

GOD'S REVIVALIST

June, July, August 2018

and Bible Advocate





about this issue

“POP” PSYCHOLOGY

My father was a get-along guy. Even in difficult circumstances, he knew what to say and what not to say, what to do and what not to do. You just couldn’t seem to ruffle his feathers.

He was a kind, humble man. Even when dealing with obstinate parishioners, he remained calm and was careful not to respond in ways that might exacerbate things. One tactic he would often employ was humor. He was smooth. I learned a lot from him, although I wish I had been more consistent in applying those things in my life. Here are a few:

Getting along with people. I honestly never remember my father being mad at or speaking ill of anyone. He wasn’t blind to the faults of others; he just didn’t focus on them. He didn’t allow them to be a barrier to making personal connections. “Everyone has something messed up in his or her life.” Your starting point should be that you are going to like people on purpose, no matter what baggage they may have.

Refraining from arguments. I remember him telling me that he and mother “could argue all the time,” but he chose not to. “It takes two to tango,” he said. When less angelic members of the family were arguing, Daddy would step into the room, mimick playing a violin, and say, “I think it is time to change the tune.”

Maintaining good balance. Daddy once told me that things tend to run in cycles. At times church attendance would be up, while at other times attendance would slump. At times you may feel on top of the world spiritually, at other times down in the valley. I remember him, arm cocked at the elbow, forcibly moving it back and forth while singing, “Sweeping this way, yes, sweeping this way....” He continued by saying that it will not always be like that. Sometimes you will be depressed. His solution was, “Hold steady. Keep doing what you know God wants you to do. Eventually things will improve.”

Making good decisions. Lastly, I recall his advice concerning decision making. First, pray and ask God to help you with the decision; then decide. It may feel like you are deciding “all by yourself,” but just wait. Later, when you are “further down the road, you will look back and realize that God was helping you all the time.”

Thanks, Daddy, for all the lessons you taught us Farmer kids. We love you and miss you! —KF ■

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God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate (ISSN 0745-0788) is published monthly except for combined issues in January-February and June-July-August for **\$12.00 per year (\$28.00, Canada; \$60.00, other countries)** by the Revivalist Press of God's Bible School, College and Missionary Training Home, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Periodical postage paid at Cincinnati, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER: send address changes to God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.**

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

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COVER PHOTO by Kevin Moser: Dr. James Keaton, guest speaker for Commissioning Weekend 2018, and his wife, Carolyn Sue (Cash), both GBS alumni, flank two of their 41 grandchildren, Heidi (Keaton) Potter and Wesley Cragun, who both graduated in the GBS commencement ceremony on May 19.

the president's page



THE BRUISED AND BROKEN

by Rodney Loper, President

We live in a “throwaway” society: disposable diapers, disposable razors, paper plates, plastic forks, etc. And, at times, it doesn’t make sense to fix more expensive items when the repair bills exceed the value of the damaged item. It may be a computer, microwave oven, cell phone, tablet, or even an automobile. Our philosophy is—Junk it. Get another one.

Unfortunately, this “consumer mentality,” which gives little or no value to damaged items, can also influence our thinking about people: troubled teens, broken homes, twisted lives, damaged emotions. Are they really worth the effort? Isn’t there a cost-benefit analysis needed before emotional energy is expended?

Friends, the attitude I am describing is not the attitude of our Savior! The prophet Isaiah proclaimed that the Messiah would place enormous value on individual people. “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench” (42:3). In other words, Jesus will go to great measures to reach out to the bruised and broken, lovingly healing and restoring them.

BRUISED REEDS AND SMOKING FLAX

Hollow reeds grew in the lowlands, along streams and in marshes. From the plenteous supply, a shepherd boy would select one, cut it off, and fashion it into a flute or whistle. But reeds are fragile, easily bruised or crushed, especially when dropped. When that happened, it seemed sensible to throw it away and get a fresh one. It would have been a ridiculous waste of time to try to fix the bruised reed.

In a similar vein, think of a smoking flax. Picture a small clay bowl filled with oil. The flax in

the oil is a wick. When lit, it provides light for the room, but when the oil gets low, the wick chars and smolders. Then smoke curls upward, filling the air. So the homeowner snuffs it out. Enough of this annoyance. Toss the old wick out and get a new one.

But, as Isaiah informs us, when Messiah comes, He will do astonishing things! He will pick up broken reeds and repair them. He will trim charred wicks, enabling them again to give needed light.

LOST SHEEP

What did that look like in practice? In Luke 15, as the “bruised reeds” of society gathered around Jesus (“publicans and sinners” they were called), and the Pharisees and scribes glared in contempt and disgust, Jesus decided it was story time. Let me give you that story in the vernacular of our day.

There was a man who had a bucket of 100 golf balls. He went to the driving range for the afternoon. When he was finished, he went out and started gathering up the balls, managing to find 99 of them. His golf buddies called to him, wanting to leave. It was getting dark and he knew his wife would have supper waiting for him, but he wanted to find the one lost ball. He took a flashlight with \$5.00 worth of batteries and searched through the night. Around 2:00 a.m., when the batteries were nearly dead, he spotted the missing ball. In exultation he ran back to the clubhouse, got on his cell phone, and called those same friends to meet him at Shoney’s to celebrate. Pie and ice-cream! The lost ball had been found!

I know my imagination is running wild, but you get the point. Jesus’ story was about a lost sheep, not a golf ball. The good news is that the Messiah will spare no expense for one lost sheep!

PRODIGAL SON

Keep reading the story in Luke 15 and you will eventually arrive at the wayward son who took life into his own hands. He’s decided to do things his own way, no doubt against the advice and pleading of his parents—against the protests of his conscience. But away he went, and the inevitable happened: he fell to the ground and was broken. He became a bruised and crushed reed. The bright fire of ambition died out as his focus became “survival” rather than achievement. He became a smoldering flax.

But you know the rest of the story. When the son came to his senses, he returned home, fully expecting to throw himself on the mercies of his father with an offer to be his servant, as he had squandered his sonship. At the reunion, the father did not have one word

of condemnation—not “I told you so” or “If you would have only listened.” Only love! Fine clothes! Gold rings! Fatted calves!

THE THIEF

There is one final picture I would offer. Follow Jesus to the garden of suffering where His soul agony literally wrings blood from His body. Follow Him on to Pilate’s courtroom. Witness the horrors of His scourging. Hear the snap of the whip. Hear the hammer driving spikes through His hands while fresh blood flows out of new wounds and runs to the ground. Feel the thud as the cross is dropped in the prepared crevice on Golgotha, and a thief being crucified beside Jesus asks for mercy in his dying breath. How dare he! He dished out misery to others all his life; it seems like he deserves some misery as well. His “worthless” life was flickering, smoldering... going, going, almost gone. But Jesus was there! And as the smoldering flax gasped out one last faint cry for mercy, “the smoldering flax He did not quench!” No, He said, “Today you’re coming with me to paradise!”

