete; we believe that Our Lord has all power in heaven and on earth. Why then is God so long in making His answers to our prayers an actuality? In such a state of mind, we are capable of becoming bitter against God unless we are led into the inner secret of our Lord's own attitude.

God takes such a long time because of what He is after: "bringing many sons to glory." It takes time to make a son or daughter. We are not made sons and daughters of God by magic. We are saved in the great supernatural sense by the sovereign work of God's grace, but sonship is a different matter. I have to become a son or daughter of God by deliberate discernment and understanding and chastisement, not by spiritual necromancy, imagining I can ascend to heaven in leaps and bounds. The "short cut" would make men machines, not sons, with no discernment of God. If God did not shield His only begotten Son from any of the requirements of sonship, He will not shield us from all the requirements of being His sons and daughters by adoption. "Though He were a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

—Adapted from *The Place of Help*, pp.1015-16*

Dimensions of Divine Love

"That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge" (Eph. 3:17-19).

The first thing we need to be educated in spiritually is a knowledge of the dimensions of Divine love—its length and depth and breadth and height. The concept that God is love is a revelation. Unless I am born from above, what is the use of telling me God is love? To me He is not love. Where is the love of God in war, in suffering, in all the inevitable inequalities of life? No one who faces facts as they are could ever prove that God is love unless he accepts the revelation of His love made by Jesus Christ. John 3:16 does not begin to have any meaning to the natural man who knows nothing whatever of the domain Jesus Christ represents. Not until we realize that there is something tragic at the basis of human life shall we recognize the love of God.

In the Cross we may see the dimensions of Divine love. The Cross is not the cross of a man, but the exhibition of the heart of God. At the back of the wall of the world stands God with His arms outstretched, and every man driven to the Cross is driven into the arms of God. The Cross of Jesus is the supreme evidence of the love of God (see Rom. 8:35-39). "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (v.35) The Cross of Christ reveals that the blazing center of the love of God is the holiness of God, not His kindness and compassion. If the Divine love pretends I am all right when I am all wrong, then I have a keener sense of justice than the Almighty. God is a holy God, and the marvel of the Redemption is that God, the Holy One, puts into me, the unholy one, a new disposition—the disposition of His Son.

—Adapted from *The Place of Help*, p.1004*

Perfecting Holiness

"...perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).

It is perilously possible to cultivate a spurious, unhealthy holiness not "in the fear of God." There is a subtle form of carnal pride that is set on my holiness. It is unscriptural and morbid and ends in taking myself more and more seriously and God less and less seriously. Practical holiness is the only holiness of any value in this world.

—Adapted from *Conformed to His Image*, p.368*

* Page numbers are from *The Complete Works of Oswald Chambers*, Discovery House Publishers (2000), available as a free download at <https://dhp.org/chambers>.



Smith, and Timothy Crater performed musical works by Massenet, Bach, Gounod, and others before an appreciative audience. This annual event displays the varied and exceptional talents of our Music Division staff.

FALL REVIVAL

The opening revival of the school year, September 24-27, featured six ministers from the greater-Cincinnati area. **Travis Johnson** (Kenwood Bible Methodist Church) took his text from Luke 15 in a sermon on "Two Lost Sons."



TALENT NIGHT

Talent Night remains a campus highlight each fall semester. On Friday evening, September 15, students and staff gathered outdoors on the campus proper to enjoy musical ensembles, solos, skits, recitations, and even a freestyle yo-yo presentation! We love discovering unique talents in our campus family!

FACULTY RECITAL

On Tuesday, September 19, at 7:00 p.m. in the Adcock Chapel, music faculty members Nick and Jana Pop, Rachelle Wolf, Jessica

The younger son was lost in his rebellion while the older was lost in his religion. By application, people can be lost among the pigs or lost among the pews. **Mark Cravens** (Morning View United Methodist Church), using Matthew 16:24-25, showed that being a committed disciple of Christ involves an utter denial of self, daily taking up one's cross and choosing a life of radical and full obedience to God, and living a life of unconditional following. **Darrell Stetler, Sr.** (Burlington Bible Church) spoke from 1 Peter 1:13-16, noting that God says His "obedient children" must be holy

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.

DEATHS



Kenneth Dale Wright, 80, of Overland Park, KS, died peacefully at his home Saturday, August 12, 2017. He was born in 1937 in Dade County, MO, to Noble and Goldie (Feezell) Wright. At an early age, Kenneth and his family moved to Ft. Scott, KS, where he graduated from Ft. Scott Christian Heights. He married Evelyn Darlene Zeigler in 1972.

His printing career began at Witt Printing in El Dorado Springs, MO, and included management

positions at Mid-America Business Forms (Ft. Scott, KS) and Vallis Wengroff Printing (Cherryvale, KS). He later accepted a position as production manager for Herald and Banner Press in Overland Park, KS, and worked there more than 40 years.

He was actively involved with Overland Christian Schools and Kansas Christian College, where he enjoyed attending his children's school and sporting events. He faithfully attended the Overland Park Church of God (Holiness) and was willing to use his mechanical abilities to help the church, Herald and Banner Press, the school, and other people in need. He will be remembered for his quick wit, humor, and common sense.

Survivors include his wife, Darlene; son, Gregory; daughter, Ashlee; five grandchildren; two brothers, Gary and Nathan; and three sisters, Melba, Betty, and Dorothy.

as He is holy. This is a command, not a spiritual option or luxury.

Steve Gresham (Auburn Bible Methodist Church) spoke on the importance of "Knowing God" (Phil. 3:10). Those who seek to know Him better get a better understanding of themselves and God's purpose for their lives.

Andrew Stroud (assistant pastor, Burlington Bible Church) noted that in giving the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-5), God was establishing His relations to His people, His record with His people, and His rules for His people. Rules are not meant to stifle a relationship, but to seal it, define it, and protect it.

Idolatry can involve observable idols (possessions and pleasures); or hidden idols (power, popularity, position). **Chad Snider** (Loveland Wesleyan Chapel) spoke on the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-21) who ran to Jesus, seemingly very interested in inheriting eternal life. However, there was one thing he lacked. So it is with many today. One thing can separate a person from complete victory with God.

