

GOD'S REVIVALIST

November 2018

and Bible Advocate



honoring our Veterans





about this issue

RETURN FROM USAF

I was saved a couple of weeks after my discharge from the U.S. Air Force. I had worked in “intelligence” as a Morse Systems Operator. Except for a brief set of classes for advanced specialized training held at Clark Air Base in the Philippines, I was stationed at the 6921st Security Wing at the Air Base in Misawa, Japan. I basically snooped on military assets in then-USSR and China for over three years. Yes, I saved the free world in the 1970s!

I know it doesn’t happen this way for everybody, but when I was saved, I received instant release from several bad habits that had grown increasingly problematic over the previous seven years. Of course my attitude changed—I was radically remade...a brand new Christian.

I felt like I needed to let my Air Force buddies know this, so I penned a letter of testimony to them, describing what had happened to me. I remember signing it “Your Sacred Agent, Farmer” and hoped they would get the joke. I knew this change would be a real shock. They had intimate knowledge of the “old Farmer” and would not be able to imagine the “new Farmer.”

Some weeks later, while at home by myself, a knock came to the front door. There stood a young man whom I did not know. He asked, “Are you Ken Farmer? Recently out of the Air Force?”

Of course I was intrigued. I assured him I was the person he was seeking. It turned out that when my Air Force buddies received my letter, not surprisingly, they could not believe it. Could Farmer have actually changed? (We referred to each other by last name or by a nickname.) So they found someone who was headed back to the states on leave and asked him to drop by my house—just to ask me directly if it were true. A journey of over 10,000 miles brought him to my door.

I was happy to let him know that I had indeed been converted and no longer smoked, drank, or cussed. “Yes, tell all my friends in Misawa that Farmer is a changed man.”

Thank God for my time in the Air Force. It helped me to get to a place where I was aware of how desperately I needed help—help that only God could give. Also, as a result of my service, my GBS degree and my first graduate degree were paid through the GI Bill. Plus, I receive my healthcare from the Veterans Administration Medical Center. I am indeed blessed! —KF ■

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COVER: Photos of Elmer Farmer and his tank crew surrounded by some of his medals. Background illustrations ©iStock / Andrey_Kuzmin / breakermaximus

the president's page

PATRIOTISM AND FAITH

by Rodney Loper, President

Military service was always held in high regard in the Loper house. Both of my grandfathers served in the military—one in the Air Force and the other in the Navy. Grandpa Loper served in France during WWII and would often share stories with us when my family spent the night at my grandparents' home. I remember the first glimpse I had of the tattoo on my other grandfather's arm. He was always embarrassed about his "foolish" behavior while serving in the Korean War era that led to the tattoo. Although he always tried to keep it covered, I did happen to see it peeking out from under his T-shirt as he shaved one morning. Grandma told stories of her younger brother coming home in a flag draped coffin from the front lines in Germany. For her, Pete was a national hero—he paid the ultimate price by laying down his life for our nation.

It is interesting that our expressions of patriotism and faith are similar. Our political and personal freedom was won by the sacrifice of veterans. Our spiritual freedom was won by the sacrifice of Christ.

However, I wonder if we sometimes get the flag and the cross confused. In the same breath, we may recite the pledge to the flag of the United States, the Christian flag, and the Bible.

Some assert that you cannot be a Christian without being patriotic, and vice versa, you cannot be a real patriot without being a Christian. I believe we would all agree that as American Christians, we are indeed twice-blessed, but we must not get the two confused. As great as the United States is, the kingdom of God is greater! As wonderful as our freedom is here, our freedom in Christ is better! As proud as I am to be an American, I am much prouder of being a Christian! Being a Christian is far more important than our national origin. We must never forget this—even in the midst of our patriotism!

It concerns me that sometimes in our quest to be patriotic we gloss over some major un-Christian



behaviors, such as racism, classism, sexism, bigotry, and neglect of the poor. Although America, more than any other country, may be a better place for even the most marginalized of our citizens, it is not always what it should be. As Christians, regardless of our earthly citizenship, we are called to show Christ's love to a lost world.