CONCLUSION

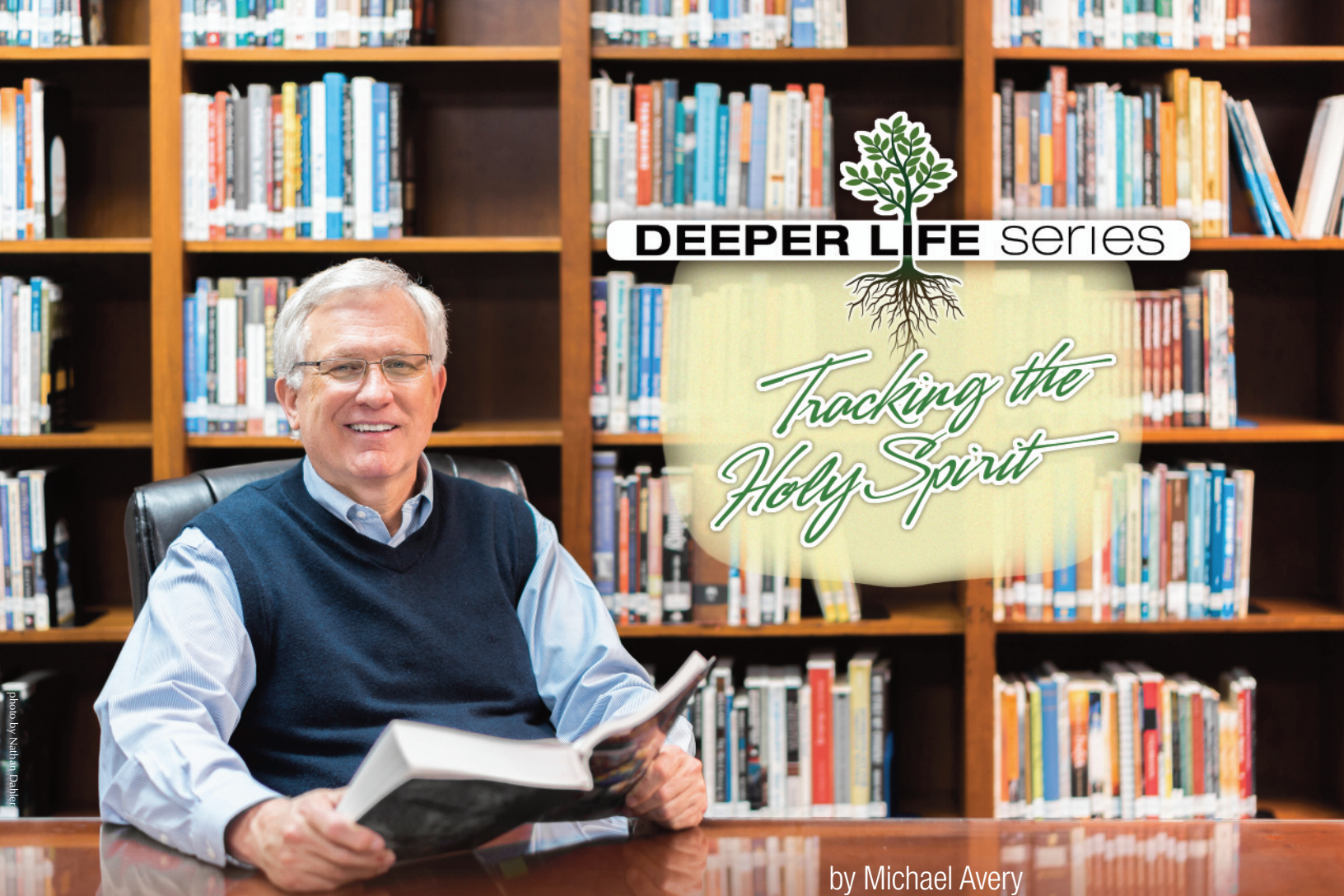
Look around today. We’re living in a world of “bruised and broken reeds.” People are hurting, although it is not always obvious. A wound might be hidden behind obnoxious behavior, loud and crude talk, or brash and cocky attitudes. The wounds are real, nonetheless.

Some time ago, I read an article about some of the hurts that the author had experienced in life. He said that he got to the point where he determined the best way to deal with his hurt was to accept the fact that no one could help or protect him, and that he was on his own. I read those words and my heart broke. This is the kind of person Jesus came to heal.

Friends, I don’t know what hurt you are dealing with. I don’t know the pain that may exist just below the surface in your life. But I do know that Jesus loves you—just as you are. He doesn’t want to leave you there in your pain. He wants to show you that His love for you is real. Experiencing His love and grace is the starting point of real healing.

Too often people see the church as a place for perfect people. Broken and bruised people say that it’s not for the likes of them. Jeremiah 18 gives us an example of what God wants to do with broken vessels. He tells Jeremiah to go down to the potter’s house for a lesson. While there he watches the potter work with some clay. When there was a marred or broken piece of clay in the potter’s hand, he did not throw it away. Instead, he reshaped it into what he wanted it to be.

Aren’t you glad that God does not throw away lives that are broken and twisted by sin? ■



DEEPER LIFE series

Tracking the Holy Spirit

by Michael Avery

The Goal of the Holy Spirit in Spiritual Formation

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. —2 Corinthians 3:18

While visiting his grandparents, a little boy decided to entertain himself. His grandfather in passing asked, "What are you doing?" to which he replied, "I'm drawing a picture of God." Amused, his grandfather said, "You can't do that because nobody knows what God looks like." To which the little boy responded, "They will when I get through!"

Imagine with me that you are on your knees praying, and you ask the Holy Spirit, "Why are you so busy in my life? What are You up to?" And He replies, "I am transforming your inner person—renovating your whole character into the image of Christ." "Why?" you respond, "Nobody knows what He looks like!" To which He replies, "They will when I am done with you."

No serious Christian can escape the question: Is there a single divine strategy that unites all of the many-sided

works of the Holy Spirit as a means to one end? Is there a goal to which His work of empowering, enabling, purifying, and transforming is ultimately directed? The Holy Spirit clearly mediates the presence of Jesus to us so that we may know and experience personal intimate fellowship with Jesus. He constantly seeks to assure us of the certainty of being loved and accepted as "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). But His one single objective in all of this is to transform our personal character into the likeness of Christ—that is, to make us holy!

Why Holiness?

I believe the aim of God in human history is the creation of an all-inclusive community of loving persons with God himself at the very center as its prime

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Sustainer and most glorious Inhabitant.¹ This is what God had with Adam and Eve before the fall. It is what He will have in the new heaven and earth, and it is what He is working toward right now in the whole scheme of redemption through the Church. Holiness, then, is both God's gift as well as His command. It is the goal of all His providential dealings with us (Eph. 1:4; 5:25-26; Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 7:1). The Holy Spirit is the chief agent in implanting a passion for holiness in our hearts at the moment of our new birth and in making it a reality through the whole process of His sanctifying work in our hearts and lives.

What Is Holiness?

Holiness is a thoroughly biblical concept that is divinely revealed through the biblical writers. Any adequate definition of holiness is based on God's holiness and His call to us that we "be holy" (I Peter 1:15; Matt. 5:48). We know the character of God only through God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and through the Bible's witness to Him. And we know the holy life to which we are called as Christians only because God has revealed it to us through the life of Christ and through the Scriptures.² Therefore, in a word, holiness is God-taught, Spirit-wrought Christlikeness.³ The very first words Jesus spoke to His disciples, "follow me," had not only *directional* implications but also *replicational* implications. If we claim to be followers of Christ, then we must be like Christ. In the very last sermon John Stott ever preached, he stated that Christlikeness was God's eternal purpose (Rom. 8:29); is presently His historical purpose (II Cor. 3:18); and will be His final eschatological purpose (I John 3:2).⁴

What Does Christlikeness or Personal Holiness Look Like as It Is Formed in Us?

If holiness looks like the restoration of the image of God in us, then holiness also looks like Christlikeness, for Jesus Christ is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15) and the "exact imprint of his nature" (Heb. 1:3). It is in Christ that we have the best, most practical, most human example of what it means to be holy. He is our model for love (John 13:34; Eph. 5:2); He is our model for easy, relaxed obedience (John 6:38; 14:31); He is our model for humility (Phil. 2:5-8); He is our model for virtue or moral blamelessness (Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 6:12-14); He is our model for steadfastness (I Peter 4:1-2); He is our model for complete dependence on and total cooperation with the Holy Spirit (John 5:30; John 15:5; Gal. 5:25).

Is It Really Possible?

Union with Christ (Rom. 6:5-6), putting on Christ (Rom. 13:14), identifying with Christ in His death and

resurrection (Rom. 6-8), following after Him in obedient love (John 14:15), and walking in the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5) all have serious behavioral ramifications that clearly impact the way we live and conduct our lives. So, yes, it is possible to live a Christlike life. However, it is not possible in our own strength. It is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. As we experience both the instantaneous workings of the Holy Spirit and the incremental progressive workings of the Holy Spirit, our outer conduct can and should become a natural expression or outflow of the character and teaching of Jesus.⁵ This is the primary goal of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the chief end to all spiritual formation. 📖

Michael Avery is the former president of God's Bible School and College (1995-2017) and its current chancellor. This is the fifth article in a series.