We are thankful for the moving of the Spirit during these services and pray that the victories gained will be maintained with God's continuing help.

SEE YOU AT THE POLE

On Wednesday, September 27, at 8:00 a.m., staff and students gathered by the flagpole on the south lawn for a time of singing and prayer. This "See You At The Pole" event, led by the high school students of Aldersgate Christian Academy, was observed in solidarity with Christian high school students all around the world. According to



syatp.com, participants in both public and private schools have met annually for more than 25 years to pray for their classmates, teachers, friends, families, churches, and communities.

PHONATHON 2017

Phonathon 2017 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 \$120,245 was raised, exactly 3,000 individual pledges were made, and nearly 945 volunteer hours were logged. (See back page.)

CAMPUS KIDS SOFTBALL

President Loper and Chad Snider (pastor of Loveland Wesleyan Chapel) are coordinating softball/baseball games for GBS campus children each Monday afternoon at nearby Filson Park. This fun activity is open to 5-to-12-year-old boys and girls. ■

Funeral services were at the Overland Park Church of God (Holiness), Overland Park, KS, with burial following at Memory Gardens, Ft. Scott, KS.

HITHER AND THITHER AMONG US

Penn View Bible Institute. Daniel Durkee has been elected to serve as president of Penn View Bible Institute, Penns Creek, PA, where he had been Director of Public Relations. He will work alongside outgoing President John Zechman for several months to ensure a smooth transition. President Zechman feels that God is directing him to retire in 2018 after serving Penn View for over 25 years.

Ohio Christian University. Dr. Jon Kulaga became the 11th president of Ohio Christian University, Circleville, OH, on August 1. He most recently had been an

administrator at Asbury University, Wilmore, KY, where he served as the chief operating officer and chief academic officer for 10 years. Dr. Kulaga fills the role vacated by Dr. Mark Smith, who, after serving as president of Ohio Christian University for 12 years, accepted the call to be president of Columbia International University, Columbia, SC. Dr. Smith had previously served as a GBS trustee from 1995 to 2004. He assumed his new position on July 1.

Wesley Biblical Seminary. Dr. Chris Lohrstorfer became Vice President for Academic Affairs on July 1, 2017. Dr. Lohrstorfer is an alumnus of Wesley Biblical Seminary and has over 20 years of educational experience in higher education, both as a classroom professor and administrator. He succeeds Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gary Cockerill, who retired on June 30. ■



ON THE MOVE

Lucas Ryder was appointed Music Department Chair at Hobe Sound Bible College, Hobe Sound, FL, in August. He also assumed the position of choir director. For the previous three years, Lucas had been the registrar at the college



while being involved in the music department in both accompanying and directing roles. After graduating from GBS (BA '11) he continued his education, receiving an MM from Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN, in 2013. He is now pursuing a doctoral program at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA. He and his wife **Alanna (Smith)** (BA '12) reside in Hobe Sound. Alanna has been teaching kindergarten at Hobe Sound Christian Academy.

Dr. Troy Castle is now Associate Professor of Music at Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, IN. Previously Troy taught at Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC, for five years. He began his education with a BA



from Union Bible College, Westfield, IN, in 2002, and took additional undergraduate work at GBS (2004-06) during which time he served as the Di-

rector of Student Recruitment. He received an MM from Bob Jones University in 2008 and a DMA from Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA, in 2015. He currently resides in Marion, IN, with his wife Martha and sons Seth, Ethan, Silas, and Elliott.

Maricka Herrer (BA '16, MA '17) is on assignment as a missionary to



the Philippines for Bible Methodist Missions. After a few weeks of orientation at the home of missionaries R.G. (BA '98) and Sarah (Thomas) (BA '97)

Hutchinson on the campus of Shepherd's College, she will begin language classes in Manila. Maricka is from South Africa and has always felt that missions was an important part of her life. For her, working at Shepherd's College is a "good fit."

Jerald Glick (BA '83) is moving into another phase of ministry. He



has worked for 30 years in Christian education, the last 28 of which were at Union Bible College and Academy, Westfield, IN, where he was Music Studies Program Coordinator. His wife, **Rebecca (Burress)** (1979-83) was also fully involved in ministry, playing for and traveling with musical groups and giving piano les-

sons. Jerry and Becky will now focus on song evangelism, which they have been involved in for 35 years. They reside in Westfield, IN, and have four adult children.

ALUMNI FILL BIBLE METHODIST CONNECTION POSITIONS

The Bible Methodist Connection marked two recent transitions. On Saturday, July 8, newly elected Alabama Conference President **John Parker** (BRE '78) was presented a gavel by outgoing President Walter Hedstrom (BRE '74), who had served as Conference President for 27 years. In a Saturday celebration, the Hedstroms were presented with a retirement love offering of \$27,000—\$1,000 for each year of Conference leadership.

Chris D. Cravens (2012-14) was elected as the new president of the Heartland Conference. This transition was solemnized on Sunday, June 25, during the morning service of the annual conference at Mendon, OH. He replaced G. Clair Sams (BA '05) who had been Conference President for 16 years. ■



CONDESCENSION

A CHRISTMAS MUSICAL DRAMA

DECEMBER 8-10, 2017 | GBS.EDU



God, the Master Craftsman

by Randy Huff

"You know what you need, Randy?"

I groaned inside, prodding my ears to hear the counsel of a wise elder.

"What?"

"You need thicker skin."

I swallowed the urge to scowl and shoot back a snide, "You're not telling me something I don't know!" Suppressing the scowl merely buried it within where neglected truth always gives birth to pain and anger.

As I recently recalled that distant conversation, I saw the path so naturally avoided but stressed over and over by Solomon in Proverbs: "Correct a wise man and he will be wiser still," and, "The wise man loves correction."

Why did I resist correction? Natural youthfulness? To be sure. Carnality? Of course, on almost any nuance of definition. Stubbornness? Wrong-headedness? Yes, and yes—a bane of hazy thinking, a stunted formation of mind into which only the Spirit could breathe new life and wholeness. But how would He do it?

