October 2017



bostom hoper



about this issue

AHA! MOMENTS

Thile a student at GBS, I remember having several "aha! moments." As the assistant pastor of the Colerain Avenue Mission, I diligently worked to have something worth saying, whether it was in a sermon or a Sunday school lesson. However, the sermons proved more challenging, as there was pressure to present the content in a well-packaged outline. I had heard about the great Alexander Maclaren, who was said to have had a "golden hammer" with which he would tap a text, resulting in natural, proper divisions with excellent headings for preaching points. I was no Maclaren. But on one occasion....

I distinctly remember when it happened. I was reading Psalm 37. Verse 27 says, "Depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore." Wow! I didn't even have to resort to a hammer! No tapping required! This was simple, but powerful—and alliterative! I felt like a young Wingrove Taylor! Depart from evil. Do good. Dwell for evermore.

I remember another "aha! moment" I had while reading Hebrews chapter 11. I noticed an effectual order: faith, action, result. For example, Noah was "warned of God of things not seen as yet." Water coming down from the heavens? A flood that would destroy all flesh? These things had never happened before. But Noah had faith. He chose to believe God. His faith moved him to action—he "prepared an ark to the saving of his house." The result was that his actions were the avenue by which God saved for Himself a remnant to repopulate the earth.

You can examine all of the accounts of those heroes of faith and notice similar progressions. Each was presented with a situation that called for an exercise of faith. That faith in turn incited actions leading to God's providential result. I was struck by the fact that faith came BEFORE the God-ordained "things to come." God always has a reciprocal response to our faith and obedient actions which flow from it.

Five hundred years ago, the Protestant Reformation began as Martin Luther posted his Ninety-Five Theses on the church door. This was a call to faith—to faith in God alone, and not in works. For Luther, his "aha! moment" came while reading Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith."

Enjoy this special issue on the Reformation! —KF

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COVER: 1528 painting of Martin Luther by Lucas Cranach the Elder



THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

by Rodney Loper, President

hristianity by its very nature looks forward. The "blessed hope" has been planted If firmly in the hearts of believers. We join saints of all the ages as we long for that glorious day when we will leave this sin-darkened world for our eternal reward. Think about the reunion with family and friends, and bowing at the feet of Jesus—our Savior! No wonder the songwriter wrote, "What a day that will be!"

Even as we look forward to our eternal tomorrow, we also realize that we have a responsibility to plan for our earthly tomorrow. Many stand ready to coach us on planning for our earthly future. We give a lot of thought and effort to retirement plans, investment strategies, and estate planning—as well we should. But there is more to planning for the future than just making provisions for the accruements of this life. One must also consider direction. A comedian posed the humorous question, "Where will we be when we get where we are going?" When taken in light of eternity, this is quite profound. Yet we all know people who seem to be oblivious to the direction their life is taking them.

I believe that individuals, families, and churches ought to be asking this question. Perhaps the reason churches close their doors, families walk away from their heritage, and individuals lose their identity is because they have quit looking to the future— "where they will be when they get where they are going." Preachers of yesteryear would thunder about the danger of allowing the things of this life to determine our eternal destiny. This warning was merited then and remains applicable today. Yes, the fingerlike tentacles of materialistic living have adversely affected many Christians.

It is critical that, when we evaluate our present direction, we must be sure the trajectory of our life

is headed towards the ultimate goal—heaven. While the goal is clearly defined in Scripture, it may not always be clear in the way we conduct our lives. The guiding question ought to be, "Do all my priorities and daily choices reflect the glory of God?" While a one-time decision is sufficient to start us on this journey, the journey itself is made up of countless daily decisions that ultimately determine our destiny!

But Christianity doesn't only look forward; it also looks backward. In fact, all that we believe is based on a historical document—the Bible!

Beyond Scripture, we have the history of the Church that helps guide us to be what He wants us to be and helps guide us where we need to go! Timothy Jones expressed it like this, "God's activity, then, is not a blank ocean between the Apostolic shores and our modern day. So we must remember—and search for our roots in—the luminaries, risk takers, and movements of the Church through the centuries. To neglect them is not only to risk repeating past errors, it is to fall victim to a narrowing amnesia that leaves us floundering." In other words, we are not on an island. We are standing on the shoulders of saints throughout the ages. If we neglect history, we will at best wallow around in our own self-sufficiency, and at worst succumb to any popular "Christian" whim. When we neglect our history, we tend to view ourselves as the church rather than the Church—uppercase "C." The danger here is real.

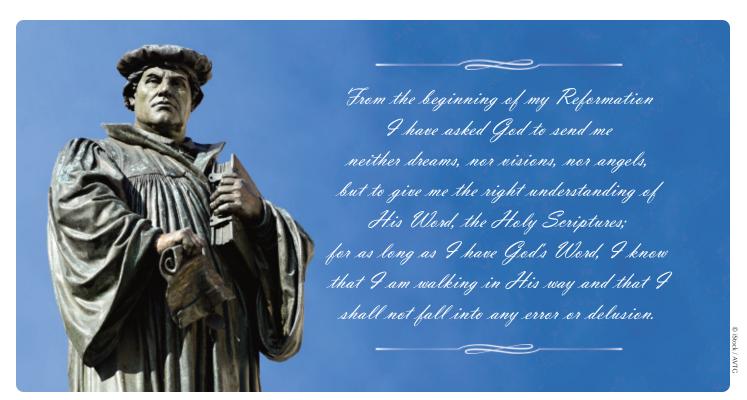
There are two possible errors that we must guard against. First is the danger of holding vain traditions. By this I mean traditions that have no scriptural basis. Often when you ask the Amish why they do or don't do something, they will answer, "Tradition." Let me be clear—

there is nothing scriptural or spiritual about identifying with a specific period in time. Part of the beauty of Scripture is that it is timeless and cultureless. If our manner of living is simply a reflection of a bygone era, we are no different from the Amish, blindly following tradition for the sake of tradition.

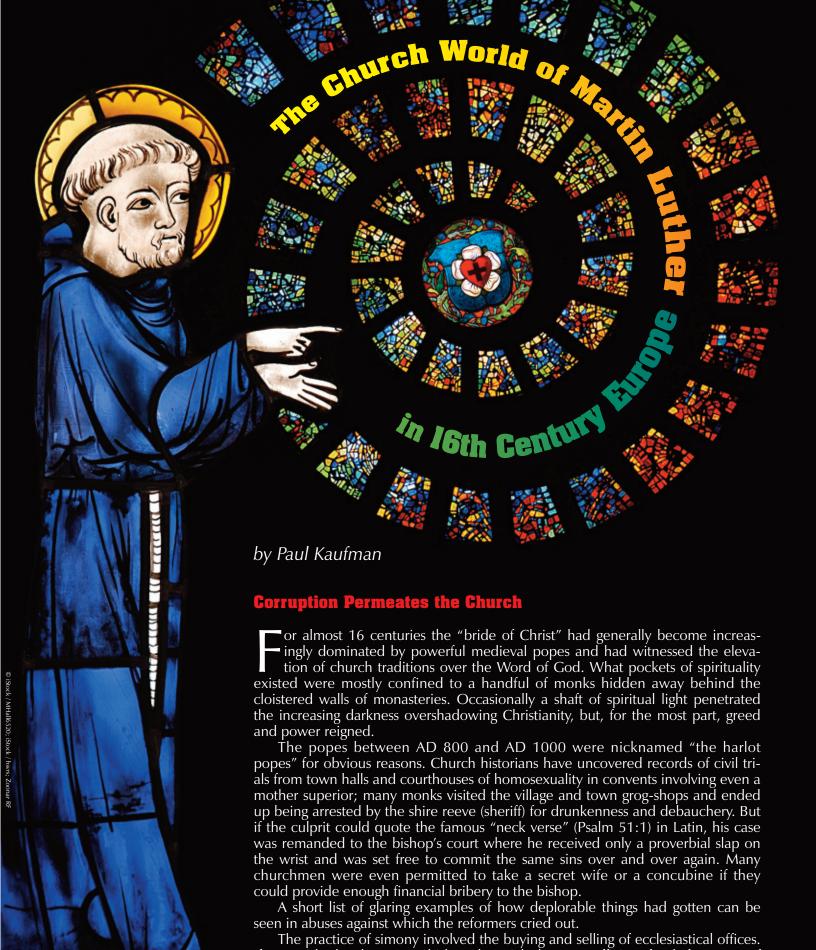
The second danger is abandoning traditions, assuming they have little or no scriptural basis. This approach leaves everything up for grabs. Today, this danger is more readily embraced than the other. It seems as though Christians are always finding new liberty. Paul in Galatians offers a stern warning—"Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh" (5:13). Friends, before we tear down a fence (tradition), we should first know why it was erected. Tradition, when combined with careful scriptural application, can give us timeless directives on faith and practice.

Our Methodist heritage unashamedly embraces history. In fact, it places history as one of the four key components in vetting a theological development. The "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" of Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience has been essential in understanding and applying theological matters—even before John Wesley. He is credited with building on the trilogy that the Church of England embraced. His addition was "Experience" (which incidentally is historical in nature).

I believe that we would do well to dust off some church histories and Christian biographies and remind ourselves of how God was present in history! As we reflect upon how God worked, perhaps a vision will be born within of what He wants to do through us and the rest of His Church in the future!



GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE



If one wished to become a bishop, he might borrow sufficient funds from one of

the new European banking houses and buy the office by paying off the archbishop.

Pluralism permitted bishops and archbishops to "own" more than one bishopric at the same time. Cardinal Wolsey in England enjoyed vast revenues from three bishoprics during the early 16th century just ahead of the English Reformation. Such activities afforded sizeable incomes from the tithes of the dioceses over which he was lord. It gave new meaning to our Lord's term "hirelings." The people loathed such actions, but were powerless to end them.

Absenteeism described those who had an incomeproducing position in the church (beneficed position), but never carried out their duties. One bishop in northern France never visited his assigned bishopric until the day they carried him into the cathedral for his funeral!

Nepotism, the appointment of one's relatives or friends to a church office, became a common problem in the imperial church. Men completely unqualified for their positions lorded over Christ's church, and the laity looked on, discouraged and disheartened, wondering, "Where is the 'true church' of Christ?"

Other matters tended to discourage those who did bother to attend Sunday service (mass), such as the relative ignorance of the clergy and the lack of regularly preached sermons. As mentioned earlier, if a cleric got in trouble, his way out was to cite the "neck verse." Since most local priests were uneducated and barely literate, they planned to "save their neck" by memorizing Psalm 51:1, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." How appropriate for the wayward cleric! The bishop of London in 1551 conducted a survey of 311 ministers in his diocese and found 168 could not recite the Ten Commandments, and that 39 of them could not even locate the Lord's Prayer in Scripture! No wonder God's children avoided church and had nothing but distain and contempt for the church of the 16th century!

The sad state of affairs can be seen even in the observance of the Lord's Supper (Eucharist). The laity only received the bread; the priests alone drank the cup. No wonder the local folk hated the church and all that it stood for! Yet the stranglehold of Rome seemed unbreakable. Through the hierarchy of its ecclesiastical structure and its numerous monasteries and convents (944 in England alone), the Catholic Church controlled one-third of all the real estate in Europe. But God's Spirit was awakening His faithful followers—men who were willing to stake their lives on an attempt to correct all the abuses within the corrupt system.



This early 17th-century, oil-on-canvas painting depicts reformers Heinrich Bullinger, Girolamo Zanchi, John Knox, Huldrych Zwingli, Pietro Martir Vermigli, Martin Bucer, Jerome of Prague, William Perkins, Jan Hus, Philipp Melanchthon, Martin Luther, Jean Calvin, Theodore Beza, and John Whiclif sitting around a table. (Spellings of names vary.) In the foreground are a cardinal, a devil, a pope, and a monk vainly attempting to blow out the light on the candlestick.