1. Willard, Dallas. Quote in *Eternal Living: Reflections on Dallas Willard's Teaching on Faith and Formation*, Edited by Gary Moon. InterVarsity Press, 2015, p.39.
2. LeClerc, Diane. *Discovering Christian Holiness: The Heart of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*. Beacon Hill Press, 2010, p.34.
3. Packer, J.I. *Keep in Step with the Spirit: Finding Fullness in Our Walk with God*. Baker Books, 2005, p.81.
4. Stott, John. *The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of Our Calling*. InterVarsity Press, 2014, p.31.
5. Willard, Dallas. *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*. NavPress, 2012, p.22.

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

"The Discipline of the Spirit"

"The Holy Spirit's Tools for Spiritual Formation."


ALDERSGATE
FORUM

**Entrusted with the Gospel:
The Pastoral Epistles & The Church**

October 23-25

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Father of all fathers, and of Jesus Christ our Lord,

Fatherhood is a great mystery. The calling is majestic, and the dangers real. We love our children, and we long to love them better, but we fail so frequently.

We worship You as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and marvel at the perfect fellowship You enjoy with Him. He is Your pristine image, the radiance of Your manifold perfections. You love Him with an infinite fullness of love, and Your love is returned in fullest measure.

We are therefore amazed at the choice You have made, together with Him.

For sending Him into our world, for crushing Him at the cross, for raising Him from the dead, and for seating Him at Your right hand—so that we might be reconciled to You and adopted back into Your family—we are astonished, and we bow in worship.

Now may we shadow You, our Father, until we become Your shadow to our own sons and daughters.

We need...

Your truth to shape us,
Your love to fill us,
Your wisdom to guide us,
Your strength to gird us,
and Your grace to cover us.

Instill in us...

the virtue to lead,
the wisdom to instruct,
and the fortitude to endure.

Form in us integrity our children can trust, and faith they can follow. Teach us to love them on their worst days, and especially our worst days.

Teach us to know Your Word, our times, and their hearts, so that we might steer them well through the storm-tossed harbor, till we commit them fully to You and release them to the open seas.

With all our fatherly burdens, help us...

love without reservation,
discipline without anger,
teach without hypocrisy,
listen without distraction,
and care without coddling.

Make us men who...

give freely,
hug warmly,
confess quickly,
laugh often,
and listen long.

Make our wisest words sink in, and our most foolish fade away.

May they remember mainly the smile of our favor, and recall our anger and disappointment only in ways that warn them well against the many wanderings that will tempt them in days to come.

When those days arrive, and they stumble and fall, help us bring the gentle conviction and abundant mercy You Yourself have shown us.

All along the way, help us at all times...

to do all that we should do,
say all that we should say,
give all that we should give,
and withhold all that we
should withhold.

Raise us up as we raise them up. Forgive our sins as we forgive our children's. Protect our hearts so that we might protect theirs.

Grant them Godspeed and safe passage, Lord, for You know how much we love them, how much we fear for them, how our hearts swell at their best joys and ache over their follies and sins and sufferings.

Answer these prayers, our Father, that our children might know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, rise together like a mighty host, and give body and soul in faithful service to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be merciful to us, O Lord, and to these little ones You have given us to love in Your name. Make our children Yours, we pray, in the name of Your Son, our Lord,

Amen. 🕊

A Father's Prayer

by David A. Gundersen

David Gundersen pastors in Houston, Texas. This prayer from his blog, davidagundersen.com, is used here with permission.

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from **FAKE Pilot** to **REAL Dad**

Frank
Abagnale's
Thoughts on
Fatherhood and
Being a
True Man

by Randy Hynes

"There are many who write
and say, 'Well, you were
certainly gifted.'

That I was. I was one of
those few children who got
to grow up in the world
with a daddy."

You won't recognize his name, and by his own admission he prefers it that way. He never desired that there would be an award winning film, Broadway musical, or television series based on his life. He would rather you know him for the man he has become, not the boy he was.

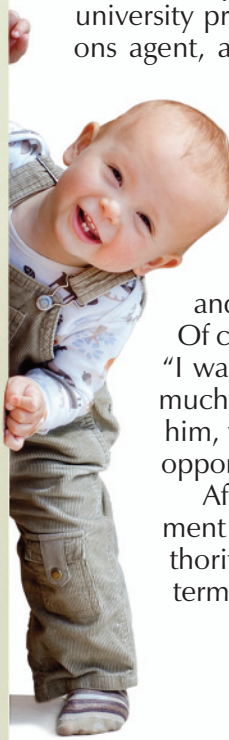
Frank Abagnale was one of four children. He vividly and affectionately remembers his father: "Every night at bedtime he'd walk into your room. He would drop down on one knee, kiss you on the cheek, pull the cover up, put his lip up on your earlobe, and whisper deep into your ear, 'I love you. I love you very much.' He never ever missed a night."

Frank displayed an early proclivity toward conning people—including the father whom he adored. Unbeknownst to him, his mom and dad were having marital difficulties. One day a teacher at the Catholic school he attended took him to meet his parents in family court. At the difficult age of 16, he learned from a judge that his mom and dad were getting a divorce and that he would have to choose to live with one or the other. Overwhelmed with emotion, he began to cry. Then he ran from the courtroom. It would be seven years before he would see his mother; as for his father, he would never speak to nor see him again.

It was the mid-1960s, and Frank headed to New York City. To survive, he became a confidence trickster, check forger, and imposter with fabricated identifications showing himself to be 10 years older than he actually was. Before his nineteenth birthday he had become a charlatan extraordinaire and had performed cons worth millions of dollars. It is estimated that between the ages of 16 and 18 he flew more than a million miles, boarded over 250 aircraft, and visited 26 countries, all by posing as an airline pilot. Later he would pass himself off as a university professor, a physician, a U.S. Bureau of Prisons agent, and a lawyer. In his own words, "No one ever doubted for a minute."

While on the lam in France, he was arrested and imprisoned. During the time he was languishing in a pitch-black cell thousands of miles from home, his father fell while climbing the subway stairs in New York City, hit his head on a railing, and landed at the bottom of the steps—dead. Of course Frank didn't know his father had died. "I was thinking about him. Thinking about how much I couldn't wait to see him, hold him, hug him, tell him how sorry I was. But I never got the opportunity to do that."

After extradition and an additional imprisonment in Sweden, he was turned over to U.S. authorities. Back in the States, he was given a jail term of 12 years. However, after serving only four



years, Frank was released on the condition that he would help federal authorities investigate crimes committed by scam artists. This led to his work with the FBI, with whom he has been associated for over 40 years.

REPUDIATION OF FORMER LIFE

Frank and his wife reared three sons in Tulsa, Oklahoma, living in the same house for 25 years. Their neighbors had no idea about Frank's past, and he would have preferred it to stay that way. But a Hollywood producer made a motion picture based on Abagnale's autobiography because he felt compelled to share the incredible tale with the world. As Frank put it, "He loved the redemption side of the story."

Many are enamored with Abagnale's past, but he is quick to point out its reality. "Some say, 'You were brilliant. You were an absolute genius.' I was neither. I was just a child. Had I been brilliant, had I been a genius, I don't know if I would have found it necessary to break the law in order simply to survive. And while I know that people are fascinated by what I did some 50 years ago as a teenage boy, I've always looked upon what I did as something that was immoral, illegal, unethical, and a burden I live with literally every single day of my life... and will until my death."

Due to his work at the FBI Academy and expertise in fraud prevention, cybercrime, and identity theft, Abagnale was recently asked to speak at Google.* As one would expect, his talk was laced with personal anecdotes and insights into cybersecurity. What came as a surprise was his emphasis on family and his convicting reminder to all fathers about what it means to be a dad.

CHILDREN NEED A DAD

As Abagnale sketched his life for the tech-savvy audience, his tone took a turn—a heartfelt detour that ignored cultural norms and reinforced how important it is for every child to have a mom and a dad.

"When I was...sixteen years old, I was just a child. All sixteen-year-olds are just children. As much as we'd like them to be adults, they're just children. And like all children, they need their mother and they need their father. All children need their mother and their father. All children are entitled to their mother and their father. Though it's not popular to say so, divorce is a very devastating thing for a child to deal with, then have to deal with it the rest of their natural life.

"A complete stranger—a judge—told me I had to choose one parent over the other. That was a choice a sixteen-year-old boy could not make. So I ran. How could I tell you my life was glamorous? I cried myself to sleep until I was nineteen years old. I spent every birthday, Christmas, Mother's Day, and Father's Day in a hotel

room somewhere in the world where people didn't speak my language. The only people that associated with me were people who believed me to be their peer—ten years older than I actually was. I never got to go to a senior prom or high school football game."