I hear the much-loved echo of holiness preachers across the years and believe they speak to this. But even single—or multiple—altar encounters, which comprised my idea of holiness, did not prove to be enough. I could not get free from this dislike of correction, the habit of rationalizing it, and the refusal to really listen and learn.

Could God have healed me of it in a moment? Without question, yes. I wish He would have and I would have been happy to let Him. But I didn't, and He didn't, for reasons that perhaps are not nearly as clear as we all might prefer.

Nonetheless, I have found it helpful to understand this much: my thought patterns were deeply ingrained, always pressing through in unspoken determination: "If I want to develop a thick skin, I will do it my way and in my time." These stubborn ideas held me in a death-grip, and only the knocks and suffering of life could eventually make me realize that only a renewing of mind would set me free and bring change. As I told a friend, "I hated it when my elder gave me that advice. I wanted nothing of his ideas! *I was determined to grow character by my own effort!*"

Alas, this never happens because we always get in the way.

Character growth puts self to death and requires too much pain. On our own we (p15)➡

NOVEMBER 2017

*A*s a child, I was often bored with church. The amusing story is told that during one particularly long missionary service, looking for something interesting to hold my attention, I finally found it. Leaning over to my dad who was sitting beside me, I whispered an exciting bit of trivia in his ear: “Dad, there are six BALD HEADS here!” I don’t think it enhanced his worship experience.

In any worship service, in any denomination, there is always the possibility that the relatively SHORT time set aside during a busy week for corporate worship will become commonplace as the worshipers absentmindedly, almost mechanically, follow the bulletin through the familiar routine. Are there new, creative ways of worshipping God that can add meaning to an otherwise stale format? Mark Batterson once stated, “There are more ways of doing church than we have ever thought of!” Do you agree?

Here are a few suggestions to help folks concentrate on intentional worship and eliminate distractions.

1. MAKE ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS BEFORE WORSHIP BEGINS.

Too often announcements become quite lengthy and can actually hinder the Spirit. Once during a camp meeting service, following a particularly Spirit-filled musical offering, the Holy Spirit was moving as people lifted their hands in praise. A loud announcement was suddenly made from the podium. “IF YOU ARE DRIVING A WHITE PONTIAC YOUR LIGHTS ARE ON.” The atmosphere of praise quickly dissipated.

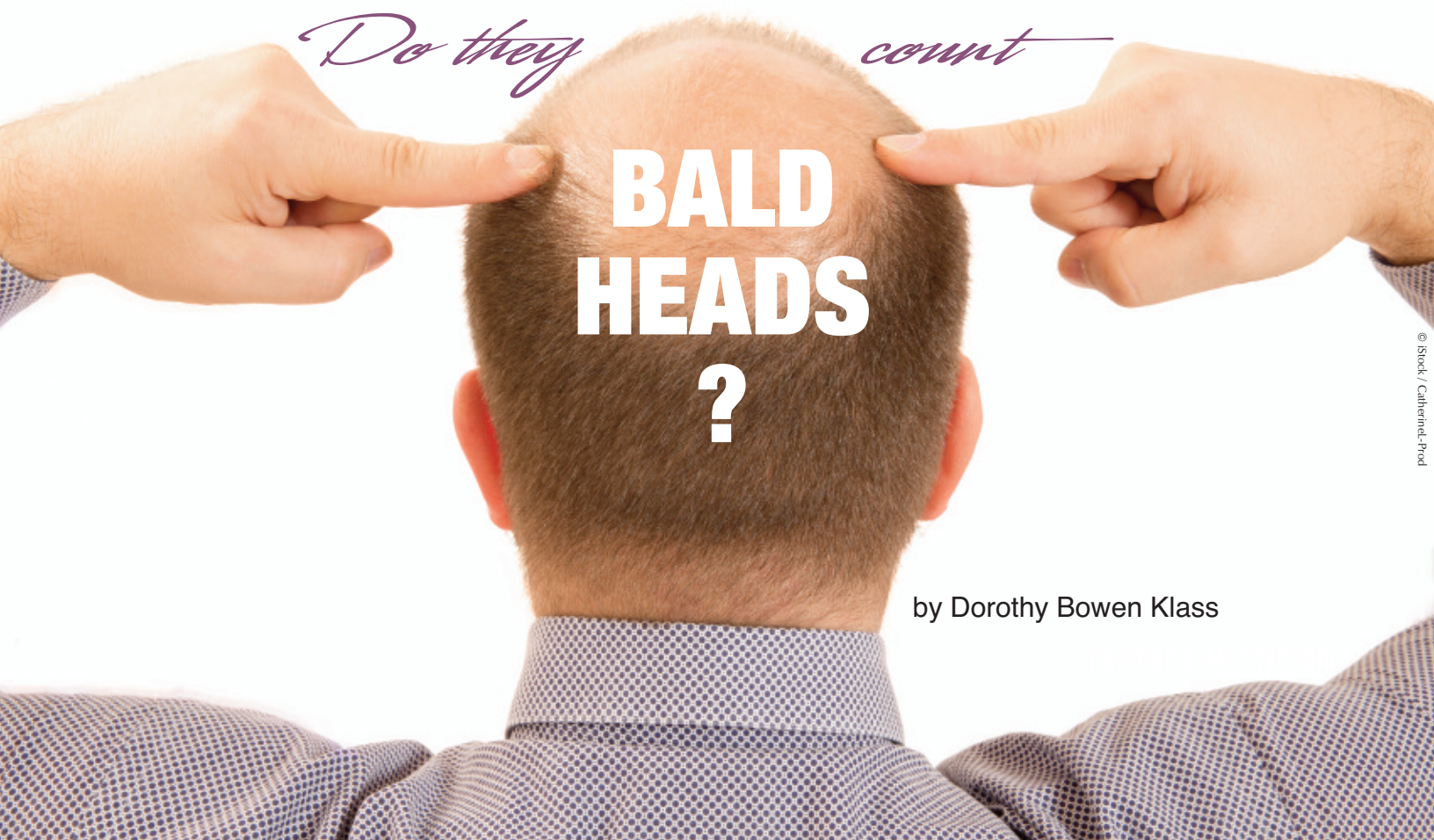
I know of a Presbyterian church where ALL announcements are made at the very beginning of the service. Then the pastor declares, “AND NOW LET US COME TOGETHER TO WORSHIP GOD.” A moment of silence gives a distinct line between the mundane announcements and focused worship.