This means we cannot embrace or condone things that are contrary to Scripture. We must look for ways to build bridges to the marginalized of society instead of erecting barriers and criticizing from our ivory towers. It has always been the duty of the Christian to lift up the underprivileged and the outcast. Study the path of Christianity throughout history and you will see that Christianity always leaves elevated civilizations and human rights in its wake. Is this our duty as Americans? Yes, it is; but it is even more our duty as citizens of His kingdom.

I believe that our founding fathers came together as they did, in large part, because they believed in this truth. They formed a country based on their belief "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." This sounds like a quote from Scripture rather than a quote from the Declaration of Independence. The founders' belief in these universal, eternal truths gave fertile ground in our young country thus allowing the growth of a society in which people of faith enjoy more freedom than anywhere else in the world.

There are some who believe God has a special place in His heart for the United States. While I believe we have indeed experienced His blessings, I do not believe that we are His favorite child. Scripture is clear that He is a Father to all those who confess their sins and place their faith in Him regardless of their earthly address.

So, what does this mean for those who are blessed to live in these United States? I believe our mandate is clear: "To whom much is given, much is required." We have a greater responsibility to demonstrate biblical values to a world that needs to hear the good news of the gospel.

Once again, patriotism and faith seemed nearly to have merged at times, especially in those situations where it was necessary to maintain and propagate freedom. In such cases, we have had to drive back the forces of evil with armed might. As a result, the same liberty we enjoy as citizens of the United States of America has extended

to many countries and opened the door for citizens of heaven to spread the message of Christ.

Mark Twain said, "Loyalty to the nation all the time, loyalty to the government when it deserves it." For us as Christians, this means our loyalty is to those biblical principles to which our government aspires but does not always achieve. There may well come a time when our government takes a path we cannot in good conscience follow, and we must stand where God stands. Patriotism must never supersede faith!

Most of us will never put on the uniform of our country—less than one percent do. Regardless of this, there is something we can do. We can reflect God's values to our world. Jesus said that doing something as small as offering a cup of cold water in His name is significant because we do it as unto Him. As ambassadors of the heavenly kingdom, we must use the freedom we enjoy as citizens of the United States to carry on His work. This may be by serving in the military, a governmental position, or another setting in which God places us. Whatever or wherever we serve, when evil rears its ugly head, when bigotry spews its hatred, when sexism devalues, when racism seeks to divide, when people wonder where God is, may our lives be such that they see Him in us!

The reason we stand for the pledge, the national anthem, and when the flag passes by is because of the rich heritage we have as a nation

of doing good around the world. Good all the time? No. Good most of the time? Yes.