SAY, "I LOVE YOU"

The internationally known security expert not only focused on the family unit, but he also offered insight into the power and practicality of three words we often take for granted—three simple words that are a password providing strength and security for our loved ones.

"There comes a time in all of our lives...if we're fortunate enough, we have children. And as every parent knows, whether your child is three months old or thirty-eight years old, when you lay your head on a pillow at night and you're just about to close your eyes, the last thing you think about, the last thing you're worried about is your children.

"So if you still have your mother, if you still have your father, give them a hug, give them a kiss—tell them you love them while you can."

WHAT IT TRULY IS TO BE A MAN

As Abagnale brought his talk to a close, he spoke directly to the men. With poise and conviction, his words were crafted to carry weight. And while he didn't refer to or quote Scripture, he could have referenced Paul's admonition in Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it," for his closing words contained eternal values.

"And to those men in the audience, both young and old, I would remind you what it truly is to be a man. It has absolutely nothing to do with money, achievements, skills, accomplishments, degrees, professions, or positions. A real man loves his wife. A real man is faithful to his wife. And a real man, next to God and his country, puts his wife and his children as the most important things in his life.

"I've done nothing greater, nothing more rewarding, nothing more worthwhile, nothing that's brought me more peace, more happiness, more contentment in my life than simply being a good husband, a good father, and—what I strive to be every day of my life—a great daddy." ■

Randy Hynes is a marketing manager, freelance writer, and Men of Integrity board member. He currently resides in Indiana with his wife Melissa and their three boys. Having survived a near-fatal explosion, Randy understands what it is to "walk through the valley." With a love for Christ and passion for the outdoors, he is focused on ministering to men through one-on-one discipleship.

* Speech given by Frank Abagnale during Google's Security and Privacy Month, published on YouTube 11/27/2017 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsMydMDi3rl>.



SWSE SPRING TOUR

The Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble sounded forth the

themes of intentional discipleship and “making our lives count for the cause of Christ” during its spring tour. Conducted by music faculty member David Hartkopf and assisted by faculty accompanist Jessica Smith, the orchestra presented spirited symphonic renditions of gospel music interspersed with inspiring vocal numbers and heartfelt student testimonies. Those attending the services reflected upon God’s faithfulness as President Rodney Loper and Vice President Marc

Sankey each officially represented GBS on different parts of the tour.

Pennsylvania pastor and experienced bus driver Andy Cooley safely navigated the group to venues in Ohio and Pennsylvania from March 23 to 28. The tour provided opportunities for GBS alumni to reconnect with and show their support for the school during a GBS alumni banquet and rally, hosted in Lebanon, PA. Noted by Mr. Hartkopf was the large group of spiritually-minded college seniors who set the tone for a God-honoring tour.

VIP DAY 2018

VIP Day 2018 was a tremendous success! Nearly 200 guests, 160 of whom were prospective students, graced our campus for our college open house on Friday, April 20. With campus and city tours, mini classes, divisional time, a parent/sponsor session, recreation, and a humorous banquet, the event schedule was packed. About 20 guests even joined



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.

WEDDING



Esther Easley to Paul Peak, June 1, 2018, at Bradley United Methodist Church, Greenfield, IN, with Rev. Ray Easley and Rev. Ray Peak officiating. Paul has worked in Christian school music, church music ministry, and piano technology for several decades, including substantial stints in the music divisions of GBS (1978-1985) and Hobe Sound Bible College, Hobe Sound, FL (1992-2008). Paul will continue to serve as associate minister of music at his local church, online professor at Indiana Wesleyan University and Lee University, and

piano technician and rebuilder. Esther is retiring from Hobe Sound Bible College after 31 years of teaching music and serving as minister of music and organist at a variety of churches, and will be assisting at Peak Piano Service, Roanoke, VA, where the couple plan to live.

BIRTH



To Laura (Hinton) (2012-13) and Meredith Lee Moser (HS '89, AA '97, BA '05), a daughter, **Evelyn Faith**, born September 15, 2017, at UC Medical Center, Cincinnati, OH. Meredith taught in the ministerial division of GBS (2006-14) and now pastors Immanuel Church of the Nazarene, Highland Heights, KY. Laura operates a home cleaning business. Evelyn is welcomed by her older brother, Ian Meredith (2).



members of our campus ministry teams downtown, handing out bottled water and gospel tracts and staffing a prayer station.

President Loper delivered a passionate message during the Friday evening service, challenging the attendees to live lives with “nothing being held back from the Kingdom of God.” With many prospective and college students alike going forward to pray, this was a perfect conclusion to this year’s event!

LOCK-IN

On May 4, the annual Student Government-sponsored Lock-In was held at Sports of All Sorts in Florence, KY. From 11:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m.,

GBS students, family, and friends had exclusive use of the facility. They participated in volleyball, basketball, and other games while enjoying pizza and drinks. A good time was had by all.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Stephen St. Germain, a GBS student from Terre Haute, IN, recently began assisting Debby Byer in the cafeteria and plans to continue on staff in the fall. Stephen graduated with a ➡



DEATH



Richard Clinton Watters, 82, of Tecumseh, MI, passed away March 3. He was born in 1935 in Morenci, MI, to George and Hazel (Andrews) Watters. In 1955, he married Mary Ann Baughey. Richard worked for American Chain and Cable. He was the superintendent and music director of the Pilgrim Evangelistic Tabernacle for more than 40 years. Later he attended the Adrian First Church of the Nazarene.

Richard is survived by his wife Mary Ann; three sons, Jeffrey, Michael, and Jonathan (GBS 1995); two daughters, Pamela and Teresa; three brothers, Albert, Paul, and George; sister, Alberta; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at Anderson-Marry

Funeral Home in Adrian, MI, with Pastor Larry Betz officiating. Burial followed in Lenawee Hills Memorial Park, Adrian, MI.

HITHER AND THITHER AMONG US



Steven Hight recently stepped down from the presidency of Evangelistic Faith Missions, Bedford, IN. He will continue to stay busy teaching Bible and theology classes 4 to 6 weekends a year for a Hispanic group in Indiana, traveling for EFM, doing translation work for Shepherds Global Classroom, teaching Bible at a Hispanic camp in Indiana in July, and being involved in pulpit supply. “...And I’m trying to fit in some private, personal enhancement study in holiness with Dr. Phil” (Philip Brown of GBS). ▀

Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies in May.

We are indebted to Teresa Cravens for 13 years of service to her alma mater, including as GBS Business Manager, and wish her well after leaving the school's employ. Rebecca Pohl has been assisting in the Cashier's Office while continuing her studies in the college department. Additionally, **Anthony Arender** of Fordland, MO, moved to campus mid-May to become the new Business Manager, effective May 22. Anthony had worked in sales at Byler Building Supply in Seymour, MO, for the past 12-and-a-half years. He and



his wife Adrian have four children, Alexa (11), Ashlyn (8), Alec (7), and Alyssa (3). We welcome the Arenders to the campus family!

MUSIC DIVISION ENDS YEAR WITH CONCERTS

The Music Division ended the spring semester with two presentations. On Thursday, May 10, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Adcock Memorial Chapel, the Oratorio Choir with alumni guests, directed by Mr. Tim Crater and accompanied by Mrs. Martha Miller (piano) and Ms. Jessica Smith (organ), performed



excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. Soloists included students Autumn Quesenberry and Erica Biggers, as well as alumni Nick Pop, Joy Barnett, and Isaac Owens. A highlight of the evening was Chair Emeritus Garen Wolf conducting "Since By Man Came Death."

On Tuesday, May 15, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Adcock Memorial Chapel, the Division of Music presented "Memories," an entertaining evening of concert music with the

Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble. The performance featured a 50-piece orchestra with Mr. David Hartkopf as director and Ms. Jessica Smith accompanying. Chair Emeritus Garen L. Wolf was a guest conductor on the program. In addition, the orchestra also included several guest musicians from Stone City Christian Academy and their teacher, Mrs. Ronna (Hughes) Craig (BSM '94).