2. ELIMINATE LONG SPOKEN PRAYER REQUESTS BEFORE PRAYER, BUT INVOLVE THE CONGREGATION IN ACTUAL PRAYER TIME.

During the pastoral prayer at a local United Methodist Church, the minister pauses in the middle of his prayer and says, “And now we lift before You the names of those on our hearts.” At this time the names and prayer concerns are called out randomly from the congregation and brought to the Lord.

3. MAKE PRAYER TIME A SACRED TIME.

I have always wondered how God feels when we are speaking to Him as a body of believers and yet, for many, it is nothing more than a time to “take care of business.” I have witnessed DURING prayer (with one eye open) the singers walking to the platform, the organist and pianist conferring, the pastor whispering to the evangelist, people walking out with babies, and all ages leaving to visit the restroom or get a drink! THIS IS SAD! Young ones are taught by example—“Prayer time is the time we move around.” Surely God must be hurt by our irreverence and unconcern when we do not have a sense of awe while we are speaking to HIM.



by Dorothy Bowen Klass

The first time I attended a large Christian conference made up of various denominations, I was impressed when, during the opening prayer, people stopped in their tracks wherever they were and bowed their heads reverently. There was an absolute stillness, no one moved until the amen was spoken.

I also fondly recall the prayer bell at Clinton Holiness Camp Meeting which sounded at 2 p.m. every day. At that moment a hush fell over the grounds as people everywhere, from the first peal sounding forth, immediately stopped what they were doing and prayed. The bell rang very slowly for five minutes as people paused in silent reverence for prayer.

We need to return to a fear of the Lord during our prayer time. Do you remember years ago when the pastor would say, "And now we will have a SEASON of prayer"? We would reverently kneel, several would pray as they felt led, the pastor would close, and then all would linger on their knees as a chorus was sung. There was a heavenly sense of God's presence and finally the pastor would say, "Shall we rise." Now, instead of a SEASON of prayer, there is only a WORD of prayer, and God is not honored DURING the WORD of prayer.

As folks grow older it becomes increasingly difficult to kneel. The Lutheran Church has forward kneeling benches which are convenient and make kneeling a painless and meaningful experience for most.

4. HAVE A TIME FOR CONGREGANTS TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS OR TESTIMONIES FOLLOWING THE SERMON.

The Friends Church has an interactive time during the service called Open Worship for testimonies and exhortations. The pastor will write a query about the sermon and have it displayed on a screen. During Open Worship, people rise as they feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to comment on the sermon. For example, if the pastor's sermon was on God's Grace, the query could be "How can you demonstrate God's grace to others?" Individuals share what God is saying as it relates to everyday life in a practical way. This gives people an opportunity to ponder the sermon just preached instead of rushing out for lunch and most likely forgetting the Word spoken just moments ago.

5. INCLUDE LITURGICAL ELEMENTS DURING WORSHIP.

Including liturgical elements will involve the congregation and teach the children important truths. The reciting of The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles' Creed, or the Nicene Creed gives a sense of unity as the corporate body speaks as one.

In conclusion, let me assure you that I do not count bald heads during the worship service! I hope no one in your church does either! May we recognize a stale (boring because it is always the same) form of worship and be willing to make creative changes to show the adoration, love, and respect that God commands. ■

Dorothy Bowen Klass (BA '76) taught at GBS from 1976-1980. She is the music director for Christ Lutheran Church in Greensboro, NC, and music teacher at Neighbor's Grove Christian Academy in Asheboro, NC. She lives in Thomasville, NC, with her husband Mark.

➡(p13) will *never* exert the necessary will. We'd be near masochists to do so! Indeed, many ascetic monks fell into this very trap, believing too much in the power of self-denial to effect character transformation. Only God can do it. His tool chest is massive; His skill and tender care are legendary. And while He certainly works transformation at the altar and in crisis moments, it is never *all* done there. In fact, character growth is never all done.

How have I learned thick skin? Tears. How have I learned to give a soft answer to anger? By feeling the dagger of hateful words. How have I learned to receive correction and counsel? Exasperation and despair with my own efforts. How have I learned a scintilla of humility? Painful, repeated humiliation. This is not something we orchestrate, for on our own we would run away. But when He helps us stay the course, we begin to see with growing and happy acknowledgment that He is indeed the Master Craftsman who works to shape and build us. He knows which tool to use and when. At times He is a "zealous pruner," for He knows "Who, falsely tender, spares the knife will spoil the rose."* If we give Him "half a chance" God will not let us spoil. He has something else in mind, something very good.

This is no new message. It is clear in Scripture and Christian experience through the ages, as any time-tested devotional repeatedly attests. Nor do I question the power and truth of our holiness heritage and its emphasis on the crisis work of God. I beg only to add this emphasis so desperately needed: God's work in our lives is always ongoing, He is the Master Craftsman, and His work takes time. How wonderful it would be if we could grow maturity at the altar, or with a word of counsel, or in one painful failure. We cannot. It requires life, and all that life is made of. Happily, we are in His good hands, and *that* is the best word of all! ■

Randy Huff serves as pastor of North Pole Missionary Chapel in North Pole, AK. Randy is a graduate of Hobe Sound Bible College and Wesley Biblical Seminary and has served on staff at HSBC and Kentucky Mountain Bible College. He and his wife, Jane, have two sons, Lawrence and Elliot.

* From the poem "The Pruner" by William Arthur Dunkerley (1852-1941), a prolific English journalist, novelist, and poet who wrote under his own name, and also as John Oxenham for his poetry, novels, and hymn-writing.