Early Attempts at Reform

In the centuries leading up to the Reformation, God had strategically placed forerunners along the pathway. One of these was John Wycliffe. Known today as the "Morning Star of the Reformation," he graduated from Oxford in England, and then remained as one of its most

famous professors. A godly man who instinctively knew there was more to New Testament Christianity than what the Roman church practiced and taught, he began to expose the abuses mentioned above—and many more. He introduced the concept of sola scriptura, i.e., the Bible stands far above the church's long list of traditions. He translated the New Testament into the English language in 1382 and denounced the forced celibacy of the clergy, something the church had practiced for centuries. He also taught and preached against transubstantiation, the doctrine that the elements of communion the bread and the cup-turn into Christ's actual body and blood. He even went so far as to refer to the pope as the anti-Christ!

Because he had the strong support of the king of England, Rome couldn't touch him. Unlike many early reformers, Wycliffe died of natural causes. However, within a few years, the Catholics exhumed his body, burned it, and scattered his ashes on a nearby river. His influence was vast, nevertheless, and his disciples continued to promulgate his teachings as they cautiously moved about England, further sowing seeds that would prepare the way of reform. Fortunately, Wycliffe's writings reached across the English Channel into the mainland of Europe.

At the University of Prague, the rector of the chapel, John Huss, read Wycliffe's ideas against the many abuses of the church. By 1415, this noble forerunner of the Reformation

cried out against many of the same things Wycliffe opposed. When Rome learned of his "heretical" ideas, they summoned him to the Council of Constance. Unfortunately, the king who promised him safe passage failed to protect him, and Huss became a martyr for insisting on the priority of Scripture over tradition, and additional things that Wycliffe and others taught.

By the eve of The Reformation, it was as though the wood had been laid and the kindling was in place; the only thing lacking was someone to light the fire. Such a soul proved to be the German reformer, Martin Luther.

Luther Lights the Fire in Wittenberg

Martin Luther was born in 1483 to a successful mine owner who planned for Martin to be a lawyer. A summer's thunderstorm in July of 1505, however,

steered things in a different channel for young Luther. Fearing for his life in the storm, he promised St. Anne, the patron saint of miners, that he would become a monk if his life were spared.

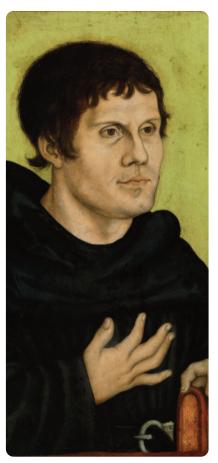
True to his word, young Luther entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt and began a spiritual journey to find rest for his soul. Within two years, he was

ordained a monk under the spiritual tutelage of Johannes Staupitz. Luther continued to seek for some assurance of salvation driving himself into poor health, sleeping on the stone floor of his monastic cell-all to no avail. He had one last hope for finding God—a visit to Rome. Desperate and accompanied by other pilgrims, he walked the entire way, crossing the Alps and descending into Italy, hoping and praying for solace for his troubled soul.

The nearer he got to Rome, the more evidence of a corrupt system of religion he witnessed. Greed, selfishness, and immorality were in evidence in the cities of Italy. When he reached Rome, he prayed his way up the steps of St. Peter's Cathedral, but instead of relief, he felt only emptiness. Instead of returning refreshed to Wittenberg, Germany, and to his

new assignment of teaching Hebrew and theology in the newly established university there, he arrived home convinced of the charlatanry of the corrupt church and determined to attempt some internal reforms.

Happily, God rewarded his diligent seeking, and in 1515 he discovered what so many others have found—"the just shall live by faith." In his newfound freedom in Christ, he set about to preach and teach deliverance to his fellow monks—indeed all those within the surrounding territory. Matters continued with a steady outflow of his writings that reached all over Europe and into England. Scholars at Cambridge University met secretly one night per week in a room at the White Horse Inn (nicknamed "Little Germany") and read, discussed, and imbibed Luther's works, which today comprise eighty-five bound volumes. Things in Wittenberg were soon to boil over.



Portrait of Martin Luther as an Augustinian Monk by Lucas Cranach the Elder

The Reformation Actually Begins

In the fall of 1517, Johannes Tetzel, a Dominican monk, headed toward Luther's city selling indulgences a theological invention of Rome which claimed to enable laity to purchase the release of their departed relatives out of the torments of purgatory. Tetzel declared, "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs!" The artful salesman was especially successful among the poor, who could least afford such nonsense. The proceeds were divided two ways: half went to repay the loan that the new Archbishop of Mainz had secured for the purchase of his archbishopric; the other half went to Rome to help with the building of St. Peter's basilica. Luther was outraged at such chicanery. On the eve of All Saint's Day, October 31, 1517, he posted his famous Ninety-Five Theses on the church door in Wittenberg. As they were written in Latin, the language of academia rather than the common folk, the Ninety-Five Theses were intended to summon scholars to debate theological matters and were quickly reprinted, translated, and widely distributed throughout Germany and Europe. This was followed by a debate in 1518 between Luther and Cardinal Thomas Cajetan in Augsburg, and a pamphlet war with Johannes Tetzel. More and more attention was being drawn to Luther and his arguments.

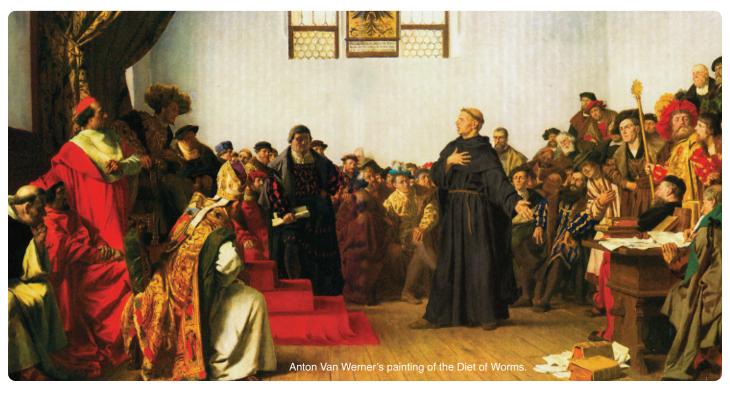
His earthly political head, Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, convinced of the truth that Luther promulgated, was willing to defend him against the attempts of Rome to silence the reformer, for the Bishop of Mainz had warned the Augustinian monastery to quiet the trouble-making monk. When that accomplished nothing,

Luther was summoned to debate John Eck, a renowned theologian from Rome. This Disputation at Leipzig in 1519 settled nothing as far as Luther and his supporters were concerned. Eck, a powerful debater, did maneuver Luther into a corner by getting him to admit that he agreed with Huss. In so doing, Eck pointed out that since Huss was burned at the stake, Luther deserved the same. But Frederick kept protecting Luther, who continued to write sermons, tracts, and treatises against the false teachings of Rome. The pope responded by excommunicating Luther and demanding that he appear in the city of Worms before Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, the civil power behind the Church of Rome.

Should he appear? Every thinking person knew what to expect. However, Frederick stood solidly for his man and promised him safe passage if he would only stand before the emperor. Luther could not help but remember that John Huss had been promised safe passage to the Council of Constance in 1415—and look what had happened to him! Nevertheless, Luther, trusting in God, decided to make the trip.

The Excommunicated Heretic Leads Protestant Europe

At Worms, with all the might of the emperor intimidating all who entered the massive hall, Luther stood alone to learn his fate. On a table before those assembled were his writings. When the emperor demanded to know if Luther had written those books and would still affirm what they contained, Luther asked for the night to ready his response. In the morning, with the



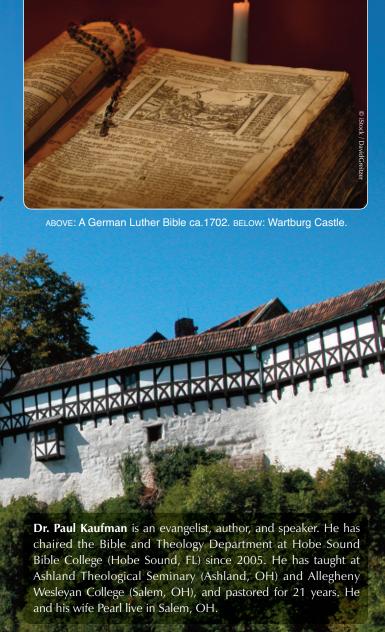
GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE

city and hordes of laity from the surrounding towns watching, Luther refused to recant. His mind was firmly set. Unless someone could prove his errors from Scripture or plain logic, he would stand firm. "I can do no other, so help me God."

Hurried from the hall by friendly soldiers from Saxony, Luther mounted a horse and headed for Wittenberg. Unknown to him, a few miles from the city a mounted band of "robbers" (sent by Frederick) ambushed the party and secreted Luther in Wartburg Castle, high in the Bavarian mountains. While there, he produced some of his most powerful writings, including a German translation of the New Testament.

Returning to the university classroom a year later, Luther increased his literary output, writing several significant tracts. His "Address to the German Nobility" served as a call to arms for all civic and national magistrates to take up the cause of reformation. Another tract, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," was a lengthy exposé of many errors of the Catholic Church, including transubstantiation, celibacy of the clergy, communion in one kind, tradition in place of Scripture, and a host of other issues that the reformers had opposed for years.

At the age of forty-one, Luther added further insult to the pope by marrying a former nun, Katharina Von Bora, his beloved "Katie." The old Augustinian monastery became their parsonage. Sixteen years younger than Luther, Katie proved to be a wonderful mother and encourager, caring well for him until his death in 1546. By that time, the Reformation had become well established in Germany, and, mainly through Luther's preaching and writing, had spread across much of Europe. While many had cried out against the abuses of the Roman church, in Martin Luther, God had raised up the one who more than any other would instigate the Protestant Reformation.



OCTOBER 2017

Five Solas of the Reformation

by Stephen B. Smith

The Protestant Reformation was a multi-faceted movement that spread across multiple geographical locations and contained various theological emphases. From the perspective of 500 years later, many things could be said about Reformational influences and results. However, at the center of the movement stand five distinct but related principles that embody the heart of the Reformation. They are commonly referred to using the following five Latin phrases: *sola Scriptura* (by Scripture alone), *sola gratia* (by grace alone), *sola fide* (by faith alone), *solus Christus* (by Christ alone), and *soli Deo gloria* (glory to God alone).

sola Scriptura (by Scripture alone)

Although the five solas could be arranged in a different order, we begin with *sola Scriptura*, since it formed the foundation for authority in the challenges of the Reformation period. When asked to recant his own writings at the Diet of Worms in 1521, Martin Luther refused to do so unless he was convinced by the truth of Scripture that what he had written was wrong. Although the Roman Catholic Church recognized the church's tradition as a determining factor, Luther pointed out that both popes and councils have been in error. He asserted that "Scripture alone is the true lord and master of all writings and doctrine on earth. If that is not granted, what is Scripture good for? The more we reject it, the more we become satisfied with men's books and human teachers." 1

Likewise, for John Calvin, God's written word was the standard by which all else must be judged. He said, "I approve only of those human institutions which are founded upon the authority of God and derived from Scripture." ² This attitude permeated the Protestant Reformation to such an extent that B.B. Warfield could claim *sola Scriptura* "is the cornerstone of universal Protestantism; and on it Protestantism stands, or else it falls." ³

This bedrock belief in the authority of Scripture is just as important today as it was during the time of Luther and Calvin. "Back to

the Bible," God's Bible School's motto, is not just a motivational slogan. Instead, it characterizes an entire worldview that turns first and foremost towards Scripture and seeks to judge all other claims to authority by its standard.