Dr. Jana Pop, Chair of the Division of Music, expresses deep appreciation for the generosity of individuals who have contributed to the Music Patron Program, thus enabling the presentation of guest master classes and recitals throughout the year, as well as scholarships for upperclassmen to attend professional workshops and events. Persons who are interested in making contributions for the coming year should contact Dr. Jana Pop: jpop@gbs.edu or (513) 763-6547.

COMMISSIONING WEEKEND

Commissioning Weekend began Wednesday evening, May 16, with a Candlelight Celebration Service featuring the graduating college seniors. Students, staff families, and visiting guests first gathered in the chapel for a time of singing and student testimonies. Afterward the participants moved to the south lawn where several students were baptized in a portable baptistry. The service culminated in a candle-lighting ceremony. A large number of small flames lit the hillside as a reminder that soon many would be leaving campus to minister in various parts of the world.

Guest speaker for Commissioning Weekend was Dr. James Keaton. In addition to being a worldwide evangelist, pastor, and author, Dr. Keaton has had a lifetime of leader-

ship accomplishments, including positions as Vice President of GBS, President of Union Bible College, and President of Florida Evangelistic Association/Hope International Missions. Two of his grandchildren were in the GBS College Class of 2018 (see cover photo and information at the bottom of page 2).

His opening sermon on Thursday evening was from 2 Corinthians 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ." One of his points answered the question, "What is the responsibility of an ambassador?" He suggested three things: representing the best interest of one's country, offering assistance to other homeland people, and not being distracted from one's purpose. Dr. Keaton closed by reminding students that, while they may be going home for their summer vacation, there is no vacation from being the Lord's am-

bassador. This service, as well as each one following, can be viewed on GBS Facebook:

- Friday PM: Unforgiveness: The One Thing That Will Destroy Your Life (Matt. 6:9-15)
- Saturday PM: The Journey from Egypt to Canaan (Ex. 6:2-8)
- Sunday AM: Need for a Present God (Psa. 23)
- Sunday PM: Identifying with Christ (Luke 9:57-62)

COMMENCEMENT

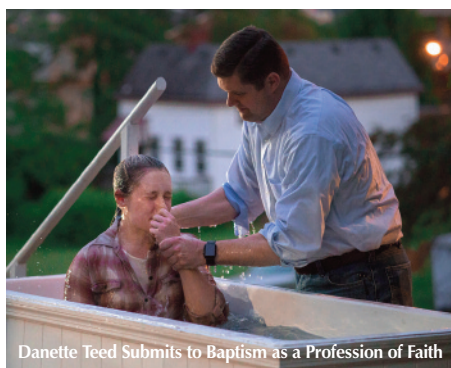
College commencement exercises took place Saturday morning, May 19, in the Adcock Memorial Chapel. President Rodney Loper conducted the service, with Mrs. Martha Miller as organist.

Mrs. Rachel Collins of Hobe Sound, FL, delivered the invocation, and Jose Martinez of Guadalajara, Mexico, read the Scripture lesson. Special music, "Take My Life," was sung by Brittany (Potteiger) Albright, accompanied by Ms. Jessica Smith (piano) and Melissa Jackson (flute).

Dr. James Keaton's commencement address focused on having a vision. He warned that there will be those who will attempt to discourage you from pursuing your dream. "If God has given you a dream, don't let anybody destroy it." Noting that dreams and common sense were often the same, he said, "Rely on common sense unless God gives special instructions." The purpose of a dream is to lift us above medioc-



Song and Testimony



Danette Teed Submits to Baptism as a Profession of Faith



Go Light Your World!



Dr. James Keaton



The Hooding of Benjamin Highley



College Valedictorian, Merilee Barnard



David Martinez Receives Two Awards



Rev. Mark Cravens Receives Teaching Award

ity, to articulate a cause, to help us close a chapter (perhaps on past failures), and to believe for a new tomorrow. Dr. Keaton urged the graduates not to be satisfied with going from these halls to a life of mediocrity. Rather, capture a dream and get others to come along.

Presenting college graduates was Dr. Aaron Profitt, Vice President for Academic Affairs. Merilee Joy Barnard was recognized as valedictorian, and Michael Scott Sobie as salutatorian (in absentia). The chairs from GBS's academic divisions presented the following student awards:

Division of Ministerial Education (Dr. Allan Brown, Chair): *Zondervan Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of Biblical Greek*, Cale Manley; *Zondervan Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of Biblical Hebrew* as well as the *Oswald Chambers Ministerial Leadership Award*, Jose David Martinez Pulido; **Division for Professional Studies** (Lyle Witt, Chair): *Educated Christian Award*, Travis James Stroup; *Oscar Johnson Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Service*, Melissa Brielle Crosley; *Student Teaching Award*, Heidi



Dr. James Keaton Delivers the Commencement Address



High School Graduates of Aldersgate Christian Academy

Michele Potter; Charles Cowman *Missions Leadership Award*, Emily Sue Wolf; **Division of Music** (Dr. Jana Pop, Chair): *Music Division Award*, Motoo Hamada.

Dr. Philip Brown, Director of the Graduate Program, introduced Benjamin Tyler Highley as the first graduate earning the MA in Ministry. Dr. Stephen Smith performed the hooding.

Dr. Aaron Profitt presented the biennial *Excellence in Teaching Award* to Professor Mark Cravens. Nominations for this award are submitted by students and based on two key elements: academic excellence and student centeredness.

President Loper conferred the degrees on the Class of 2018 and Rev. Doug Eads of West Blocton, AL, offered the benediction.

ACADEMY GRADUATION

Aldersgate Christian Academy held its graduation ceremony at 7:00 p.m., May 24, in the Adcock Memorial Chapel, where Principal Timothy Makcen and GBS Academic Dean Aaron Profitt presented 12 high school graduates with diplomas. Special recognition was offered to Karissa Bird, valedictorian (previous page, bottom; front row, third from right), and Lauren Lambeth, salutatorian (previous page, bottom; front row, far left). Four graduates received Academic Honors Diplomas and blue-and-white tasseled cords in recognition of their excellence in academic achievement for having completed honors courses: Karissa Bird, Helen Feseha, Mekdelawit Galicha, and Kayli Pommering. The ceremony also honored six students graduating from eighth grade to high school: Aidan Carter, Landell Collins, Lia Crawley, Breanna Loper, Yoselyn Perez Ambrocio, and Gina Welch. Rev. Travis Johnson, Pastor of Kenwood Bible Methodist Church, gave the address, "Finishing Strong." ■



2018 GRADUATES* OF GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND MISSIONARY TRAINING HOME

HIGH SCHOOL

Christopher Baker
Karissa Bird,
Valedictorian
 Veda Coleman
 Caroline Crater
 Abigail Gresham
 Anna Donohue
 Helen Feseha
 Mekdelawit Galicha
Lauren Lambeth,
Salutatorian
 Kayli Pommering
 Joshua Wina

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS IN BIBLE AND THEOLOGY
 Leonard Jordan Sankey

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS IN GENERAL BUSINESS
 Jessica Lynn Earls

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS IN GENERAL STUDIES
 Jessica Danae Behm
 Marlissa Marie Brandon
 Hayden Britt
 Erin Nicole Collins
 Jessica Brooke Evans
 Phyllis Ann Null
 Victor Ivan Perez
 Sarah LeAnn Shaffer

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
 Jack Lee Ashcraft
 David William Cody
 Cook *
 Bobbie Jo King
 Nathan Rhett Miller *
 Silas Andrew Perkins

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN CHURCH AND FAMILY MINISTRY
 Kevin Bradley Howell

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN CHURCH MUSIC (NON-PERFORMANCE TRACK)
 Ilyssa Danielle Myers *

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN CHURCH MUSIC (PERFORMANCE TRACK)
 Motoo Hamada *

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTEGRATIVE STUDIES
 Aaron Antonio Trincado
 Alegria
 Khulan Baigalimaa **
 Jannah Marie Bond *
 Whitney Beatrice Collins
 Wesley Ray Cragun
 Scott William Craig
 Melissa Brielle Crosley **
 Jessica Nicole McKim *
 Michael Glenn McKim
 Rachel Renee Pohl *
 Dakota Russell Powell *
 Stephen Michael
 St. Germain
 Emily Sue Wolf *