Dear Phil

JESUS AND TRANSGENDER IDENTITY

I recently saw a Huffington Post article that claimed (1) that Jesus' statement, "There are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb...He who is able to accept this, let him accept it" (Matt. 19:12 NASB), includes people who are born transgender and (2) that expressing their transgender identity is acceptable. Is this true? Also, what is your opinion of the Nashville Statement? —Sarah

Dear Sarah,

To answer your question, I looked at the occurrences of the word *eunuch* in Greek up to and just shortly following the time of Jesus. I also checked all the classical, NT, and patristic Greek lexicons I could access. What I found was that *eunuch* is consistently used in two ways in Greek. First, to designate a court or palace official (Gen. 39:1; 40:2, 7; 1 Sam. 8:15). Second, to denote a male who had been castrated (Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 5.2.28) or was born without the ability to beget children (Matt. 19:12).

In the Mishna and its associated literature, Jewish rabbis discussed eunuchs, intersex persons, and androgynes. In all cases, the rabbis distinguished eunuchs, whether born so or castrated, from persons whose gender was confused due to the development of both male and female sexual features (intersex) or whose gender was uncertain due to other physical reasons (androgyne). They never used the term *eunuch* to refer to transgender persons, and they prescribed the death penalty for eunuchs who engaged in homosexual behavior.

The ancient world was familiar with all forms of transgender and homosexual behavior. However, the term *eunuch* was never used to label such persons. While undoubtedly there were eunuchs who engaged in sexual perversions, they weren't called eunuchs because of their sexual behavior; they were called eunuchs because of their physical condition.

It is true that various ancient authors believed that eunuchs were neither male nor female but somewhere between, or something else altogether (e.g., Philo, Lucian). However, these beliefs were rooted in non-biblical ideas about what constitutes male and female. Scripture knows of only two genders/sexes: male and female. Eunuchs are males with damaged or missing sexual organs.

The bottom line is that all the evidence, both biblical and extra-biblical, indicates that the term *eunuch* was not used to refer to intersex, androgyne, or transgender persons, let alone those practicing homosexual behavior. All the standard Greek lexicons come to this conclusion as well. We can, therefore, confidently say that Jesus was not referring to or implying anything about transgender

behavior or persons when he said, "There are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it" (Matt. 19:12 NASB). The last phrase means some non-eunuchs will be able to be as though they are eunuchs, i.e., not marry, for the sake of the kingdom.

The *Huffington Post* article you referenced raises another issue. Our culture currently uses the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, etc. to establish a person's identity based on their sexual orientation or practice. I believe Christians must resist cultural pressure to identify people on the basis of sexual practice. Our sexual practices do not determine our gender or our identity. Further, a person who practices homosexual behavior is still a human made in God's image, the object of God's love, someone for whom Christ died, and one who by God's grace may be washed, sanctified, and justified, thus becoming our brother or sister (1 Cor. 6:9-11). God does not determine people's identities or their gender by their sexual practices. We should not either.

The Nashville Statement affirms traditional Christian values on sexuality and gender roles. It outlines Scripture's positive view of human sexuality and marriage and its negative view of all sexual behavior outside of heterosexual, monogamous marriage (see esp. Article 6). It also addresses how Christians should express Christ's love to those who suffer from same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria. I believe the statement is well-crafted, doctrinally sound, irenic, and worthy of support.

Blessings,
Philip Brown ■

A. Philip Brown II is the Graduate Program director and a member of the ministerial faculty at God's Bible School and College.



RECLAIMING THE RAINBOW

The apologetics ministry behind the “Ark Encounter” theme park in northern Kentucky is reclaiming the rainbow. The park’s 510-foot-long ark is lit up in rainbow colors in the evenings “as a testament to the true meaning of the rainbow.” These days the rainbow is more likely to be seen as a symbol of pride for homosexuals and their supporters. However, Christians know that it is actually a sign of God’s promise following The Flood described in Genesis 6-9.

HAPPINESS AND GENEROSITY

A study posted online at www.nature.com shows a neural link between generosity and happiness. Scientists conducted an experiment with 50 people at a lab in Zurich, Switzerland. The subjects were promised a set amount of money per week for four weeks. Half were asked to commit to spending the money on other people, while the rest could plan how they would spoil themselves. No money was actually received or spent by either group. After committing to spending, the participants replied to questions while their brains were being scanned. The researchers examined activity in various areas of the brain. The group that committed to giving money away reported being happier than self-spenders. At the

same time, MRI scans revealed that activity in the area of their brain linked to generosity triggered a response in another area related to happiness. The message? Don’t hoard; be happy!

THE NASHVILLE STATEMENT

On August 29, the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood released a 14-point declaration called the “Nashville Statement.” The statement addresses issues of gender and human sexuality from a biblical foundation and has been affirmed by a coalition of evangelical pastors, teachers, and theologians. However, others have been very critical. *The New Republic* went so far as to declare it to be the “religious right’s death rattle.” Find it at <https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement>.

U.S. CHURCH AFFILIATION IN DECLINE

A Gallup survey shows that the number of Christians who say they belong to a specific denomination has dropped from 50% in 2000 to 30% in 2016. At the same time, a number of surveys have shown a rising demographic of Americans called “nones”—those who claim no religious identification at all—and their numbers have doubled in 16 years: 10% in 2000 and 20% in 2016. ■



student focus

JUDAH YUCADDI, the son of a Philippine pastor, was involved in ministry when then-President Avery visited his country and invited Judah to come to GBS to study music. He immediately said YES “with a big smile on my face.” The reason for his smile was because he knew that GBS offered a “quality education,” and had “outstanding instructors, professors, and staff.” Also important to him was the fact that GBS also focuses on spiritual transformation as well as his field of specialization.

After four years, Judah says that GBS has helped him to grow in his spiritual life, develop his skills and proficiencies in music, and improve his social life. While he still has “shortcomings and flaws,” Judah is thankful for God’s patience in working with him. Also the GBS staff and student body “encourages you when you are down.”