However, Scripture is not completely alone, since tradition is also valuable and was respected by the Reformers. It is "alone" in the sense that nothing else bears as much authority. Church tradition, human reason, and personal experience occupy important but secondary roles. A firm belief in the authority of Scripture must be accompanied by a sound hermeneutical approach that properly interprets Scripture within the community of other Christians. Without this, the Church is in danger of dissolving into a group of disputing individuals who all cling to their own private interpretations. Finally, dependence upon the Holy Spirit is essential. Those who hold to *sola Scriptura* are blessed to have the divine Author of Scripture present today to illuminate and direct them as they read His Word.

sola gratia (by grace alone)

When Luther famously nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the castle church door in Wittenberg, number 62 read, "The true treasure of the Church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God." Because of God's gracious character, this glory and grace has been extended to undeserving sinners. Luther described the glorious reality accomplished by that grace, as Christ gives of Himself on behalf of His people. "Christ is full of grace, life, and salvation.... If Christ is a bridegroom, he must take upon himself the things which are his bride's and bestow upon her the things that are his. If he gives her his body and very self, how shall he not give her all that is his?" 4

The fact that grace alone is emphasized sets it over against all human endeavors to accomplish salvation by one's own work. In Ephesians 2:1-7, the words "but God" in verse 4 are the hinge point between the life of

deathly self-preoccupation as a child of wrath and the transformation of being made alive with Christ to share in His privileged place. It is God's rich mercy and great love that made this transformation described in verse 8 as "by grace you are saved through faith." Luther personally discovered the truth of verse 9. Works based upon human effort can never accomplish salvation, leaving no room for boasting. It must be given by God. On the other hand, works are important as the result of this transformed life, since 2:10 says that those who are God's creation have good works prepared ahead of time for them to perform.

In every generation, the doctrine of sola gratia is a needed caution against placing our confidence and trust in that which we possess or the efforts that we produce. Grace flows from God. John Wesley helpfully reflected upon the ways in which God's grace is conveyed to believers in his sermon "The Means of Grace." These are "outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, preventing [prevenient], justifying, or sanctifying grace." They include prayer (both private and corporate), the Scriptures ("reading, hearing, and meditating thereon"), and partaking in the Lord's Supper. Grace flows through these channels from God, who alone is "the Giver of every good gift, the Author of all grace," and He is able to convey this grace to His creatures, without limitation to any particular means. 5

sola fide (by faith alone)

John Calvin's description of faith reminds us of the interconnections among sola fide, sola gratia, and solus Christus. He called it "a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit." 6 This freely given promise points to God's grace, and it is only available in Christ. Thus, any faith that trusts on or believes in something else is not the faith which accompanies the grace that saves us (Eph. 2:8). John Wesley made this clear as well. "That we are justified by faith, is spoken to take away clearly all merit of our works, and wholly to ascribe the merit and deserving of our justification to Christ only." ⁷ Or as the familiar hymn puts it, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

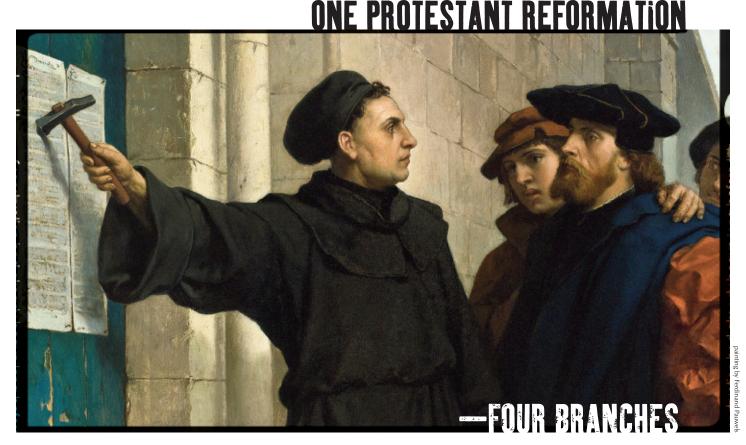
On the other hand, while faith is alone in the sense that human works are excluded, genuine saving faith must be a faith that works by love (Gal. 5:6) and results in good works that bring glory to God (Eph. 2:10 and Mat. 5:16). In John Fletcher's *Five Checks to Antinomianism*, he qualified a particular understanding of the Reformation's *sola fide*. Fletcher explained that the way to enter Christ's sheepfold is by believing, and the way to stay there is by believing and obeying. "Wilt thou be numbered among his sheep in the great day? *Endure unto the end: continue in well doing*; that is, persevere in faith and obedience." ⁸ Thus, the doctrine of faith alone should be proclaimed boldly, but always with the understanding that the faith that saves is also a faith that obeys (cf. the "obedience of faith" in Rom. 1:5 and 16:26).

solus Christus (by Christ alone)

All the solas are connected, but in a sense this is the one that anchors them all. This is reinforced by the frequency with which the New Testament uses the terminology "in Christ." Scripture points us to Jesus (John 5:39), God's grace is personified in the self-sacrificial life of the Son (2 Cor. 8:9), and Jesus is the only sufficient object in which to place our faith (Rom. 3:22). When these first four solas are working together in conjunction, the result is that all glory is given to God, as the Son and the Father share a wondrous relationship where both are glorified in the unfolding plan of salvation (John 1:14; 13:31-32; 17:5).

John Calvin observed that this focus upon Christ alone is a key to avoiding the entrapments of false doctrines. "This, therefore, is the only means of retaining, as well as restoring pure doctrine—to place Christ before the view such as he is with all his blessings, that his excellence may be truly perceived." 9 For Calvin, this focus was appropriate because of the multitude of riches provided in Jesus. "In short, since rich store of every kind of good abounds in him, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other." A single-eyed focus upon the Savior dissolves the mists of distraction that otherwise cloud our vision and enables the other truths of the Reformation to assume their proper place.

Christ is preeminent over creation and provides the means for reconciliation between God and man (Col. 1:13-20; 1 Tim. 2:5). In John's Gospel, when Jesus is lifted up, He draws all people to Himself (John 12:32). The solus Christus theme also emphasizes the exclusivity required if people want to participate in the salvation He brings (Acts 4:12). He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). John Wesley captured this truth in his description of his Aldersgate experience. "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death." ¹⁰ (continued on page 29)



by Larry D. Smith

Il over the world, evangelical Christians are celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. For it was on October 31, 1517, the eve of All Saints Day, that a vigorous young Augustinian monk named Martin Luther marched up the steps of the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany, and pulled an official-looking document from the folds of his dark gown. Soon the firm, steady blows of a hammer rang throughout the marketplace as he nailed his parchment to the massive church doors, then stepped back to survey the Latin letters inked upon it. Not for a moment did Brother Martin realize that he had forever enshrined that autumn day in the history of the world, igniting a revolution which would shake Western Christianity to it foundations.

Bound Joyously to the Word of God

Indeed, those strokes from his hammer still reverberate in the hearts of millions who love the saving truth of Christ's gospel, and who declare, as did he, that their consciences are "bound to the Word of God." His dramatic Ninety-Five Theses, displayed on

those famous church doors, bore public testimony to this conviction, and before long, this testimony had roused tens of thousands of others to join him in determined purpose to reform Christ's ancient church, cleansing it of superstition, ignorance, and corruption. There were to be many heartbreaks along the way, but as a result of the great Reformation that ensued, the good news of our salvation was preached, taught, and sung in the churches, the fields, and the marketplaces with such clarity and joy as hardly had been known in Europe for a thousand years.

For as Luther had declared in the sixty-second article of his "Theses," "the true treasury of the Church is the holy gospel and the grace of God." This Church, "one, holy, catholic (universal), and apostolic," as the ancient creed asserts, was the whole and undivided body of Christ, embracing all true believers and acting in this world as "the pillar and ground of the truth." Luther and the other great Reformers wished to maintain the undivided oneness of that Church, but soon discovered that though Roman Catholic Christianity—which regarded itself as "the one true church"—was willing to correct some of its most notorious abuses, it steadfastly refused to rid itself of unscriptural doctrines. Since further union with Rome was thus impossible, Protestants were forced to form new church structures of their own.

Four Branches of the Reformation

But, alas, unity was elusive for these new structures, too; and, when the dust had settled, the Reformation was splintered into many subdivisions grouped into four major branches. True, most of them were united in loyalty to the cardinal doctrines of classical Christian orthodoxy, as well as the Reformers' central themes: Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone, and Christ alone. Still, the differences were real and divisive, and for the most part they remain to this very day. The first three branches of the Reformation—the Lutheran, the Anglican, and the Calvinist—constitute what scholars call the Magisterial Reformation, because they insisted that the civil magistrate should support the church. The first and third especially were very conservative, determined to keep all that was scriptural, noble, and useful in pre-Reformation Christianity. The fourth major branch is called the Radical Reformation and consisted of Anabaptist groups who were far less enamored with ancient churchly forms and far more suspicious of the powers of secular government. We still rub shoulders with Reformation Christians like these, and so we should note their continuing distinctives.

The Lutheran Reformation

Martin Luther is regarded as the courageous prophet and pathfinder of the sixteenth century Reformation, though he stood on the shoulders of such heroic "pre-Reformers" as Huss, Savonarola, and Wycliffe. One of the most memorable chapters in church history records his anguished search for peace

with God—a search which was finally rewarded by divine assurance that "the just shall live by faith." In the wake of the furious controversy over the Ninety-Five Theses, he entered into public debate with church officials in a welcome forum that augmented his popularity with his fellow Germans, who were already incensed with the greed and corruption of the Roman church. By 1518 he was insisting that the only final authority in the conflict over his views must be the Bible, not the pope or church tradition.

Not only did the pope condemn Luther's opinions, but in June 1520 he issued a bull excommunicating him from the Roman Catholic Church. The expanding conflict was bitter as Luther became a national hero, and his writings—circulated widely by the newly-invented printing

press—spread like wildfire throughout Europe. At the imperial Diet of Worms in 1521 he was asked to recant his views. He replied, "Unless I am convicted by Scripture

and plain reason, my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me!" He probably would have been captured and martyred except for the protection of his friend Duke Frederick the Wise, who kidnapped him to the Wartburg Castle, where he remained until 1522, translating the entire New Testament into German.

Until his death in 1546, Luther continued to shape his model of a gospel-centered church built on the truths of scriptural supremacy, justification by faith, and the priesthood of all believers. He stripped the ancient liturgy of Romish superstition, though he maintained that Christ is literally received at Holy Communion "in, with, and under" the elements of bread and wine. Luther emphasized the importance of preaching, encouraged the development of congregational singing, creating such hymns as "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," and stressed the catechizing of children. His writings, now filling nearly fifty printed volumes, helped spread Lutheran doctrine throughout Europe, especially Germany and the Scandinavian countries.

Lutheranism was brought to this country by immigrants from Europe, and especially where it has been faithful to its orthodox beginnings, it has maintained a strong attachment to the teaching of its founder.

The Calvinist Reformation

Next to Martin Luther, John Calvin is regarded as the most important figure of the 16th Century Reformation. He belonged to the second generation of Reform-

ers, building on the foundations laid by Luther and Huldrych Zwingli, the latter of whom was a godly and courageous pioneer of the Reformation in Switzerland. Millions of Christians in the United States and such countries as Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, and elsewhere call themselves "Calvinists," a lasting tribute to the brilliant and forceful scholar who lent his name to their system of belief.

A native of France, he received a fine university education, wrote his major theological treatise at the age of 26, and in time was called to serve the Protestant church in Geneva,

Switzerland. He was to turn the city into a theocracy, an ideal Christian community under the rule of the Bible. But Calvin's rigid system of morals and austere discipline



aroused intense opposition, and for a time he was sent into exile. On his return in 1541, he tried again to turn Geneva into a model Christian city. He died in 1563, worn out by his many labors—preaching, writing, operating a pastor's school, and developing a Presbyterian form of church government by lay and ministerial elders.

John Calvin centered his teaching in the majestic sovereignty of God, and his system of theology may be summarized in the famous TULIP acronym. Its letters stand for (1) Total Depravity, (2) Unconditional Election, (3) Limited Atonement), (4) Irresistible Grace, and (5) Perseverance of the Saints. While we Wesleyan-Arminians reject the concept of unconditional election and its neces-

sary corollaries, we are glad for the valiant Christian lives and witness of many of the followers of the great Genevan Reformer. Many of them are found in Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational, and Baptist churches.

The Anglican Reformation

Anglicanism, which resulted from the pervasive Reformation upheaval that finally established the Protestant Church of England, has made vast contributions, not only to its country of origin, but also to all the world wherever the British Empire has gone, spread by saints and martyrs, missionaries and evangelists, statesmen and soldiers. We are especially interested in this branch of the Reformation because it is the "mother church" of the entire Wesleyan movement from which we trace direct lineal descent. John and Charles Wesley, John Fletcher, and other early Methodist leaders lived and died in the Anglican Church.