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTERCULTURAL STUDIES AND WORLD MISSIONS
 Joshua Daniel Atkinson

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MINISTERIAL EDUCATION
 Jose David Martinez
 Pulido **
Michael Scott Sobie,
*Salutatorian ****

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MUSIC EDUCATION (K-12 NON-PERFORMANCE TRACK)
 Brittany Lanea Albright *
 Melissa Benecia Jackson

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MUSIC EDUCATION (K-8 MUSIC EDUCATION AND CLASSROOM EDUCATION TRACK)
 David Jonathan Medellin
 Gomez

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION (ELEMENTARY)
Merilee Joy Barnard,
*Valedictorian ****
 Morgan Ashlin Martin
 Heidi Michele Potter

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION (SECONDARY ENGLISH)
 Travis James Stroup *

GRADUATE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS IN MINISTRY
 Benjamin Tyler Highley

★ pending completion of all course requirements
italics indicates graduates in absentia

* Cum Laude (3.50-3.79) ** Magna Cum Laude (3.80-3.89) *** Summa Cum Laude (3.90-4.00)

Dear Phil

BIBLE INCLUDED IN “DON’T HAVE TO READ” LIST

Major news outlets recently quoted GQ magazine as having listed the Bible among books that you “don’t have to read.” They called it one of the most overrated books of all time: “It is repetitive, self-contradictory, sententious, foolish, and even at times ill-intentioned.” How can a Christian respond to an unbeliever who feels the same way? —Kent

Hi, Kent,

There is a range of options for responding which includes (1) defend the Bible, (2) critique the attack, (3) engage the attack’s basis, and (4) explore the attacker’s background.

Our first impulse is to say, “That’s not true! Here, I’ll show you.” We then set about to show how Scripture’s apparent discrepancies are not contradictory. Or, we argue that repetition is a function of Hebrew literary style. Or, we show how commanded genocide is consistent with God’s love, and so on. Key books that help deal with apparent discrepancies are Gleason Archer’s *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*; John W. Haley’s *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, and Walter Kaiser’s *Hard Sayings of the Bible*.

A second option is to critique the attack. For example, “What are some examples of the contradictions and foolish or ill-intentioned texts in Scripture? How do you know these things are contradictions, foolish, or ill-intentioned?” If they can give examples, then apply option one above. Don’t let red herrings like “everybody knows this” or vacuous claims like “there are

so many, I don’t know where to start” sidetrack you. Insist on evidence. Since there are plenty of contrary evaluations, you can ask, “How do you explain that some of the brightest minds of western civilization (Isaac Newton, Immanuel Kant, C.S. Lewis) characterize the Scriptures as without literary peer? A helpful resource along this line is *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* by Kennedy and Newcombe.

A third approach is to engage the attack’s basis. Ask, “Have you read the Scriptures? If so, what part did you read and what did you expect to find when you read it? Did you know the Bible is a collection of books and not a single book?” The questions and expectations you bring to a text often determine what you hear or don’t hear it saying. Whether they have read the Scriptures or not, you can offer your personal testimony. You’ve read the Scriptures many times and, hopefully, have encountered things in the text that raised questions for you. But, every time you investigated them, they turn out to have a reasonable explanation. i.e., you haven’t found evidence of what they are claiming. It’s hard to

dispute your testimony without hard evidence. Josh McDowell’s *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* and Fee and Stuart’s books *How to Read the Bible for All It’s Worth* and *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* address this angle. These first three methods may help strengthen the faith of weak believers, but they rarely convert attackers into believers.

The fourth angle seeks to show attackers love by exploring their background. Step around the attack and demonstrate you care more about them as a person than you do about proving them wrong about the Scriptures. You might say, “That’s interesting. Have you been hurt or offended by someone who claimed to be a Christian? Has someone wronged you and justified their actions by appeals to the Bible?” It’s very common for animosity toward Scripture to be rooted in hurtful experiences associated with the Bible or church—for example, the use of the Scriptures to sanction the crusades or to sanction physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. In cases like this, we should be quick to express our grief at their hurt, affirm abuse is always wrong, and make clear that such wrongdoers were misusing the Scriptures. Hopefully, this approach opens the door to sharing what the Scriptures teach about loving others as ourselves. A person who is obeying the Scriptures will treat others with respect and pursue justice for the victims of injustice. The fact that people abuse prescription drugs doesn’t justify banning prescription medicines. And, the misuse of the Scriptures doesn’t justify abandoning their proper use. *Questioning Evangelism* and *Corner Conversations* by Randy Newman will help you work on this angle.

Blessings,
Phil ■

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



RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN CANADA

The Canadian government has taken positions on sexuality without the consent of its citizenry. Alberta's Child and Family Services barred a Christian couple from adopting a child because their religious views about sexuality were incompatible with the official government position. Additionally, Ontario passed a law giving state agencies the power to prevent families from adopting or fostering children if the parents would not affirm the child transitioning their "gender identity" from male to female or vice-versa.

GENERATION Z IS THE MOST NON-CHRISTIAN

"Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs, and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation," a recent survey from the Barna Group, said that teenagers who are part of Generation Z (born from 1999 to 2015) are the most non-Christian generation in U.S. history. Of Generation Z teens surveyed, only 4% have a true biblical worldview. Additionally, 35% say they are atheist, agnostic, or unaffiliated with any religion compared to 30% for Millennials and Generation X and 26% for Baby Boomers.

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS AMBASSADOR IS CONFIRMED

The U.S. Senate confirmed former Kansas Governor Sam Brownback as Ambassador-at-Large for

International Religious Freedom. The ambassador and the International Religious Freedom office as a whole are responsible for monitoring religious persecution and discrimination worldwide, in addition to developing programs and executing policies that encourage freedom of religion or belief.

GOOD DEEDS EASE STRESS

"The sheer volume of stressful events occurring on a near-daily basis can make people feel pessimistic or fearful," said researcher Emanuel Maidenberg, a clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA. He claimed that making a donation or volunteering your time to help others can ease feelings of helplessness. He also advised doing more leisure activities, getting more exercise, maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, and limiting exposure to news.

MORE GOVERNMENT, LESS GOD

A recent study concluded that "if a secular entity provides what people need, they will be less likely to seek help from God or other supernatural entities." Some are also connecting this to a failure in family structure, saying that the family has failed and government has stepped in. The study "Religion as an Exchange System: The Interchangeability of God and Government in a Provider Role" was conducted by the University of Rochester and the University of Utah. ■



student focus

MELISSA JACKSON grew up in the Cayman Islands, the youngest of six children. She attended Wesleyan Christian Academy from pre-school through high school, graduating as valedictorian in 2013. GBS was a positive influence in her life during that time. "From my teachers at WCA and revival speakers at my church, to the GBS Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble coming to minister in Grand Cayman, I feel God used these influences to point me in the direction of GBS."

Being at GBS has definitely helped her "grow as a person" and develop her "God-given gifts and talents." Those talents include playing the flute. "The knowledge I have gained here, as well as the experiences, especially travelling with SWSE and ministering in services, has helped to prepare me for ministry."

Melissa graduated in May and plans to use her musical talent to serve in some way, "whether it be teaching lessons or helping with music in the church." ■

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



— Called Unto Holiness —

In this space we use writers both past and present to discuss various aspects of Christian holiness.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, NOT ADAMIC PERFECTION

by Richard Treffry

It is asserted that if believers were wholly delivered from sin, and cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit of this world, they would be restored to the state in which Adam was before his fall, and not only have sinless souls, but deathless bodies.

In answer to this, we say that Christian perfection and Adamic perfection are widely different. Adam's perfection was a perfection of nature, coeval with his creation; ours is a perfection of grace, grafted upon nature. The former was involuntary and gratuitously bestowed with the concurrence of the human will. The latter is chosen, solicited, and obtained by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Adam's perfection was highly intellectual as well as moral. He possessed a clearness of understanding, a correctness of judgment, a comprehension of mind, and a knowledge of God and His works, to which the most perfect Christian lays not claim since Christian perfection is not a physical restoration of our lapsed powers to their pristine intellectual vigor, but a moral restoration to the image of God, which consists in righteousness and true holiness....