Judah’s dream is to be a music teacher/minister in the Philippines, sharing the word of God through music. ■

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
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Cincinnati, OH 45202

or give online anytime at
www.gbs.edu/givenow

How to Shorten and Sharpen Your Sermons

by David Murray

“Leave space and say less.”

That’s the advice TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) talks specialist Nicholas Negroponte gives to new TED speakers. It tracks with what President Woodrow Wilson said when he was asked how long it took him to prepare a speech:

That depends on the length of the speech. If it is a 10-minute speech, it takes me all of two weeks to prepare it; if it is a half-hour speech, it takes me a week; if I can talk as long as I want to, it requires no preparation at all. I am ready now.

That’s why, whenever you hear a sermon that goes on too long, the reason is not that the preacher prepared too much. It’s that he prepared too little. It takes much more time to prepare a 40-minute sermon than a 60-minute sermon.

I usually have to spend about 2-3 hours cutting material out of most of my sermons. It’s the most demanding and painful part of the preparation, yet it’s these extra few hours that make the difference between an average sermon and a good sermon.

TED speakers are allowed a maximum of 18 minutes. The organizers have found it’s “short enough to hold people’s attention, including on the Internet, and precise enough to be taken seriously. But it’s also long enough to say something that matters.”

Now, I’m not advocating for 18 minute sermons (most congregations have been trained well enough to listen for longer), but most preachers would benefit from being forced to preach an 18-minute sermon from time to time.

According to Chris Anderson, author of *TED Talks: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking*, some TED speakers make the mistake of just speaking twice as fast, as they try to cram a 40-minute speech into 18 minutes. The result is usually a dry, conceptual, and superficial speech that falls flat. As Anderson puts it:

Overstuffed equals underexplained. To say something interesting, you have to take the time to do at least two things: (1) Show why it matters.... What’s the question you’re trying to answer, the problem you’re trying to solve, the experience you’re trying to share? (2) Flesh out each point you make with real examples, stories, facts.

But this all takes time, which means the only option is to slash the number of topics covered to a single connected thread—your throughline. The result is “you cover less, but the impact will actually be significantly greater.”

Anderson tells the story of one of the most popular TED speakers, Brené Brown, who also struggled to meet TED’s tight time demands. She recommends this simple formula:

Plan your talk. Then cut it by half. Once you’ve grieved the loss of half of your talk, cut it another 50 percent. It’s seductive to think about how much you can fit into 18 minutes. The better question for me is, “What can you unpack in a meaningful way in 18 minutes?”

I’ve often dreamed of a “TED talks for preachers,” where we would be forced to “leave space and say less.” The long-term effect would not be more 18-minute sermons, but more 40-minute sermons that feel like 18 minutes rather than 80. ■

David Murray is a pastor, seminary professor, and author. This article is from his blog, headhearhand.org, and is used here with permission.





HOW TO AVOID SHIPWRECK

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

by Allan P. Brown, Chair

GBS Division of Ministerial Education

Scripture—1 Timothy 1:5: “Now the end [goal] of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good [clear] conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”

What is your conscience? How does it function? Can you trust it? Is it a safe guide to follow? These are only a few of the many questions one could ask.

In the simplest of terms, the conscience is the inner “voice” or judgment that assists in distinguishing right from wrong. It is the faculty which warns you that you are doing something wrong, or neglecting to do something you should.

Scripture reveals much about the importance of one’s conscience. It teaches us that a biblically trained conscience is a good guide (1 Tim. 1:5; Acts 23:1). And if properly trained, it also acts as a motivating force (Rom. 2:14-15). However, the conscience must be educated by the Scriptures (1 Cor. 4:4; Psa. 119:11). If one is not careful, it can be damaged, either by hardening or searing (1 Tim. 1:18-19). Further, one’s sense of assurance of salvation and happiness is based upon a clear conscience (2 Cor. 1:12). In this message we will briefly explore each of these aspects of the conscience.

A BIBLICALLY TRAINED CONSCIENCE IS A GOOD GUIDE

One of the primary goals of Scripture is to enable Christians to have genuine faith, to love God and their fellow humans out of a pure heart, and to keep their conscience clear (1 Tim. 1:5). In fact, a clear conscience is so important that Paul warned Timothy

that failure to keep one’s conscience clear would inevitably result in spiritual shipwreck. He then names two such shipwrecks (1 Tim. 1:18-20).

Paul states that God used his own biblically trained conscience to guide him. In Romans 9:1 he asserted that the Holy Spirit gave him inward assurance that what he was writing to the Roman church was “the truth in Christ,” and contained no deceit or falsehood. He was guided by a God-given inner assurance from his conscience.

Paul made keeping his conscience clear a daily imperative. He said, “Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts 24:16). A conscience void of offence toward God is a “clear” conscience; there is no inner awareness of disobeying God or failing to obey God in any matter. A conscience void of offence toward men includes an inner awareness of treating others properly and a confidence that no one can point their finger and say, “You did me wrong and you have made no attempt to make it right.” Toward the end of his life, Paul testified to the Sanhedrin and to others that he had “lived in all good conscience before God” for his entire Christian life (Acts 23:1).

A BIBLICALLY TRAINED CONSCIENCE SERVES AS A MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

A scripturally trained conscience sharpens one’s ability to discern good from evil. The Apostle John records that scribes and Pharisees, experts in the Law of Moses, realized their own hypocrisy by the working of their conscience. As they listened to Jesus’ challenge, “He who is without sin among you, cast the first stone,” John records that they were “convicted by their own conscience” (John 8:9). As a result, they were moved to reexamine their condemnation of a guilty woman.

Every person is born with a God-given conscience. It is not trained, but it does have some awareness of right and wrong. Paul explains: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another; In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Rom. 2:14-16). In other words, the role of the conscience is to “approve” or “disapprove” of one’s own thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

YOU MUST EDUCATE YOUR CONSCIENCE BY GAINING SCRIPTURAL KNOWLEDGE

It is possible to have a “clear” conscience but, from God’s perspective, be guilty. Paul wrote about

this danger when he said, “My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me” (1 Cor. 4:4). The standard of behavior, and the standard for our conscience, is the Word of God. Ignorance of God’s Word does not excuse wrong behavior, even if a person’s conscience is “clear” while he is doing wrong.