Its final break with Roman Catholicism came during an intense dispute between the pope and King Henry VIII over the king's petition for a divorce. But the scene for separation had already been set by such "pre-Reformers" as John Wycliffe, known as the "Morning Star of the Reformation," and William Tyndale. For centuries, moreover, the English people had resented the rule of the church by the pope and his emissaries and were incensed by the Roman Church's corruption and abuses. The official break came in 1534, although England did not really

become Protestant in doctrine and worship until the reign of Henry's son, the "boy king," Edward VI (1547-1553). This was largely accomplished by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (later burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic queen "Bloody Mary"), who vigorously stripped the church of idolatry and superstition. The final settlement of the English church came during the rule of Elizabeth I (1555-1603).

Anglicanism, wherever faithful to its heritage, maintains a strong identity with historic Christianity, its saints, traditions, creeds, and worship. In addition to John and Charles Wesley, its evangelical wing has included such notables as John Whitefield, Bishop J.C. Ryle, and, in



more recent days, J.I. Packer and John Stott. Among its valuable gifts are the King James Bible of 1611, a rich and magnificent hymnody, and the Book of Common Prayer, probably the most beautiful book in our language next to the KJV. We Wesleyans trace our roots from different sources. But our Anglican legacy—much loved and faithfully transmitted to us by our founders—emphasizes dignity and reverence in worship, the veracity and authority of the Bible, the significance of the sacraments, continuity with the Christian ages, sober godliness, and disciplined living.

The Radical Reformation

One branch of Reformation Christianity was far more "radical" or extreme in its adherents' attempts to "restore" what they believed to be the New Testament church. Generally, it may be said that the Magisterial Reformation leaders wanted to purify and reform older religious structures, not destroy them unless they were contrary to the Word of God. But the more radical forces—called Anabaptists or rebaptizers because they opposed infant baptism in favor of adult "believers' baptism"—dispensed with many customs and traditions long cherished in Christian churches. Meeting in homes for Bible studies, the Anabaptists spread throughout Switzerland, Germany, and Holland.

Anabaptists would generally have agreed with the great doctrinal foundations of orthodox Christianity. But there were certain distinctives that separated them from the mainstream Reformation. These may be summarized as follows:

- The Nature of the Church: Christ's church consists of only truly-converted believers, not those baptized in infancy, whether Catholic or Protestant.
- Separation of Church and State: Contrary to most Catholics and Protestants, the church should be neither established nor supported by the civil government, nor should heresy be a crime.
- Non-participation in Civil Government: Some type of government may be necessary, but true Christians—commanded to be separate from the world—should not involve themselves in it. Thus they may not hold public office, vote, swear a legal oath, sue in the civil courts, or bear arms in military service.

• Community of Goods: Parts of the growing movement were attracted to the practice of the earliest Christians to "hold all things in common."

In spite of the fact that many Anabaptists lived godly and virtuous lives, they were cruelly treated, tortured, and even executed by both Catholic and Protestant authorities. This largely was because their refusal to participate in civil government, to bear arms, and to conform to official church policies appeared antagonistic and

even anti-social to late Medieval life. There was also an ultra-extreme faction among them that favored polygamy, socialism, and extreme views on eschatology. Helping save the movement from this lunatic fringe was a sane and devout leader named Menno Simons (1469-1561). His followers still bear his name: Mennonites. One division among them was that of the Amish in 1693.

Today we regard the Mennonites and their subdivisions as hard-working, honest, and peaceful citizens, known for good works, and, at least in their more conservative manifestations, determined separation from sinful, modern culture. Even when we disagree with Anabaptist views and emphases, we respect many of those who hold them as faithful and sincere Christians.



THOSE STROKES FROM
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THE WORD OF GOD."

Ringing Still

Yes, there was one great Protestant Reformation divided into four distinctive branches, each contributing its gifts to the advance of Christ's kingdom. Five hundred years ago a monk's hammer helped unleash the energies of their protest and service. Five hundred years later we hear that hammer ringing still.

Larry D. Smith is former editor of God's Revivalist and a retired member of the faculty of God's Bible School and College. He and his wife Carol (Wiseman) live in the Cincinnati, OH, suburb of Oakley.



ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

Shortly after noon on August 15th, new students began arriving on campus to begin their journey at GBS. Ready to welcome and assist them in unpacking their vehicles were current students, staff, and faculty. The next several days were full of information and fun activities, culminating in a Saturday morning trip to the Creation Museum. It was a terrific first week!

In the morning service of Convocation Sunday, August 20, Marc Sankey, Vice President for Constituent Relations, presented scholar-

ships (see p.22). In addition to the recurring endowed scholarships, four new endowed scholarships were unveiled (see pp.17-19): Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders, Merrill and

Yvonne Braymer Scholarship, Wanda G. Farmer

Scholarship for Musicians, and the Dr. Bence C. Miller Memorial Scholarship. There was also a one-time scholarship awarded in memory of Ruth Hooker (see below and p.19).

The total amount of endowed scholarships was \$85,985. Divisional scholarships and Wingrove Taylor Legacy Awards were also distributed, bringing the grand total to \$124,460.

After the presentation of scholarships, President Loper preached about the transition between Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2).

Elisha had been following Elijah for some time. Both knew the Lord



was going to take Elijah soon, so Elisha followed him closely. When Elijah was taken, his mantel fell and Elisha picked it up. Walking back to the Jordan River, he had some fear and trepidation because his mentor was gone. But he also had excitement. A sense of resolve gripped Elisha as he gripped the mantel, struck the water, and said: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"

President Loper told of his own similar feelings when his mentor, Michael Avery, retired and left campus on July 1. Like Elisha, President Loper even asked a similar question:

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



Ruth Hooker, 90, of Franklin, OH, passed away July 24, 2017. Ruth was born in Sapulpa, OK, on October 6, 1926, to the late William and Gladys Hollars. A graduate of Purdue University with an MEd from Florida Atlantic University, she was

married on August 26, 1948, to her husband Jack Hooker. Ruth retired from the St. Lucie County, FL, schools after 34 years of service and was an ordained elder in the Bible Methodist Church.

Ruth is survived by her two sons, Jack (BRE '74), who is a current GBS trustee, and Richard (BA '89);

daughter, Joan; sister, Betty Philips; eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at Anderson Funeral Home, Franklin, OH, Pastor Jack Hooker officiating, with burial following in Anderson Memorial Park, Anderson, IN.



Suzann "Suzy" Hunt, 71, of Seneca, SC, passed away at her home on Thursday, August 3, 2017. A native of Valparaiso, IN, Suzy was the daughter of Herbert and Pearl Norton. She attended GBS (BA '77), where she also met her

husband, Robert (ThB '77). Suzy retired as a secretary from Knickerbocker Roofing in Harvey, IL, and was always known for her compassionate spirit and dedication to her family.

Suzy is survived by her husband Robert; brothers Herbert, Joe, and Harry; sister Josephine; and many nieces and nephews. Funeral services were conducted at Daven-

"Is God still going to be God after the transition?"

When Elijah's mantel hit the water, God reminded Elisha that Elijah was not the source of his power—God was the source. That was also good news for the new president of GBS as well as for its students, many of whom are in a period of transition and newness.

Where is the Lord God of Elijah? He is working today. He is moving today. He is calling today. Walk into the future committed to being obedient to God's call on your life.

In the evening service, Marc Sankey, Vice President for Constituent Relations, spoke on "What God has taught me over 25 years of ministry." His first point was that God always has a plan. His plan is simple. Follow Him and He will make you fishers of men. We should not ask God to bless what we are doing, but rather we should do what He is blessing. God always blesses His plan when humble Christ-followers become whole-hearted par-

ticipants in it. Second, God is always working on His plan. Whether we see it or not, He is working on our behalf and from His vantage point of seeing all. Third, God seems to work more slowly than we sometimes wish. He has a different understanding of time than mere mortals do.

He concluded by assuring staff and students that they can trust God with their lives. The goal for each one is to become a willing participant in His plan. That means taking personal goals and ambitions and laying them at His feet, allowing His plan to be life's priority.

We thank God for a good start. Pray with us that this will be a great school year as we train the students entrusted to us. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to accomplish great things this academic year!

Current enrollment at GBS is 430. This includes 135 K-12 students in Aldersgate Christian Academy; 187 undergraduate students on campus (including 16 academy students taking college classes); 108 undergradu-

ate students online; and 25 graduate students (16 in MA degree programs and 9 taking graduate courses either as part of an undergraduate degree or for personal development).

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Each year we give special recognition to new GBS scholarships being awarded for the first time. Following are four new endowed scholarships and a one-time memorial scholarship.

Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders

Established through the generosity of Chancellor Michael R. Avery's family and friends, this annual scholarship is presented to college students in their sophomore year or higher who demonstrate outstanding leadership qualities and potential in Christian ministry.

Serving as President of God's Bible School from 1995 to 2017, ■



port Funeral Home Chapel, West Union, SC, with burial following at Heritage Memorial Gardens, Westminster, SC.



Cheryl Annette Hemrick, 64, of Griffin, GA, passed away July 28, 2017, at Brightmoor Hospice where she resided for about three weeks after suffering a massive stroke. Cheryl was born on February 24, 1953, in Grand Rapids, MI, to Robert and

Marilyn (Duval) Sickmiller.

Cheryl attended GBS for her senior year of high school (HS '71). She continued her education in the GBS college department, but left during her junior year to help with the care of her sister Becky, who was having serious health problems. She came back to GBS in January 1977 and completed her degree (BA '78). While at GBS she met Glenn Hemrick (1976-78) and they married in the summer of 1978. Glenn finished his schooling in the FLAME track to ordination in the

Wesleyan Church, and the two spent 38 years together in ministry.

Cheryl is survived by her husband Glenn; two daughters, Ona and Regina; her mother; a sister, Robbie; as well as in-laws, nieces, and nephews. A memorial service was held at First Wesleyan Church, Griffin, GA, with several speakers: Rev. Kenneth Hemrick, Rev. Joe Emert, and Regina Hemrick. Rev. John Parker prayed the closing prayer.



WEDDING

Teresa Troyer (BA '16) to Andrew Churchill, June 10, 2017, at the Canal Wesleyan Methodist Church in Utica, PA, with Rev. John Manley officiating. Andrew is a

mechanical engineer and both are involved in ministry at the Wesleyan Evangelistic Church in Dayton, OH.

Dr. Michael Avery's excellent leadership significantly strengthened and expanded this institution.

Greatly valuing the importance of education, he kept diligent study a priority, maintaining a challenging reading schedule amidst his other duties. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Wesley Biblical Seminary in 1998 in recognition of his significant contributions to Bible college education. He later earned a Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership from Cincinnati Christian University in 2008 and in May was granted the title "Chancellor of God's Bible School and College."

Dr. Avery has spoken at hundreds of revivals, camp meetings, conferences, and other venues; actively served on a number of organizational boards (such as the Interchurch Holiness Convention, Bible Methodist Connection of Churches, Bible Methodist Missions, and Shepherds Global Classroom); written over 200 articles for *God's Revivalist*, as well as co-authored two books; taught ministerial and leadership classes; and mentored many students.

In recognition of his outstanding leadership and engagement in Christian ministry, and to impact future generations of leaders in the Church, the GBS Alumni Council along with Chancellor Michael Avery's family and friends have established this scholarship. On their behalf, President Loper presented the Michael R. Avery Scholarship for Leaders to its first recipient, Travis Stroup.



Merrill and Yvonne Braymer Scholarship

Established through the generosity of Merrill and Yvonne Braymer, this annual scholarship is presented to a worthy student with financial need in the missions or ministerial program.



Born in 1938 in Kalamazoo, MI, Merrill Braymer was dedicated to God at one week old, and in his early teens made a personal decision to follow Christ. A call to ministry led him to Olivet Nazarene University, from which he graduated in 1964 with a dual major in religion and philosophy, and on to Nazarene Theological Seminary, from which he graduated in 1967. Subsequently he served 34 years in pastoral ministry.

During his college and seminary years, Merrill received financial aid that enabled him to continue his studies. To show his thankfulness for that, he and his wife Yvonne established this endowed scholarship to aid other needy students as they prepare for ministry.