Adam's perfection extended to the whole human... but Christian perfection is not a universal perfection; it leaves the body exposed to death, it neither prevents the encroachments of disorder nor the attacks of pain. It saves the soul from sin, yet the effects of it will be sensibly felt by the total enervation of its powers and the physical debasement of its faculties....

If natural death were entirely the result and consequence of every man's personal sin, there might be some ground for concluding that a salvation from all sin would ensure a deliverance from death; but death is the penalty and desert of original sin and the effect of the divine decree on Adam and his posterity. Hence immense numbers are cut off out of the land of the living before the commission of actual sin; and the holiest men upon earth must

die, not merely because they have been sinners, but because they partake of a nature on which the original curse is entailed; and because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Thus St. Paul declares, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." For "when Adam had actually tainted his soul with sin, and his body with mortality, sinfulness and mortality actually tainted all his offspring then in his loins...."

If the highest degree of personal sanctity of which the human spirit is capable could obviate the approach of death, it would follow by an inevitable consequence that in proportion as any man approximated towards that most desirable consummation, his body would gradually become invulnerable against disease; and longevity be the never-failing concomitant of piety.

"But there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not." Eminent saints can no more claim an exemption from death than notorious sinners; "we must needs die." Holiness deprives death of its terror, but not of its dominion; it extracts its poison, but it cannot check its progress. Two individuals have gone to heaven without passing through the gates of death; but we have no authentic records to prove that this high honor was conferred upon them in consequence of their singular and sinless sanctity. Even could such a position be admitted, it would not prove the necessary existence of indwelling sin; but it would furnish a most indisputable evidence that the destruction of sin has no essential connection with the dissolution of the body. ■

Richard Treffry (1771-1842) was a theologian, author, and itinerant minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Great Britain, serving as conference president in 1833. This excerpt is from *A Treatise on Christian Perfection* (McDonald, Gill, & Co., 1888, pp.59-61).



WALKING THROUGH THE VALLEY

by G. Clair Sams

Scripture: Psalm 23

Text: *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4 NKJV)*

What anguish is felt when a loved one passes away! I would be dishonest if I didn't admit that in moments of deep loss I wrestle with understanding the larger issues of life. The answers are not simple. There are answers, but they are often complex. At times we understand, but, because of the limits of our humanity, we often do not.

Yet, in these times of wondering, we realize that others have had questions as well, such as David expresses in Psalm 121:1: "From where is my help to come?" Think also of Thomas' words to the Lord in John 14:5: "How can we know the way?"

Transition causes us to think. The uncertainty reminds us that we must face the fact of difficulties and death. Death is an everyday reality. I know that in my head, but I have a hard time facing that in my life and in the lives of those I love. I do not want to accept that reality. Probably you do not either.

Alongside the difficulties of life is the reality of faith's strength. Knowing there are deeper questions than answers need not turn us away from faith. As certain as the difficulty that rises in troubled times is the confidence that is lifted in faith.

The songwriter E.E. Hewitt wrote,

*"My Faith has found a resting place,
Not in device nor creed;
I trust the Ever-living One
His wounds for me shall plead."*

Finding a resting place for faith brings some balance to life. Faith helps us remember there are significant issues in life. Faith also helps us walk through today's reality. The psalmist invites us to walk with him. Notice that he wrote about *"walk[ing] through the valley of the shadow of death."*

The familiarity, poetry, and beauty of the Twenty-third Psalm have a different tone when we are wrestling with death or deep difficulty. The shadow is dark and the valley is long and deep. I will not mislead you by denying that reality or by letting sentimentalities echo off the valley's walls. The valley is real and the shadows are real. That does not mean, however, that you and I are without hope.

I. Life at times is like a deep valley.

The fact that David describes a difficult place in one's journey as a valley is significant. He does not describe it as a violent sea, a stormy mountain, or a lifeless desert. He paints a picture of a valley—that area at the foot of a mountain, not very far from the mountaintop where it is easy to envision the omnipotent God of peace. While traversing the valley, evil seemingly lurks around every bend in the road. The psalmist even attaches the term "death" to the imagery!

If you have spent any time traveling, you know that there are valleys that must be crossed. Although valleys are indeed real, they are not all there is to reality. If there are valleys, there are also mountains and stretched-out plains. In other words, not all of life involves navigating valleys; but when valleys are unavoidable, you can have the courage to walk carefully and confidently.

Let me also point out that the psalmist mentions the shadow in conjunction with the valley.

II. Life at times seems to be a dark shadow.

Death is a dark shadow. *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow...."*

The shadow of death may be our reality today. When we are not far removed from suffering a deep loss, it seems as though there is no other reality. Shadows may be all we can see at such a moment. Yes, we all face shadows. Each person wrestles with shadows, especially when walking through the valleys of difficulty. The shadows may be dark and seem to stretch beyond the foreseeable future.

But there is another reality! A greater reality! The shadow suggests a question: What is one thing necessary for a shadow to exist? The answer to the question is *light*. The difficulty causes the shadow, but there can be no shadow without light. And the darker the shadow, the brighter the light. Even when we don't see it, the light accompanies us through the valley. It is already a present reality.

That light does not undo what has happened or magically make everything different or better. Please don't hear what I have just said as a simple answer or trite explanation. It is not. However, the reality of the light offers a way forward.

The light is our hope. I don't know when or where or how it will happen for you, but I promise you this, there will be moments when you catch glimpses of the light, and the day will come when the light pierces the shadow.

The light has been with us from the beginning. It's trustworthy. It never fades. The shadow cannot overcome or extinguish it. Until that day comes when the light pierces the shadow—and it will—our challenge, our hope, and our way forward is to put one foot in front of the other. That is easier said than done. Sometimes it takes all our strength just to take the next step. That's why we must stay close, walk together, and continually remind ourselves and one another that a shadow cannot exist apart from light.

Remember this, the light that we now speak of is our Lord God! He is known to us as Jesus. He said of Himself, *"I am the light of the world."* He is Light and offers to us the power of His resurrection. This Light brings us good news, binding up the brokenhearted and comforting those who mourn (Isa. 61:1-3). The Light is the One seated on the throne of God saying, *"See, I am making all things new"* (Rev. 21:2-7).

But along with the valley and the shadow, the psalmist David also mentions a path.

III. Remember, this is a temporary path.

One of the most significant words in Psalm 23 is one that we frequently read without giving it much thought. It is a little word of reassurance offering inspiration and hope. The word is "through."

David spoke of a walk *through* the valley. It is not a walk *into* the valley. It is not a walk *in* the valley. It is not even a walk *around* the valley. Instead, the journey is *through* the valley.

This thought of walking through the valley has to be one of the most powerful in this Psalm. The journey is a walk. When we walk, the intention is to move from one location to another.

Life is a journey, a walk that each person is taking. The reality is that our journey always takes us through valleys. Remember though, the valley and the shadows are not permanent.

David did not go into detail about the time spent walking through specific valleys. In fact, the length of the walk becomes insignificant once the discovery is made that the valley-portion of the journey is temporary. His presence gives us the confidence we need to

pass through the valley. Making a safe passage is possible because the Lord has promised that He will walk with those who trust Him.

This is the greatest encouragement of all! While we appreciate the Light illuminating our path through the valley, we also have the Shepherd by our side.

IV. On the path there is a caring guide: the Shepherd.

Yes, the great foundation for hope in this Psalm is found in the fact that the Shepherd is walking with us. David wrote, *"The Lord is my Shepherd...."* We are not alone in these circumstances or in any other. The Shepherd has walked this way before us. He knows exactly what we need to safely make the passage. But, most importantly, He has promised to walk *with* us.

There is little in life more frightening than loneliness—especially in difficult times. Our walk does not need to be alone. Family and friends are extremely important in the darkness of shadows. However, the best of company for our journey is the caring Shepherd. He makes Himself available to us, comforting us with His rod and staff.

Take one step at a time. The Light is always shining behind the shadow, and the shadow will never overcome it. John wrote that Jesus is the Light of the world, and the darkness will never overcome the Light (John 1:5).

If you don't know the power of God's light and life, you may. Though you are walking through a dark time, you may, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have the warmth and beauty of the Lord's light. His presence is available as we confess our need of Him and, by faith, rest in His forgiveness.