The Psalmist gives us good counsel when he writes, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee [God]” (Psa. 119:11). The Scriptures are designed to educate our conscience. Paul wrote, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16). The Word of God serves as a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path (Psa. 119:105). When we are taught by God’s Word, our conscience becomes more and more attuned to God’s standard of right and wrong. It is as the Psalm says, “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Psa. 119:130). To such a biblically educated conscience Paul says, “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts [be the umpire]” (Col. 3:15). The peace of Christ is experienced by having a biblically informed clear conscience.

YOU CAN DAMAGE YOUR CONSCIENCE

Paul warns Christians that part of their civil responsibility is to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment, but also as a matter of conscience (Rom. 13:5). The term “conscience” refers here to the believer’s knowledge of God’s will and purposes. He had just explained in Romans 13:1 that secular rulers are appointed by God and they function as His servants (Rom. 13:4). Therefore, the necessity for a Christian to submit to government is based upon the knowledge that such submission is the will of God (1 Pet. 2:13-15). To know to do good, and to do it not is sin (James 4:17). And known disobedience always clouds the conscience.

A person who has not had his conscience biblically trained can have what the Bible calls a “weak” conscience. Such a person can have a “guilty conscience” by thinking something is wrong that God’s Word does not condemn. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and warned about using their influence to cause a “weak” Christian to sin. Paul illustrated this truth by discussing the pros and cons of eating meat offered to idols. Paul wrote that if a Christian, who did not fully understand that eating meat offered to idols was not sin, believed it was sin, but went against their conscience and ate, they would be sinning and their conscience would be “defiled” (1 Cor. 8:7). Then Paul

warned that if you sin against your brothers or sisters in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ (1 Cor. 8:12).

Paul advises his readers that, in order to keep their conscience clear, they should eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any questions (1 Cor. 10:25). One must not defile his conscience. To emphasize this truth, Paul said that whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin (Rom. 14:23).

To emphasize the seriousness of keeping one’s conscience clear, Paul warned Timothy about people who had departed from the faith and as a result had so damaged their conscience that they now believed lies. “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION AND PERSONAL HAPPINESS REQUIRE A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

Paul spoke of the inward assurance and personal happiness a clear conscience brought him: “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward” (2 Cor. 1:12). He testified to Timothy that he served God with a clear conscience (2 Tim. 1:3). And the Apostle John wrote that a clear conscience produces confidence toward God (1 John 3:20-21). As Christians, we are to “hold the mystery of the faith with a pure [clear] conscience (1 Tim. 3:9).

CONCLUSION

We have a duty not only to keep our conscience clear, but also to make sure our conscience has been taught by God’s Word. We do this by prayer and following the teachings of Scripture. If we neglect these, we will end up with either a misinformed conscience, which won’t be a godly guide, or a weak conscience, which sees sin where there is no sin. The former condition leads to carelessness, the latter condition to uncertainty and spiritual bondage. Such conditions are signs of a spiritually malformed conscience. The good news is that such a condition can be corrected by large doses of scriptural knowledge administered by a wise, godly counselor. In all your activities, keep your conscience clear!

So, if your conscience is not clear, why not immediately take care of all troubling concerns and ask God to help you to keep a clear conscience? ■

Homecoming 2017



"A TIME TO RECONNECT"

The Alumni Executive Council chose "A Time to Reconnect" as the theme for the annual alumni gathering held this year on October 13-14. The festivities began at 5:00 on Friday evening in the campus cafeteria with a scrumptious dinner. People lingered over the meal, catching up with old friends and sharing precious memories before moving to the Adcock Chapel for the keynote service.

Pre-service music began at 6:30, and the Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble, under the direction of David Hartkopf, treated the congregation to a selection of gospel music.

At 7:00 p.m., Keith Waggoner I, president of the National Alumni Association, officially welcomed the assembled guests. As pictures of the 50-year graduates (1967) and 25-year graduates (1992) scrolled across the screen, Waggoner publicly recognized those in attendance from the two honored classes.

Waggoner reminisced about being "in awe of" one particular singing group during his GBS high school years (the 1970s). The Stetler Trio had been composed of brothers Dan, David, and Darrell Stetler, whom Waggoner described as "first class—absolutely professional." He then welcomed the Stetler Trio to the platform to sing Mosie Lister's "I'll leave it all behind" and Bill Gaither's "Something Beautiful." (Dan's son Paul sang in the place of David, who was unable to attend, and Paul also accompanied the trio.)

Dr. A. Philip Brown II received the annual Staff/Faculty Appreciation Award. A member of the GBS faculty since 2002, "Dr. Phil" was lauded as one of the most knowledgeable, influential, and passionate professors to have taught at this institution. Especially noted was his involvement in developing the GBS Graduate Program, which he now directs. In graciously accepting the honor, Dr. Phil said, "It is a delight for me to invest in lives that are going to make a difference in eternity."



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Former GBS Public Relations Director Larry Jewett warmly memorialized Densel Ray Ball II, who had been one of the most popular students and staff members as well as Jewett's "right-hand man" in the PR Department during the 1980s. Densel had recently died as a result of a tragic automobile accident. A successful and sacrificial pastor in the Kansas City area who had also worked in the mortgage and banking industry, his trademarks were "caring and compassion." More than 1,000 attended his memorial service in Kansas City, and several hundred gathered to memorialize him in his hometown of St. Albans, West Virginia.

Recently installed GBS President Rodney Loper took the podium to address the gathered alumni. He expressed his commitment to making GBS a *safe* place, a *sacred* place, and a *sending* place. "GBS must never becoming a museum—a place where we can only point out what once was. What I am interested in is a movement of people, young and old alike, who will embrace our present age and look to the future to make a lasting impact for the kingdom of God."

Three strategic priorities were announced: to strengthen our enrollment, to invest in our staff and faculty, and to enhance our facilities. "As I saw you coming in, I couldn't help but think about a connection center at the back end of this great auditorium—a place with overflow seating, space to display some of our archives, restrooms on the main floor, and, yes, an elevator that goes up to the classroom floor—and maybe on up to the Men's Residence Hall."