On behalf of the Braymer Family, President Loper presented the Merrill and Yvonne Braymer Scholarship to its first recipient, Megan Whittaker.

Wanda G. Farmer Scholarship for Musicians

Established through the generosity of Wanda Farmer's husband, Harry, and their many family and friends, this annual scholarship is presented to a worthy student with financial need in the Music Division.

At an early age, Harry moved to GBS where his father, Elmer, studied in preparation for ministry. Because of the experiences and memories made on campus during his youth, Harry has always felt close to the school.

Harry and Wanda continued their relationship with GBS by attending school events and supporting the institution's mission. Wanda Farmer, who loved music, thoroughly enjoyed presentations by the GBS choir and orchestra and encouraged both her children and grandchildren to play musical instruments, take lessons, and sing in choir. The Farmer family has established this scholarship to honor her legacy and love of music.



On behalf of the Farmer family, 13 of whom were present at the event, Harry Farmer presented the Wanda G. Farmer Scholarship for Musicians to its first recipient, Alyssa Jensen.

Dr. Bence C. Miller Memorial Scholarship

Established through the generosity of Peter Moran and in honor of Dr. Miller's legacy, this annual scholarship is presented to a needy student enrolled in Intercultural Studies and World Missions.

During the Miller administration, Peter felt prompted by the Lord to give money every week to GBS. Through this giving, Dr. Miller and Peter developed a significant friendship. Serving as President of GBS from 1975-1995, Dr. Bence C. Miller was committed to seeing the furtherance of the Kingdom continue through this institution.



On behalf of Peter Moran, President Loper presented the *Dr. Bence C. Miller Memorial Scholarship* to its first recipient, Elizabeth Albertson.

Ruth Hooker Memorial Scholarship

GBS had the privilege of awarding a one-time scholarship in memory of a long time friend of GBS, Ruth Hooker, who recently went home to be with Lord (see p.16).

An ordained elder in the Bible Methodist Conference, Ruth Hooker had a passion for God, her family, and Christian education. She was a shining testimony of God's transformational power and love, and enthusiastically shared her faith with others. Several of Ruth's children



and grandchildren attended GBS, and she remained a longtime prayer partner, donor, and friend of the institution throughout her life.

On behalf of Ruth's family and friends, Jack Hooker, her son, presented the *Ruth Hooker Memorial Scholarship* to Rebecca Pohl.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND GBS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DECEMBER 8, 9, 10

Derived from a parable by Soren Kierkegaard, Condescension, written by Ben Durr, Jr., depicts Baruch as a son of privilege—a Hellenistic Jew commissioned by Caesar Augustus to coordinate the taxation registration throughout Palestine. To assist

him with this assignment in the Ierusalem/Bethlehem region, Baruch enlists Ezra, an arrogant, dishonest Jewish official and businessman who also sells sheep for Temple sacrifices. Baruch's association with Ezra brings him into contact with simple, unrefined shepherds, one of whom is a brother to

Tamara, a lovely, God-fearing peasant girl. Smitten by her beauty and grace, but separated by the vast social and cultural barrier between them, Baruch devises a ruse to "become a shepherd" and win her acceptance and affection.

During his adventure as an "incognito shepherd," Baruch himself becomes a character in the ultimate story of condescension—
Baruch's condescension parallels the self-humiliation of Jesus.

Condescension will be staged in the Adcock Chapel on December 8 (7:30 p.m.), 9 (3:30 p.m.), and 10 (6:00 p.m.). Festive prelude music will begin sixty minutes prior to each performance. A choir, orchestra, and cast of actors numbering more than 100 come together in the production.

Ticket Information: Each family may request up to five free tickets, available beginning October 16, for one night only. After the fifth ticket, the cost is \$5 per ticket. For large groups (6+), please send payment by mail along with name of purchaser. Phone/email orders will not be accepted. Orders may be sent to the school with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Include the date you prefer and the number of tickets needed. Please contact our ticket coordinator at (513) 721-7944 if you do not plan to use your tickets. Orders for five or less may also be placed, and tickets



printed, online at <u>www.gbs.edu</u>. Please bring tickets for entry.

Mail orders and large group payments should be addressed as follows: Christmas Program Ticket Request, God's Bible School and College, 1810 Young St., Cincinnati, OH 45202.

Seats may not be saved for those who are not immediate family members. Late- and re-entries will be assisted by an usher. Child care and a designated room for nursing mothers will be available. A freewill offering will be received at the close of each performance. A complimentary coffee bar will be open in The Commons following each performance.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Jason Albertson, a recent graduate (BA '16), is the new administra-



tive assistant for the Graduate Program in which he is also enrolled. He is married to Karen Olsen (BA '16) who teaches language

arts grades 5-8 in Aldersgate Christian Academy.

Eli Albring has been working for the school in various needed areas, in-



cluding as the first student ambassador. This year he joins the staff on a full-time basis serving in the position of personal assistant to the

Vice President for Constituent Relations. He will continue working on his degree.

Ellen Bishop (AA '13) is the new high school secretary for Aldersgate



Christian Academy. Ellen spent the last few years working for Chickfil-A in Mesa, AZ, where she developed their leadership training pro-

gram before moving to Kentucky where she participated in their Transformational Leadership program.

John Burroughs (HS '73; BA '77) returns to teach high school math for



Aldersgate Christian Academy where he had earlier taught (2000-02). John has a graduate degree from Mt. Vernon Nazarene University

(1995) and has been involved in combined pastoral and educational ministry for many years, most recently at the Heritage Bible Church and Christian School. John and his wife Aneita (Bragg) (BA '77) have two adult children (one of whom is Dr. Jana Pop, chair of the GBS Music Division) and four grandchildren.

Josh Cravens is an admissions counselor in our recruiting depart-



ment. While working full time in that area, he will continue pursuing his degree at GBS. Josh and Mica Terrian (see p.21) replaced

Kent Stetler who accepted the position of college registrar.

Charity Frazier (BA '12), after receiving a Masters in Counseling



from Cincinnati Christian University (2014) and working as a counselor at Solutions Community Counseling and

Recovery Centers in Lebanon, OH, for the past three years, has accepted the position of Student Success Counselor, which involves both counseling and teaching.

Sarah McBryant, who began her studies at GBS in 2015, is the



Coordinator for Technical Services, Serials, and Interlibrary Loan in the Flexon Library. Having served as a work student in the

campus library for the past year and a half, she is now a full time staff member. Sarah will continue her education while serving in the campus library.

Jessica (Eads) McKim, who began her studies at GBS in 2015, is now assisting Mrs. Byer in the kitchen



on a part-time basis. Jessica and fellow student Michael McKim were married July 29, 2017. Both continue their studies through

distance education (ADEP) and are scheduled to graduate this year.

Kara Moore (BA '14) is the social science and science teacher for the junior high grades in Aldersgate



Christian Academy. For the last three years she taught first and second grades at Independence Bible School, Independence, KS. Anna (Robbins) O'Donnell is the coordinator for the Aldersgate



Distance Education Program (ADEP). Anna most recently worked at Penn View Bible Institute in the business office and as public re-

lations assistant (2013-17). She and her husband Greg have two children, Megan and Seth.

Caslyn Rice (BA '17) is a teachers' aide for the lower elementary



grades of Aldersgate Christian Academy. She is also teaching grades 3 and 4 for six weeks while the slated teacher is on maternity leave.

Lindsay Rose (HS '12; BA '17) assisted in the kindergarten of Aldersgate Christian Academy while



fulfilling her supervised student teaching requirement during her final college semester. She is now teaching full-time at ACA.

Marc Sankey has accepted the newly created position of Vice President for Constituent Relations.



After graduating from GBS (BRE '94), he pastored the Bible Methodist Church in Franklin, OH, before becoming a missionary

to Mexico under the auspices of Bible Methodist Missions. He later served as vice president of Evangelistic Faith Missions. Marc and his wife Melodie (Miller) (BA '94) have three sons, all GBS college students—Jordan, Cameron, and Logan.

Melodie (Miller) Sankey (BA '94) is the office manager for the



Division of Educational and Professional Studies (DEPS) on a part-time basis. Melodie has been a busy pastor's wife and missionary. She has always been involved with church music and has taught piano lessons. She is married to Marc Sankey.

Aimee (Stetler) Snider is teaching social studies at Aldersgate



Christian Academy. Since graduating from Hobe Sound Bible College in 1999 with a degree in elementary education, she has

spent more than ten years in elementary and high school classrooms. After recognizing that many Christian schools had students with learning challenges, but few resources with which to help, she completed a master's degree in special education at Indiana Wesleyan University. She and her husband Chad have been involved in pastoral ministry for more than ten years (currently at Loveland Wesleyan Chapel, Loveland, OH), as well as fostering children in their home. They are currently in the process of adopting two children.

Steve Stetler (BRE '82; BA '83) is the first visiting professor of missi-



ology in a new approach to getting active missionaries in front of GBS students (see God's Revivalist, Sept. 2017, p.19). For 21

years Steve was involved in Christian education while also serving in pastoral ministry. For the last nine-anda-half years he has been a missionary to Mexico, serving as field director for 5 years. Steve and his wife Beth (Sankey) (BA '85) have two children, both GBS graduates: Maria (AA, BA '12), who worked in advancement from 2012 to 2017; and Kent (BA '15), who has worked in



student recruitment from 2015 to 2017 (see below).

Mica Terrian served as the assistant to Kent Stetler in student recruitment while she completed her degree at GBS (AA '17). She returns as an admissions counselor in that department.

Jonathan Valentine attended Aldersgate Christian Academy (2010-13) while his father worked in the facilities / maintenance de-



partment. Jonathan graduated from Gateway Christian Academy in 2014 and subsequently attended Tennessee College of

Applied Technology, where he completed an HVAC-R program in 2016. Consequently, he is working in facilities and specializing in heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration.

Priscilla Vernon has agreed to



serve as the administrative assistant to the Vice President for Constituent Relations. She will continue working toward a BA degree

in Integrative Studies while working full time in this position.

POSITION CHANGES

Brad Bishop (HS '02), who has worked for the IT Department at GBS since 2013, began working



alongside Floyd Hyatt last semester in the area of Access and Safety. He now serves as a back-up for Floyd and will also be work-

ing on grounds and vehicles. Brad and his wife Jacquelyn (Pearce) (AA '06) have four children: Kelsie, Austin, Alissa, and Breanna.

Stephanie Hoffpauir (BA '15) is the new Director of Library



Services, replacing out-going director, Joshua Avery, who departed GBS to join the library faculty at Wheaton College.

Stephanie is a graduate student in the School of Informatics and Computing at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis. She has served as the coordinator for GBS technical services for the past few years.

Tim Makcen (BA '06) was appointed principal of Aldersgate Christian Academy, replacing Bill



Marshall who retired from that position after mentoring Tim over the prior year. Tim served as student recruiter (2006) before teaching

high school social studies (2010). He and his wife Arlette (Silva) (BA '05) have two children: Aliyah and Abella.

Bill Marshall (BA '76; BRE '77) retired from his 40-year career in Christian education (see *God's*



Revivalist, March 2017, pp.4-7), all but three of which were in academic administration. He has agreed to continue at GBS as office

manager of the facilities department. Bill and his wife Sherilyn (Troyer) (BRE '76) have three adult children and ten grandchildren.

Dakota Powell has returned to the position of housekeeping super-



visor, which he previously held in 2015-16. He has also served as a resident assistant under Student Affairs. Dakota will also continue

working toward a degree which he anticipates finishing in May 2018.

Kent Stetler has worked in student recruitment since his



graduation (BA '15). Having recently worked alongside Chris Lambeth, the previous registrar, during the opening of the 2017-

18 school year, he has now assumed that position. Kent is married to Jananne (Glick). ■



ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE | 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Endowed scholarships are investments that are held in perpetuity, with the money earned from these investments used to provide scholarships to deserving students each year. Our goal is to help ensure that a God's Bible School and College education remains affordable for students and families. We are grateful to the generous donors who have partnered with GBSC to establish the scholarships listed below.