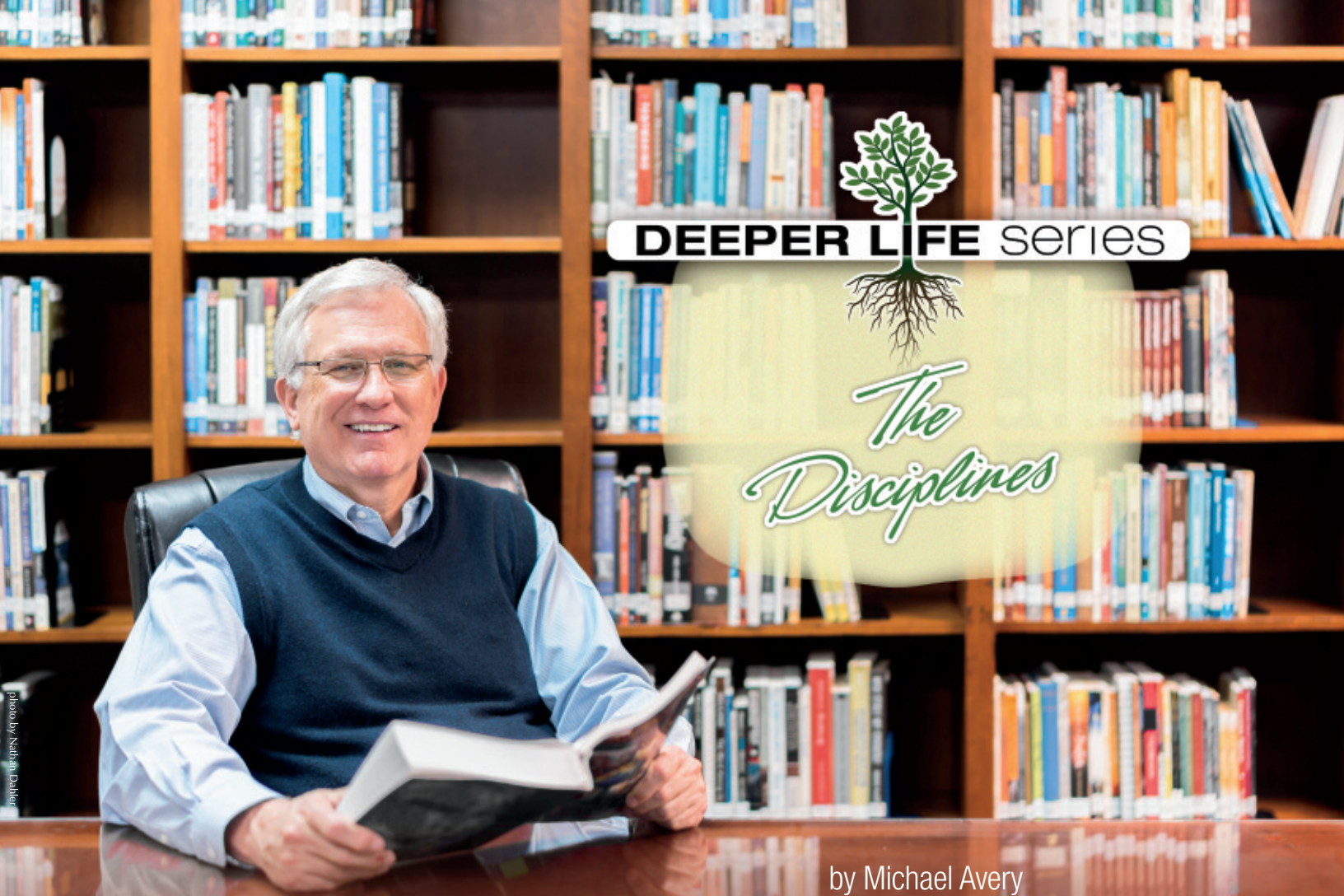
It is right that we devote time to remember and honor fellow citizens who gave their "all" for us, both those who have served the United States and those who have served our Savior so well. We are forever in their debt. ■



Maternal Grandfather, Howard Ayars (ThB '70)



Paternal Grandfather, George Loper



DEEPER LIFE series

The Disciplines

by Michael Avery

Providing Structure and Space for 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

I regularly meet Christians who desire to have a deeper life in Christ. They often express it in statements very similar to these: “I feel so shallow! I am struggling with prayer and I don’t feel that I am getting very much out of my Bible reading”; or, “I am spiritually dry and rarely, if ever, sense God’s love and assurance.” My follow up questions to them often reveal two things. First, they lack a consistent investment of quality time in the development of their spiritual life. Second, they clearly lack the knowledge of how to develop spiritual depth. Almost without exception, the person asking the question is part of a church where there is no general culture of practicing the spiritual disciplines, nor is there any place given to teaching about them. And when the disciplines are ignored, you will find a group of men

and women with desire and desperation gnawing at their hungry souls—longing to be led deeper into what they have already found in Christ.