We *will* walk through the valley—but we need not do so alone. The Good Shepherd is by our side! *"The Lord is my Shepherd. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me."* ■

G. Clair Sams (BA '05) is editor of The Bible Methodist and manages the media for The Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. He is a graduate of Bible Missionary Institute and God's Bible School and College, where he earned a BA in Ministerial Education. He was ordained in 1969 and his ministry has included Heartland Conference President (16 years), pastoral experience (30 years), and service on several mission fields in short-term mission ministry. He founded and served as president of Mission Focus, served on the board of Society of Indian Missions Canada, as well as on various other boards and committees. Clair presently leads "Let's Pray" prayer conferences and speaks in camp meetings, revivals, and weekend church services. He and his wife, Melba, have four children, fifteen grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.



ALUMNI CHOIR REUNION

by Joy (Bender) Barnett (BA '00)

On Saturday, March 17, 2018, a large group of former College Choir members who had sung under the direction of Garen L. Wolf I (Music Division Chair 1976-2010) met together to share a day of reunion. The event was graciously hosted by alumni Rod (1980-84) and Joni (Lang) (1981-82) Puckett at Montgomery Assembly of God in Cincinnati. The Cincinnati Alumni Choir Planning Committee, consisting of Matt (1998-00) and Joy (Bender) Barnett (BA '00), Paul (BA '81) and Robyn (Myers) (BA '82) Clemens, and Rob (BA '99) and Stephanie (Thompson) (BA '99) Ryan, organized the event. Participating

alumni arrived from several states, including Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama, Missouri, and Michigan.

The reunion began at 10 a.m. with Dave (1975-77) and Connie (Collingsworth) (BA '78) Hilligoss overseeing registration. A delicious brunch was provided by the host church. A lovely memorabilia table greeted the guests. Decorated by Heather (Bryan) Dickinson (BA '97), it displayed old choir uniforms, photographs, and other memorabilia.

A full-day children's program, provided by Steve (AA '06) and Korin (Reiner) (BA '07) Harms, and a staffed nursery for children under three allowed parents to relax fully and enjoy the reunion. Organizing the children's registration was Lisa (Burton) Robinson (BA '02).

During the morning rehearsal, Garen Wolf conducted songs that had been part of the choir repertoire throughout his

tenure. Martha (Madden) Miller (BSM '82) provided piano accompaniment, along with Jessica Smith (BA '07), on the organ. Tears flowed and hearts were blessed as voices from different decades blended together in praise.



Following the rehearsal, Professor Emerita Sheila Wolf (GBS faculty 1976-2012), wife of Music Chair Emeritus Garen Wolf, shared some inspiring devotional thoughts. The group then ate a meal provided by the event planners and others.

Don Davison (BRE '83) and Duane Quesenberry (BA '94) hosted "Traveling Light: Humor from the Road," in which they shared some of the amusing stories from years of choir travels. A fun and raucous auction, with Garen Wolf as auctioneer, followed with items donated by Garen and Sheila Wolf.

The alumni choir then moved back to the sanctuary for an afternoon rehearsal. Several soloists and groups, including Valorie (Bender) Quesenberry (BSM '94), David Bittinger (1995-97), Seth Wetherald (BA '05), Rhoda (Bell) Miles (BA '05), Heidi (Holmes) Easley (BA '04), Joy Barnett, and Sarah (Wolf) Fry (BA '00), were part of both rehearsals and added so much to the excitement of the day.

At the close of the afternoon rehearsal, alumni children joined with their parents to sing "Loving God, Loving Each Other." In a moving moment, Garen Wolf wept and prayed a blessing over his former choir members

and their families. It was an incredible day that drew alumni together as they laughed and cried, shared memories, worshiped, and sang.

Pictures of the event were provided by Brenda (England) Herring (BA '05), of Herring Photography. Alumni who have sung in GBS choirs under the direction of Garen Wolf may find more information by joining the Facebook group: GBS Alumni Choir (1976-2010).

IHC ALUMNI RECEPTION

by Maria Stetler (BA, AA '12)

Our annual alumni reception was held Wednesday, April 18, during the Interchurch Holiness Convention in Dayton, OH. More than 400 alumni and family members gathered to enjoy a light meal, fellowship with classmates, and hear updates from campus. Alumni President N. Keith Waggoner (HS '74, college 1974-75) shared the exciting news of both recent and upcoming regional alumni events. In 2018, events have taken place or are planned in Lebanon, PA;

Pell City, AL; St. Marys, OH; and Nampa, ID. Also promoted was our annual Homecoming to be held on October 12-13, 2018. We look forward to welcoming alumni back to the Hilltop for Homecoming 2018!

President Rodney Loper (BA '01) shared about various campus projects and news from recent months. Campus improvements were made by refurbishing the entrance doors to the Standley Administration Building to include the school logo. Also, to increase safety and accessibility, new steps were added to the ramp that leads from main campus to the Miller/Deets Student Center. Recently, a 300-year-old Torah was donated to the school with the stipulation that it should be used and physically han-



dled by our students and staff. What a great opportunity for our students to be able to see and touch this piece of history! An original writing desk owned and used by Oswald Chambers was donated to the school by the Oswald Chambers Publication Association. The OCPA, based in the United Kingdom, will be meeting on campus in our Oswald Chambers Room this fall.

Vice-President Marc Sankey (BRE '94) thanked participants in the 1810 Sustaining Donors Program who give on a monthly basis to GBS. Through graphs and charts, VP Sankey demonstrated the impact these gifts have on the "bottom line." He shared President Loper's goal to have 1,000 members by 2025 and challenged others to get involved. As a result, a number of new members joined. Special gifts were distributed to all 1810 Sustaining Donors.

In closing, alumnus John Parker (BRE '78) offered a prayer of blessing over the school and our alumni. We are thankful for each alumnus who was able to attend and for each of our corporate sponsors who make events like this one possible (www.gbs.edu/sponsor). ■

Alumni are encouraged to email updates and pictures of their lives and ministries to Maria Stetler, mstetler@gbs.edu.

Left (previous page): Alumni Association President Keith Waggoner addresses the gathering. Bottom (previous page): Vice President Marc Sankey gives an update on financial development. Immediately below: Alumni and staff line up for a light lunch. Bottom (this page): President Loper poses with alumni who have recently had additions to their families.



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THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

INVESTMENT

"In the path of your judgments, O LORD, we wait for you; your name and remembrance are the desire of our soul. My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you."

—Isaiah 26:8-9a ESV

If you are a Christ-follower today, there was a moment when you passed from death to life, a moment when you were born of God. But a deep, meaningful relationship with the Almighty doesn't happen in a moment. Instead, it is the result of purposeful cultivation and careful maintenance. It is the work of a lifetime. Often when I read Scripture, I am gripped by the longing and passion of the writers' hungering after God. Isaiah's words speak of waiting, remembering, yearning, and seeking. They convict me of how impatient I can become when my maturity in Christ doesn't develop overnight. They remind me that I will never sense that depth of hunger unless I nurture it and make it a priority. In an age of Instagram and Instapots, an authentic, passionate relationship with the Creator is more like vintage photography and fine dining. It takes meticulous care and a significant investment of time. Valuable things are not created overnight. IKEA furniture, while serviceable, will never be mistaken for sturdy, well-built antiques. Quality takes time and effort.

Do you yearn for God? Do you hunger for Him? If not, don't despair! Invest. Seek. Cultivate. Wait. The passion will come. The longing will deepen. The love will intensify. But it won't happen by accident. ■

Sonja Vernon is Director of Student Affairs at God's Bible School.

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2018



MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND Homecoming 2018

OCTOBER 12-13

MORE INFO AT GBS.EDU/HOMECOMING

Friday

5:00 – 6:30 PM	Homecoming Dinner
6:30 – 7:00 PM	Kickoff Concert
6:45 – 8:30 PM	Children's Program
7:00 – 8:30 PM	A Hilltop Homecoming: Music and Memories
8:40 – 9:30 PM	Graeter's Ice Cream Social
9:30 – 10:00 PM	Best of GBSC Talent

Saturday

8:30 – 10:00 AM	Breakfast Buffet
8:30 – 10:00 AM	25/50-year Class Reunion Breakfast
10:30 AM – 2:30 PM	1810 Street Festival
11:00 – 11:30 AM	Campus Tour
1:00 – 1:30 PM	Cincinnati Tour