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CHRISTIANS WERE THE MOST PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS GROUP IN 2016

According to a new report from the Center for Studies on New Religions, Christians were the most persecuted religious group around the world in 2016. More than 90,000 Christians were murdered because of their faith last year. This affirms the statement a year ago by then Secretary of State John Kerry that ISIS was carrying out a genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa.

TOO YOUNG TO CROSS THE STREET, BUT OLD ENOUGH FOR A SEX CHANGE

Statistics show that more than 200 children under the age of 14 died in the United States in 2014 after being struck by a car, with another 8,000 surviving their injuries. A new research study conducted at the University of Iowa determined children younger than 14 do not possess the cognitive skills and judgment to safely cross a street. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) seemed to concur and published an excerpt of the study in its Daily Briefing. Some found this quite ironic, given AAP's support for transgender treatment. Michelle Cretella, president of the American College of Pediatricians, a conservative alternative to the

AAP, comments: "This same AAP, however, also frequently promotes the claim that children this age or younger are cognitively capable of deciding that they are the wrong sex.... Moreover, the AAP also deems children cognitively competent to consent to puberty blockers, toxic sex hormones, and mutilating sex reassignment surgery."

STATE OF PASTORS

The Barna Group, in partnership with Pepperdine University, produced "The State of Pastors" report that examined individual perceptions of a sense of calling. The report indicates that, for the most part, pastors remain very assured in their chosen profession: 31% are "just as confident" today as when they first entered pastoral ministry, and 66% say they are even "more confident" now than then. In other findings, more than half of U.S pastors sensed a call to the ministry between the ages of 14 and 21, 85% attended church as children, and 74% were involved in youth ministry as teens.

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY BRINGS BACK TEEN MAGAZINE BRIO

Christian teen magazine *Brio*, a publication of Focus on the Family, was relaunched in May. It is considered to be an alternative to the secular teenage magazines such as *Teen Vogue* and *Seventeen*.



student focus

SARAH McBRYANT spent a number of childhood years in Bolivia, where her parents were missionaries. Always sensitive to spiritual things, she nevertheless chose to "do her own thing" during her later teen years. So God in His mercy allowed circumstances into her life which were painful. However, these caused her to refocus her life, and God radically transformed her.

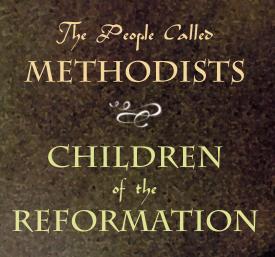
Having previously earned a bachelor's degree, Sarah felt God leading her into music education. After several weeks of praying, she chose GBS because it "has a great music program." She has become more grounded in her faith and has learned many valuable things for her music career.

Sarah dreams of conducting a missions music camp and combining music with counseling for troubled youth. In the meantime she works in the Flexon Memorial Library as the Coordinator for Technical Services, Serials, and Interlibrary Loan while she continues her studies toward a music degree.

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





As Wesleyans, we owe much to both the continental Reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, and English Reformers, such as Wycliffe and Cranmer. The 500th anniversary of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses is an opportunity to look at Wesley's relationship with the Continental Reformers. Wesleyans today are heirs of this Reformation heritage.

IOHN WESLEY AND THE REFORMERS

Wesley shared the Reformers' confidence in salvation by grace alone, through Christ alone, by faith alone. He shared their faith in Scripture alone as the ultimate authority for the believer. He shared their conviction that we live to the glory of God alone. Wesley was committed to the Reformation "Solas."

Martin Luther's influence on John Wesley can be seen in many areas. Wesley's testimony of assurance followed a reading of Luther's "Preface to the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans" at a chapel on Aldersgate Street. Wesley shared Luther's conviction that the common man should be able to read and understand Scripture in his mother tongue. Like Luther, Wesley poured great energy into publishing gospel books and pamphlets. Both men valued hymnody as a vehicle for biblical truth; Charles Wesley's "And Can It Be" became the anthem of the Methodist revival in the same way that "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" was the anthem of the Lutheran revival. John Wesley was indebted both to Luther's message and his methods.

Wesley shared John Calvin's respect for the sovereignty of God. In a letter to John Newton, Wesley wrote that he was only a "hair's breadth from Calvinism." Although this difference proved to be a very thick hair, Wesley shared Calvin's commitment to justification by faith alone, to the doctrine of original sin, and to the sovereignty of God. Despite differences between Methodism and other branches of the Reformation, we share many theological truths in common.

THE REFORMERS' MESSAGE FOR WESLEYANS TODAY

The Reformers greatly influenced John Wesley. The Reformers continue to speak to Wesleyans today. As children of the Reformation, we should value our heritage.

First, in this anniversary year, we remember that the Reformation Solas are as true today as in the time of Martin Luther. Today, as in 1517, we are saved by grace alone, through Christ alone, by faith alone. With Calvin, we recognize that we are saved only because God graciously offered us salvation when we deserved nothing but judgment. The Reformers say to Wesleyans today, "Never forget the centrality of grace in salvation."

Second, in this anniversary year, we remember the ongoing need for grace in the Christian life. Wesley's message of Christian

perfection was never, "You are perfect, so you no longer need confession and repentance." Instead, Wesley's message could be summarized as "because your heart is filled with perfect love, you will be even more sensitive to any hint of transgression against God or your fellow man." Charles Wesley sang:

I want a principle within
Of watchful, godly fear,
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near.
I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or wrong desire,
To catch the wand'ring of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.

Oh, may the least omission pain
My reawakened soul,
And drive me to that blood again,
Which makes the wounded whole.

The Methodists were quick to repent when they failed to live up to God's call to perfect love. Class meetings were not made up of sinners confessing their rebellion against God; class meetings were made up of the

holiest people in the community confessing areas where their performance fell short of their heart's desire.

As holiness people, we need a revival of this spirit of humility. The Reformers remind Wesleyans today, "Never minimize our continuing need for God's grace in our daily life." We are justified by grace alone, we are preserved by grace alone, and we will finish our race victoriously by grace alone.

Third, in this anniversary year, we remember the Reformation understanding of Christian vocation. Roman Catholics divided Christians into clergy and laity, the called and the "un-called." Luther, and later Wesley, responded that God calls every believer to Christian service.

As holiness people, we have sometimes fallen prey to the idea that only those who are called to "full-time Christian service" have an obligation to serve. Too many of us believe that while those who are "called" should give their lives to Christian service, the rest of us are free to spend our lives in any way we choose.



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With Luther and Wesley, we must remember that every Christian is called. The pastor is called to service; the mechanic is called to service; the homemaker is called to service. It is not the pastor alone who does the work of ministry. Instead, the pastor equips the saints (laymen) for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11-12).

THE WESLEYAN MESSAGE FOR OTHER HEIRS OF THE REFORMATION

As heirs of the Reformation, do we have a message for other children of the Reformation? I suggest that our Wesleyan message has much to offer our Reformation cousins in other evangelical traditions.

First, while Luther saw the great privilege of justification by faith alone, he did not see that God's grace empowers the justified believer to live a victorious life. As Wesleyans, we say to our Reformation cousins:



The promise of
justification by grace
alone is greater
than a mere legal
transaction.

Justification begins a
life of victory over
willful sin and everincreasing Christlikeness. Grace does
not excuse us
from obedience;
grace empowers us
for obedience.



"Yes, Luther understood the promise of justification by grace alone. He was right to rejoice that God sees believers as righteous. But the promise is greater than a mere legal transaction; God promises a genuine transformation in the justified individual. In regeneration, we are made new. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live victorious lives. Justification begins a life of victory over willful sin and ever-increasing Christ-likeness. Grace does not excuse us from obedience; grace empowers us for obedience.'

Second, while Calvin rightly praised the sovereignty of God, he did not see clearly that this sovereign God has chosen to offer salvation to every man and woman. As Wesleyans, we say to our Reformed cousins:

"Yes, John Calvin understood the sovereignty of God. However, Calvin did not see clearly that

God's sovereignty is best expressed in His holy love for every person. God's offer of salvation to every man does not oppose man's freedom to God's sovereignty. Instead, God's offer of salvation to every man is the perfect expression of a holy love that willingly chooses to offer grace even to those who may reject it."

Third, while Luther rediscovered the importance of the gospel, he did not fully appreciate the benefit of the law. Wesley saw that a true understanding of the gospel includes appreciation for the law. As Wesleyans, we say to our Lutheran cousins:

"Like Martin Luther, in his early life John Wesley struggled in his attempts to keep God's law in his own power. Both men learned the futility of trying to keep God's law in their own strength. But where Luther decided that Christ's obedience replaces the necessity of full obedience, Wesley came to a more biblical understanding. Wesley understood from Romans, James, and 1 John that the gospel brings the good news that the Holy Spirit empowers every believer to obey God's law."

Finally, Wesley balanced the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer with what Asbury Theological Seminary President Timothy Tennent calls the Doctrine of Sola Ecclesia, the Church Alone. He understood the importance of both the local church and the Church universal. Some of our Reformation cousins ignore the importance of the local church. As Wesleyans, we say to some of our independent-minded brethren:

"The Reformers were right to recognize that every believer can come into the presence of God. But we must not forget that we grow as part of a body, the Church. In a day when individualism has fractured the evangelical church into a thousand splinters, Wesley reminds us that we need the Church—both a local body of believers and the Church universal. Biblical preaching, corporate worship, observance of communion, church discipline, discipleship, and accountability each contribute to our growth as Christians. We do not separate on every difference of opinion. We are not 'holy solitaries'; we are part of a body."

In this anniversary of the Reformation, we celebrate our Reformation heritage and we recommit ourselves to living out those truths in today's world.

Randall McElwain is a teaching pastor at Palm Beach Chinese Christian Chapel in Lake Worth, FL, and course writer for Shepherds Global Classroom. He serves as an adjunct teacher at Hobe Sound Bible College and West Africa Theological Seminary. He was a contributor to the African Study Bible and is the author of Holy Heart, Holy Hands to be released in 2018.

by Robert W. Booth

McKinney

ast summer I drove my Lfamily through bumpy back roads in the middle of a severe thunderstorm that included torrential rain, hail, and tornado warnings. I was on a mission to show my girls the location of Cane Ridge Camp Meeting. After driving for hours, we finally arrived at our destination in Cane Ridge, Kentucky. I parked the van, woke my sleeping family, and excitedly showed them the location where thousands attended the famous revival in 1801. I tried to explain briefly to my young girls the history surrounding this important event, but they THE REFORMATION 500 YEARS LATER...

DOES IT STILL MATTER?

were more excited to be able to run around for a few minutes. We took a family selfie, and as we walked through the little cemetery there, it started raining again and our phones buzzed warnings of a possible tornado. As we rushed to get back into the van, one of my daughters said, "This was a cool place, Dad, but does it still matter?"

"Does it still matter?" That question rings in my mind as I think about the

500th anniversary of the Reformation. To celebrate the occasion, groups of Protestants are making pilgrimages throughout Europe—from Wittenberg, to Geneva, to London. If you enter a bookstore this year, you will find an explosion of books on the Reformation. Playmobil made a commemorative Luther figurine that became the best selling toy they have ever produced.



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ally nothing about the importance of Martin Luther for the Reformation." So the question must be asked, "Five hundred years later, does the Reformation still matter?"

I humbly submit that, yes, 500 years later, the Reformation indeed does matter. Looking back is a crucial key in looking ahead. The Reformation isn't just about an event led by men with long beards and oddly shaped hats. It has lasting implications. There are countless aspects of the Reformation that we could evaluate, but for this article I want to look at courage, conviction, and awakening.

COURAGE, CONVICTION, AND AWAKENING IN THE 16TH CENTURY

While Martin Luther was far from perfect, one of the traits that I most appreciate about him is his courage in the face of evil. While he wasn't expecting a revolution to take place when he nailed the Ninety-Five Theses to the church door in Wittenberg, it took courage to attack the sale of indulgences, which was a money-making mechanism of the Roman Catholic Church. He was relentless in his push against the abuse of indulgences, and then later against the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope. And remember, this took place in dark 16th century, when attacking the Roman Catholic Church was tantamount to requesting to be branded a heretic. And he was.