Loper also reaffirmed plans for a Ministry Arts Building to house the Music Division. Once that is accomplished, the current Music Studio would be repurposed as a campus welcome center and a home for the ministerial and graduate programs. Other longterm objectives include strategic property acquisition and a more attractive entrance to campus. He admitted that up to \$6 million would be needed to realize these dreams, but reminded the crowd that "we're not building *our* kingdom—we're building *His*."

Before President Loper took the offering, he encouraged participation in the Sustaining Donor Program. A goal has been set to have 1,000 participants by 2025.

After an outstanding offertory by Jessica Smith (piano) and Paul Stetler (organ), the College Choir took the platform. Led by director Tim Crater, they sang Bill Gaither's "I can never praise Him enough" and Richard Smallwood's "Trust Me."

The Distinguished Alumnus Award was presented to Dr. Daniel Stetler. Oldest son of the much-loved professor Kenneth Stetler and his wife, Jewel Lamb, Dan grew up on the GBS campus and earned three degrees from the college: music (1974), education (1975), and theology (1976). He also earned an MA in New Testament Studies at Cincinnati Christian University and was awarded the Doctor of Divinity from Wesley Biblical Seminary for his



Densel Ray Ball II



Class of 1967 (Saturday Alumni Breakfast) back row L-R: Joyce (Voss) Downing, Edgar Bryan, Bob Van Cise, Gerald Bell, Lois (Starr) Bell, David Gardner, Ron Shew; front row L-R: Beverly (Hopper) Tolle, Delores (Van Cise) Conover, Sharon (Hughes) Houck, Diane (Kirklingburg) Beal, Linda (Burton) Scarbrough, Barbara (Hopkins) Brock, Mae (Beckwith) Terpenning, Lloyd Terpenning, Ray Campbell.

Class of 1992 (Saturday Alumni Breakfast) L-R: Asa Sherman, Randy Winkler, Carol Gardner, Sheri Bell, Faye (Duddek) Tillis, Krista (Fourman) Jeffries, Dixie (Weingard) Epp, Johnna (LeBaron) Shaferly, Mike Pepple.



years of distinguished service to Hobe Sound Bible College and the holiness movement.

Dan is married to Joan Cain (BA '76), and they have five children—all currently involved in ministry: Aimee, Paul, Elisa, Julia, and Sarah. Dan pastored the Bible Methodist Church, Franklin, OH, for 20 years and taught at GBS (1987-1995). Since 1995 he has been president of Hobe Sound Bible College while also serving the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches in various capacities, including connectional chairman from 2006 to 2014.

Dr. Stetler accepted the Alumnus Award with gratitude: "Having grown up here, I obviously am just deluged with memories.... I got saved right over there [pointing to the boys' side of the altar]. So many things in my life were begun here. I can't adequately express how much I appreciate the people who gave sacrificially and served through some very strenuous and difficult times.... Those kind of people have marked God's Bible School across many, many years....

"It is a privilege and an honor to serve alongside President Rodney Loper.... [He] is a very, very special friend. I listened to him tonight, and I thought, 'He is saying just exactly what I would be saying.' At one time that bothered me. I thought, '...We're going to be wanting the same teachers and promoting the same philosophy.' But then I thought, 'Wait a minute. We are in this work together for the kingdom of God, for the glory of the name of Jesus Christ, and every young person that we can touch is going to make a difference in this world.' So I want you to know, we lock arms, we strive for the goal, and, by God's grace, we live for His glory."

An alumni choir under the direction of Music Chair Emeritus Garen Wolf closed the service with a rousing rendition of Bill Gaither's "Redemption Draweth Nigh." A Graeter's ice cream social followed in the dining hall. Later, Kent Stetler and Anthony Webb served as hosts to the final program of the evening—a talent show featuring acts by students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

Saturday activities featured a reunion breakfast buffet at 8:30 a.m. in the Martin Room for the classes of 1967 and 1992. Following the breakfast, alumni from the honored classes made brief remarks about their lives since graduation, and each was given a small gift.

Beginning at 10:30 a.m., the campus proper as well as Young Street between Channing and Ringgold teemed with people visiting the booths of various college and high school organizations. GBS supplied hamburgers and hotdogs, but a wide selection of other food was available for purchase. Children especially enjoyed the bounce house, slide, and petting zoo. At 11:00, the bus departed with those who wished to participate in a Cincinnati bus tour hosted by alumnus Zach Crater.

As activities wound down on the beautiful, warm, and sunny fall afternoon, alumni departed from the beloved Hilltop having been refreshed by God's presence and the fellowship of new and old acquaintances. ■



A STOREHOUSE OF GOODNESS

"How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You... for those who take refuge in You."—Psalm 31:19 NASB

It must be the stories I heard as a child, the ones about the farmers who worked so hard during the harvest, the communities that came together to gather the crops before the first hard freeze, and the feasts that happened afterward, that conjure up my mental images of the bounty associated with harvest time. I can almost smell the dusty barns bulging to the brim with the hard earned produce of the fruitful fields. Visions of cornucopias spilling onto tables laden with mouthwatering morsels dance in my head. Harvest means plenty, and it also means that food will be stored away for the barren days of winter ahead. In days of want there will be a supply.

After pouring out his woes to God in Psalm 31, David does an important thing. He reminds himself of who is hearing his prayer. He remembers that the God to whom he is baring his soul is good. In fact, he says, God's goodness is so vast that He stores it up for His children—an endless supply for those who trust Him and acknowledge Him as Lord. He will never run out of goodness. Like the proverbial overflowing barns from a bountiful harvest, the storehouse of God's goodness promises sustenance in times of need. In cold days of trouble, the reserves will never dwindle. Through winds of adversity, the stores will stay secure. So feast on His goodness, my friends. His storehouse is full! ■

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

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Dear GBS family,

Thank you for your generous support of our annual Phonathon! Your gifts enabled us to raise \$120,245. 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,
GBS Students