One of my favorite stories of Luther's courage took place in the summer of 1520. The pope issued an edict called Exsurge Domine, sealed with a red papal seal. The document began: "Arise, O Lord, and judge Your cause. A wild boar has invaded Your vineyard." The pope was calling Luther an animal who was causing havoc. Forty-one of Luther's teachings were deemed to be heretical or false. Luther had sixty days to repent or suffer excommunication. In the 16th century, many men and women would have shivered, folded their hands, and stopped fighting. How did Luther respond? By publicly burning the papal document.

The next year Luther was summoned to appear at the Diet of Worms and officially recant before the young Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who was flanked by an official representative of the pope. When Luther entered the room, he was faced with a table on which were stacked his books and pamphlets. He freely admitted that they were his. Then came the question. "Martin Luther, you have written, you have preached, but faced with the gravity of this situation, will you recant? Will you take back everything you have said to have acceptance of the court?"

Luther asked for an evening to pray. The next day he went back into the assembly room where, in my mind, the entire world was awaiting his reply.

The same question was asked, and here is part of his reply: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of

the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen."

Over the next few years, an unstoppable fire spread. God awoke a darkened world through the Reformation. God used individuals like Martin Luther who courageously stood for their convictions.

COURAGE, CONVICTION, AND AWAKENING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Reformation mattered then, and it matters now. Occasionally people come up to me, look at my wife and three little girls, get a concerned expression on their face, and whisper, "Brother, I can't imagine what its like to raise children in a world that is so dark and hopeless." Now, I know that they mean well, and yes, we do live in a sinful world. But God hasn't gone out of business! My wife and I consider it an honor that God has given us our little family for such a time as this. It is a joy to teach them how to live for Jesus and to let their light shine. Now is no time to look for a concrete bunker in which to hide until Jesus comes. Now is the time to be courageous, to live our convictions, and to represent Jesus to the best of our abilities. Our generation needs to know that we are not alone. Do not let culture weigh you down. Remember that we are surrounded, as Hebrews 12:1 reminds us, not by a sinister dark culture, but by a large cloud of witnesses who have gone down this road before. Sure, times are different, but God hasn't changed. He is still all-powerful. If the Reformation teaches us anything, it teaches us that we should live lives of courage and conviction.

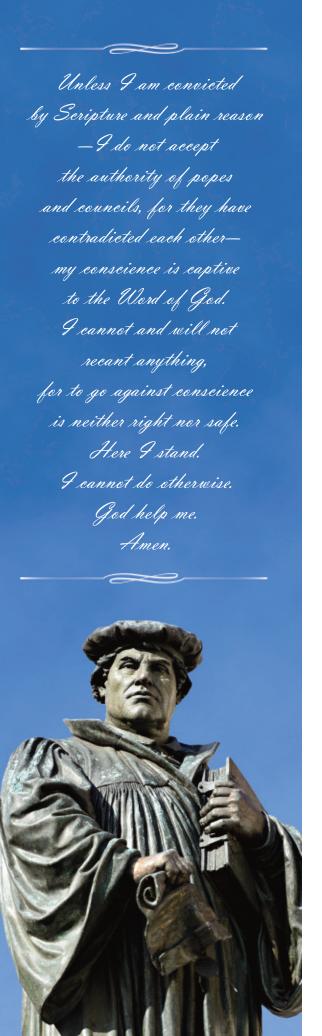
It is not our job to bring the awakening. Our job is to live according to God's plan. He alone brings the awakening. For forty years I have heard about the glory days of the past. As a child, I loved to listen to senior saints talk about the mighty manifestations of the Spirit. But too frequently I hear some say that the glory days are behind us. I reject that philosophy. The same God who was alive then is still alive today. The same God who was living in

the days of the Reformers is still alive today.

What can we learn from the Reformation 500 years later? God is still God! May we lift the banner of Jesus Christ proudly. May we not live in a spirit of fear, but of love. May we not just call ourselves Christians, but *live* as Christians.

Robert Booth is the guidance counselor and high school Bible teacher at Hobe Sound Christian Academy. He has an MA in Theological and Historical Studies from Evangelical Theological Seminary. He and his wife Arlene have three daughters.

GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE



FIVE SOLAS continued from page 11

soli Deo gloria (glory to God alone)

The final sola in this list is the one towards which the other four point. The testimony of Scripture, salvation through faith alone and by grace alone, as well as the life that Christ models all call us to give glory to God alone. This idea of the Reformation is captured in the Westminster Shorter Catechism. "What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

There is also an exclusivity to this glory, for God declares that He does not share His glory with another (Isa. 42:8). According to John Calvin, "We never truly glory in him until we have utterly discarded our own glory.... The elect are justified by the Lord, in order that they may glory in him, and in none else." ¹¹ Thus, to avoid idolatry, *soli Deo gloria* must be more than just a phrase uttered in the Sunday worship service. It must be the reality that overarches the entirety of our lives.

The example of Christ testifies that the pathway to glory leads towards the cross of Calvary. Philippians 2:5-11 presents a V-shaped pattern of the Christian life. Incredible condescension is followed by the ultimate exaltation. Because Christ was willing to humble Himself to the point of accepting death on a cross, one day every tongue will confess His Lordship and God the Father will be glorified. As Martin Luther explained, "It is not sufficient for anyone, and it does him no good to recognize God in his glory and majesty, unless he recognizes him in the humility and shame of the cross." ¹² In the end, all glory belongs to God alone. But the amazing promise of Scripture is that those who share in the sufferings of Christ will also share in His glory (Rom. 8:17)!

As we look back, it is not difficult to find differences of opinion among those involved in the Protestant Reformation. One of the saddest is the way that arguments over the Lord's Supper divided Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli. However, despite those disagreements, it is clear that the principles expressed in the five *solas* were an expression of the Reformation's central concerns. They were essential to the core convictions of this historical movement, and 500 years later they are just as important for Christians today.

Stephen B. Smith is an Associate Professor of Bible & Theology at God's Bible School. After his graduation from GBS (BA '02), he earned an MDiv in Biblical and Theological Studies from Wesley Biblical Seminary (2006) and a PhD in New Testament Studies from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (2017). Before his return to GBS, he taught courses for Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Indiana Wesleyan University and was Associate Pastor at the Wesleyan Missionary Church, Chicago, IL. Stephen and his wife Jessica have three children.

¹ Barrett, Matthew. God's Word Alone: The Authority of Scripture. Zondervan, 2016, p.21.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid

⁴ Trueman, Carl. Grace Alone: Salvation as a Gift of God. Zondervan, 2017, pp.124-125.

⁵ Wesley, John. The Works of John Wesley, Third Edition, Volume 5. Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872, pp.187-188.

⁶ Schreiner, Thomas. Faith Alone: The Doctrine of Justification. Zondervan, 2015, p.54.

⁷ Ibid, p.80.

⁸ Fletcher, John William. The Works of the Reverend John Fletcher, Volume 1. Carlton & Porter, 1833, p.431.

⁹ Wellum, Stephen. Christ Alone: The Uniqueness of Jesus as Savior. Zondervan, 2017, p.311.

¹⁰ Wesley, John. *The Works of John Wesley*, Third Edition, Volume 1. Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872, p.103.

¹¹ VanDrunen, David. God's Glory Alone: The Majestic Heart of Christian Faith and Life. Zondervan, 2015, p.13.

¹² Ibid.

Listher's Beloved Lady

he young German nuns huddled together under the cover of darkness and the protection of a cold tarp. The smell of fish penetrated the night air in this wagon of herring barrels. Influenced by the writings of the "revolutionary" Martin Luther, this group of nuns had grown dissatisfied with life in the convent. Although they found courage to abandon the cloister and abdicate their vows, they needed help. They contacted Luther, asking for his assistance. Luther dispatched a merchant friend who regularly delivered herring to the monastery. It was in his covered wagon that the nuns escaped to Wittenberg.

the nuns escaped to Wittenberg.

From the confines of a tightly structured convent to the freedom of a world outside the cloister would have been a dramatic shift in daily life. The habit and veil would quickly disappear and ordinary apparel was provided. Who would come to the aid of these religious refugees? Doubtless the young escapees would not be allowed to return to their homes and would be subject to suspicion and ridicule. Marriage would be their primary means of a secure future, yet that could be

risky and unpromising.

In this cast of characters who fled the German convent was the young Katharina von Bora. At age sixteen, she had been a fully consecrated nun, taking the vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty. History records that she was devout, dedicated, and attended to her daily prayer times and work assignments with diligence. Now, at age 24, her life took a dramatic turn. Katharina found herself a runaway nun living in Wittenberg. She had been introduced to Jerome Baumgärtner, an alumnus of Wittenberg University. A mutual admiration developed along with a pledge for marriage. However, as the

by Paula Pierpoint

GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE

months passed and no word was heard from her distant suitor, her wedding dreams were dashed. Katharina remained the only member of the convent escapees who had not married or found a means of support.

In time she was invited to live with a well-to-do family, Lucas and Barbara Cranach. Lucas Cranach the Elder was the publisher of Martin Luther's writings. In a bold and courageous act, Katharina indicated that she would be available should Luther's friend Von Amsdorf or Luther himself have an interest in being her life's partner. Although many years her elder, Luther accepted this daring offer.

Marrying a forty-one-year-old bachelor would have had its inherent challenges under any circumstances, but even more so when that bachelor was Luther. This "heretic" husband faced the possibility of being captured and condemned to death at any time. In the 1500s, the marriage of a monk to a nun was not smiled upon by the church or society, as Roman Catholic clergy were expected to remain celibate. However, clergy celibacy was one of the false teachings which Luther openly opposed, and it was a primary reason for his decision to marry Katharina von Bora. This holy matrimony was a hallmark decision with profound implications.

Not a typical woman of the 16th century, Katie (as Martin called her) was a strongminded businesswoman, a practical person. From Martin's literary works, we learn that she possessed confidence and a keen intellect, and she was not dependent on her husband as the sole provider. She was able to attend to the business matters of running a fortyroom boarding house, overseeing farm workers, assisting her husband, and providing for her children. Managing properties while farming and feeding a large household made Katie an example of the Proverbs 31 profile.

Martin's strengths did not extend to the areas of budget and finance—his charitable giving and other spending often exceeded his income. Martin acknowledged that Katie was a better money manager than he, so he entrusted her with financial and secular matters.

Yet, in spite of her supervision of renters and harvesters, Katie's family was her primary concern. It is evident that her motivation for purchasing farms and raising crops was to provide for her family and those who resided at the Black Cloister. This former monastery was named after the color of the robes worn by Augustinian monks who had resided there. After his ordination as a priest in 1507, Martin was sent there to study and continued living there after receiving his Doctor of Theology and serving on the theological faculty at the University of Wittenberg. He left when the turmoil surrounding the Reformation forced him to go into hiding at Wartburg Castle in 1521. Things eventually settled down and Luther returned to Wittenberg and settled into the abandoned Black Cloister. The Electorate of Saxony gave the empty residence halls to Luther. So, it was there that the Luthers took their residence after their marriage June 13, 1525.

Katie was a competent, caring mother. While Luther was sending a papal bull into the fire of destruction, Katie was tending to her own fires at the Black Cloister out of compassionate concern for others. At times, some of Martin's comments on women appear to be degrading. Yet when it came to Katie, there was a mutual respect and admiration. Indeed, his affection for her is evident in a letter written to her while away from home in which he referred to himself as "Your sweetheart."

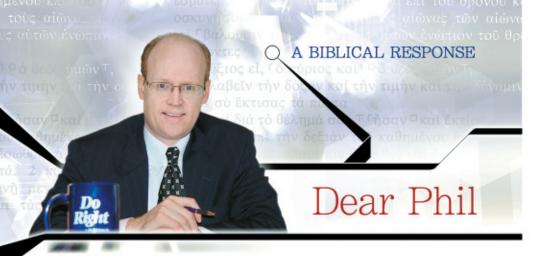
The Luthers had six biological children and cared for up to eleven others at their residence. Their lives were not without personal suffering, for they demonstrated deep grief at the loss of two daughters in their childhood. Martin and Katie experienced the ravages of physical illness and, at times, emotional weakness. When her husband was struggling with depression and fits of despair, Katie creatively attended to his needs. She was regarded as knowledgeable in herbal and natural healing methods. Multi-tasking is not an invention of the modern working woman. Katie epitomized this managerial ability. Although not a public figure, in many ways she seems to be an equal to her renowned husband. On one occasion Luther requested Katie give oversight to a pastoral search committee for a nearby village church. He trusted her, relied on her, and developed a deep and enduring affection for his "dearly beloved Katie."

Through the stalwart leadership, teachings, and writings of Martin Luther, fundamental changes were taking place in the church and in the world. I would also affirm that through the example, deeds, and devotion of Katie, women were beginning to assume a more noble role and respected place in society. In her recent biography, Ruth Tucker offers this assessment of the influence of the Luthers' marriage: "More than any other act, save posting the Ninety-Five Theses, their marriage defined the Reformation. Katie's role cannot be overstated. Truly theirs is the premier marriage of the Reformation."*

Katharina's role in helping to define Protestant family life and setting the tone for clergy marriages is often considered one of the most important results of the Reformation. As the movement's leading lady, Katharina Luther demonstrated an unconventional courage, uncompromising conviction, and unconquerable character. Among the portraits of historic heroines, a light radiates from the countenance of one whom Luther himself dubbed, "The Morning Star of Wittenberg."

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^{*} Tucker, Ruth. *Katie Luther: First Lady of the Reformation*. Zondervan, 2017, 88-89. Bainton, Roland. *Women of the Reformation in Germany and Italy*. Beacon Press, 1971. DeRusha, Michelle. *Katharina and Martin Luther*. Baker Books, 2017.



REFORMATION—INTERPRETIVE ANARCHY AND CHAOS?

Did the Reformation loose interpretive anarchy upon the world? Did it make every believer into a little pope? Does Sola Scriptura generate doctrinal chaos rather than consensus? —Kevin Vanhoozer

Kevin Vanhoozer asks and convincingly answers these questions in his 2016 book *Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity.* He notes that critics of the Reformation point to Roman Catholicism's structural unity and definite authority as a model of the way things should be. In contrast, they charge the Reformation with spawning secularism, skepticism, and church schism. The chief offenders, they say, are the two doctrines of Sola Scriptura and the priesthood of all believers.

On the surface this may seem true. Some Protestants have taught that because Jesus promised his disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth, all Christians need is their Bible and the Holy Spirit. This, unfortunately, misinterprets Jesus and misunderstands how the Holy Spirit leads into the truth. Jesus promised the apostles unique guidance as they founded the church. But even their guidance was not individualistic. In Acts we find apostles consulting together, praying together, and then declaring together, "It seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit."

The Reformation doctrine of Sola Scriptura means that Scripture is the supreme authority for the

Body of Christ and all its members. No other authority, such as the pope or church tradition, stands alongside the truth. However, Sola Scriptura does not mean that Scripture as interpreted by each believer is that believer's sole authority.

The Holy Spirit gives elders teaching authority within the church (Tit. 2:15; 1 Tim. 2:12). Believers are told to submit to that authority (Heb. 13:17). Yet, elders, and even groups of elders, are fallible. Scripture alone is infallible. As my friend, Larry Smith, loves to quote, the Holy Spirit has made the Church as a whole "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Members of Christ's body read rightly Scripture's infallible truth together with other members, under the authority of Christ, and through the illumination of the Spirit.

In other words, when Peter writes "you are ... a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9), he is reflecting the pattern of authority God has established. "Royal" signals authority. "Priesthood" signals community. The plural "you are" signals interdependence, not independence. Practically, this means we seek the truth in Scripture by attending to its message, requesting the Spirit's illumination, committing to obey its commands, listening respectfully to believers from all ages, ac-

knowledging our fallibility, remaining open to correction, and being passionate about truth but temperate in our opinions about its interpretation.

The Holy Spirit has not chosen to lead all parts of the body of Christ into the same understanding of all parts of the truth. This is evident both locally and universally. Yet, the faithconsensus that exists when Scripture is studied in concert with the Church universal under the guidance of the Spirit is amazing. We can affirm together with all the saints, past and present, our belief "in God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered for us, was crucified, buried, and rose again, ascended to the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he will come again to judge the living and the dead; in the Holy Spirit who inspired the Holy Scriptures, who by grace justifies us through faith alone and who also sanctifies us into the likeness of lesus Christ; and in the holy Christian Church, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting."

The Reformers did not loose interpretive anarchy in separating from the Roman church. The Roman church left the catholic faith by making salvation dependent upon works, upon membership in the Roman church, and upon submission to its authority. The Reformation remained faithful to both the unity of the truth and the plurality of the gifts of the Spirit.

I commend Vanhoozer's Biblical Authority After Babel to my readers who enjoy theology and don't mind wading chest deep. I hope this taste whetted your appetite for the full course.

Blessings, Philip **■**

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SOLA FIDE!Justification by Faith through Union with Christ

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

Scripture: Romans 3:24-26

The year 2017 marks 500 years since Martin Luther published his Ninety-Five Theses and launched the Protestant Reformation—one of the most momentous turning points in world history. Led by men of strong faith, deep convictions, and tremendous courage, they shouted to the world that "we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone, standing on Scripture alone."

In this sermon, I wish to address the Reformation and Biblical teaching on **Sola Fide**: justification by faith alone.

I. Mankind's PROBLEM: "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"—Romans 3:23

From the earliest days of creation, God faithfully warned mankind about the danger of sin. He clearly stated the consequences if mankind sinned. He warned, "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:4). Sadly, all humans, except Jesus Christ, have sinned and deserve death (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

II. Mankind's HOPE: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son"—John 3:16

The reason for giving His Son was so that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Peter tells us that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God desires "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). God sent His Son, Jesus, "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). The wonderful truth is that God loves sinful mankind.

Many have asked, "If God is a loving God, why doesn't He just forgive everyone?" They forget that our loving God is also a righteous and just God. For example, if a human judge started showing his love and mercy to criminals by pardoning murders, we'd say, "Wait a minute! That is horrible! That judge is not being just, nor is he upholding the law!" In like manner, God cannot ignore our sinfulness and simply forgive us. There is a penalty for sin that must be paid!

III. God's SOLUTION: "Being justified freely by his grace"—Romans 3:24

Paul reveals God's solution to the dilemma of how a loving and merciful God can be just and yet justify (forgive) sinners—how God can be both a God of love who shows mercy and yet be a righteous God of justice. He provided His own Son, Jesus, to be the "lamb of God" who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29)! Jesus' sacrificial death, through the shedding of His blood, satisfied God's wrath and displays His justice in justifying the repentant sinner.

When Jesus died on the cross, Jesus bore the penalty for the sins of all who will repent and put their faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, if I trust in Him, God can justly forgive my sin. Listen to the Apostle Paul as he explains this vital truth.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:24-26).

In these three verses the following crucial theological terms occur: justified, freely, grace, redemption, propitiation, faith in his blood. Let's briefly explore these concepts.

1. "Being justified"

"Justification" means "the forgiveness of sins." Paul, preaching in a synagogue in Antioch, explained, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*: And by him all that believe are *justified from all things*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

On what basis does God justify (pardon) a sinner? God righteously forgives a sinner based on the union with Christ that occurs the moment a sinner repents of his sin and puts his faith in Jesus Christ. The union

a repentant sinner experiences with Jesus Christ is explained by Paul in Romans 7:4. He tells us that believers in Jesus Christ "become dead to the law by [through] the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Marriage to Christ, occurring at the moment of saving faith, establishes our union with Christ. From that moment forward, believers are said to be "in Christ."

Union with Christ makes it possible for a believer to participate in everything Jesus died and rose again to provide, including justification. By virtue of this union, the believer, who was dead in sin, who was guilty, sinful, and deserving of God's wrath, has been put to death with Christ. Scripture reveals that we are united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:2-5). I am said to be "dead" to the Law, therefore the Law has no claim on me (Rom. 7:4). Further, the debt my sins incurred has been paid. In my union with Christ, all my liabilities were laid on Him. And all that Jesus died to provide and all that Jesus presently lives to provide is mine "in Him." "He was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

2. "Freely"

God's forgiveness of our sins (justification) is "freely" provided through Jesus Christ. The word literally means "without a cause and without charge." It appears in the Septuagint version of Psalm 69:4, where the Psalmist complained to God that his enemies "hate me without a cause." It is translated "free for nothing" in Exodus 21:2 where we read, "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing." It is translated "freely" in Matthew 10:8 when Jesus gave instructions to some of his followers: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

3. "By his grace"

According to Ephesians 2:4-5, God's "grace" is the outpouring of His great love and rich mercy upon undeserving people. God has chosen to justify us freely by His grace. Our justification depends on the free gift of love and mercy. Further, Titus 3:7 tells us "that being justified by his grace, we become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

4. "Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"

Redemption, as applied to humans, speaks of deliverance from slavery. When God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage and slavery, He "redeemed" them "with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments" (Exod. 6:6). In like manner, Jesus has broken

the chains of sin that bound us and has set us free from the slavery of sin. He has redeemed us.

5. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood"

Propitiation is not a word that we use in common conversation. It comes from the ancient religious world, where people offered sacrifices to appease the anger of the gods.

God's wrath against sin is not capricious or mysterious. Rather, it is His settled holy opposition to evil, expressed in both temporal and eternal judgments. What can be offered to God to propitiate Him? Paul tells us that Jesus Christ offered Himself to God as a substitutionary sacrifice for sin, and His sacrificial death is the means by which God's just wrath is turned away from sinners. It took the shed blood of Jesus to redeem us and to appease God's holy wrath (1 Pet. 1:17; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5). The emphasis on the "blood" signifies the life poured out unto death.

6. "Through faith in his blood"

In this phrase, the term "blood" speaks of the entirety of the sacrificial death of Christ. Thus the blood is a metonymy (a part representing the whole).

Faith receives the message of God's love and Jesus' atoning sacrifice and believes that Christ's death is the basis on which God, for Christ's sake, forgives sin and unites the believer with Jesus. As Ralston explains, the grace of God is the original moving cause of our justification. "The efficient cause is the Holy Spirit, 'who takes of the things of Jesus, and shows them unto us.' The meritorious cause is the death of Christ. The instrumental cause, on God's part, is the word of God; but the conditional cause, on our part, is faith." Jesus alone saves, but faith alone enables me to trust Him.

Faith receives the message of God's love and accepts Christ's death as the basis on which God forgives sin and unites the believer with Jesus.

Conclusion

Everything God provided for our atonement comes to us through union with Christ. He has provided forgiveness of sins (justification), regeneration, adoption, sanctification, and glorification. It is through union with Christ that He is our God and we are His people. This truth is expressed so well in the chorus:

He paid a debt He did not owe,
I owed a debt I could not pay;
I needed someone to wash my sins away.
And now I sing a brand new song:
"Amazing Grace."
Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.*

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Sept. 12, 2017

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HOW'S YOUR EYESIGHT?

"Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness."—Luke 11:34-35 ESV

Two individuals side by side, looking at the same object, should see the same thing. Right? Not necessarily. Differing visual acuities, color sensitivities,

wo individuals side by side, looking at the same object, should see the same thing. Right? Not necessarily. Differing visual acuities, color sensitivities, brain function, eye health, or any number of other factors in the complex process of sight could lead to widely differing results. Bottom line—two of us can look at the same thing and see it differently (or not at all). Often we only see what we expect to see. Our brains may not process things that don't fit into our preconceptions or paradigms. Such was the case with the church of the Middle Ages, a church that had sidelined Scripture in favor of papal edicts and a quest for power, influence, and affluence. They possessed the light, they talked about the light, but their eyes were trained not to see it. As a result, darkness descended. But light kept shining—even when sight had failed. It illuminated the gloom of a corrupt church world, and there were some with eyes to see. Men and women like Martin Luther, William Tyndale, Katharina Schütz Zell, and Argula von Grumbach gave their lives to the cause of spreading that light, and the message of salvation by grace through faith traveled like wildfire to hearts ready to receive it. So how's your eyesight? Are you embracing the light? Are your spiritual eyes healthy? Or are you so blinded by your own ideas and selfish pursuits that your light has become darkness? God give us eyes to see!

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



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