The classical disciplines of the spiritual life have been practiced by Christians for centuries as a means or channel for the Holy Spirit to do His work of developing vigorous, dynamic spirituality. The church has always linked the desire for more of God to intentional practices, relationships, and experiences that gave people space in their lives to “keep company” with Jesus.¹ The disciplines or practices followed by the first believers are found in Acts 2:42: “*They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching [a practice] and the fellowship [relationships], to the breaking of bread [an experience] and to prayer [a practice].*” These inten-

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tional practices, relationships, and experiences are what we know as *spiritual disciplines*.

The Role of the Disciplines

The disciplines are a way of ordering our life around values, practices, and relationships that keep us open and available to God for the work of spiritual transformation that only God can bring about.² Dallas Willard says, “We meet and dwell with Jesus and His Father in the disciplines for the spiritual life.”³ Participating in these spiritual practices is one way we cooperate with God in making room for Him to work in our lives. Though the various spiritual disciplines are not salvific, nor do they make a person spiritually superior, they do create the conditions in which grace may flow more freely into our lives.

John Wesley called these practices the “means of grace.” By this he meant the specific channels through which God conveys grace to His people. While he acknowledged that the means of grace themselves have no salvific worth, he saw them as channels by which the Holy Spirit ministers grace to our hearts. He further believed that through participation in the instituted means of grace, a person can be made aware of the pardoning and empowering presence of Christ on a regular basis.

The Disciplines Are Not Transformation by Human Effort

No one claims that the various spiritual disciplines have saving value in themselves. Righteousness is a gift from God that we graciously receive (Rom. 5:17). The needed change within us is God’s work, not ours. It is not the spiritual disciplines that transform us into the likeness of Christ. That is the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18), and without Him these practices are fruitless. Willpower and discipline alone can never fix the soul. Striving, pushing, and trying harder will never bring spiritual victory over sin or transform one’s inner man into the likeness of Christ. Paul makes it clear that regulations, disciplines, and all forms of self-imposed human effort will fail when he says, “*These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence*” (Col. 2:23). Actually, disciplines done for the wrong reason will sabotage transformation and numb us toward God and the truth.⁴

Spiritual practices do not “twist God’s arm” into getting what we want. They do not give us “spiritual brownie points” or help us “work the system” for a passing grade from God. Simply put, spiritual disciplines help put us in a place where we can begin to notice God and respond to His Word to us. They give the Holy Spirit space to brood over our souls, birthing the ever-fresh Christ-life within. They provide us with the space to “keep com-

pany” with Jesus and find His rest for our weary souls (Matt. 11:28-30).

Partnering with God

Once we understand that inner transformation through the human powers of will and determination will end in failure, we are in danger of an error in the opposite direction. We are tempted to believe there is nothing we can do. There are those who have abandoned the disciplines and the whole idea of spiritual formation as an erroneous view of sanctification. However, to reject the disciplines wholesale is to insist that growth in the Spirit is something that just happens all by itself. It is hard to see how any serious disciple of Jesus could possibly believe that. Paul says, “*For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life*” (Gal. 6:8). Paul’s analogy of farming activity is very helpful. A farmer is helpless to grow anything; all he can do is provide the right conditions for the growing of a crop. He plows the ground, he plants the seed, he waters the plants, and then the natural forces of the earth take over and up comes the crop.

This is the way it is with the spiritual disciplines—they are a way of sowing to the Spirit. The disciplines are God’s way of getting us into the ground; they put us where He can work within us and transform us. Any discipline that does not help us to partner with the Triune God for spiritual growth is an empty, worthless act and a perfect waste of time. The disciplines must, by their very nature, get us to the place where God can do something in us. They are God’s means of grace.⁵ At the same time, it is up to us to arrange our lives and put into practice the disciplines. Dallas Willard’s famous quote says it well: “Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning.”

The Disciplines

Historically the spiritual disciplines are divided into three areas: inward, outward, and corporate.

Inward – The inward disciplines are practiced in the privacy of our own personal walk with Jesus. They focus

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

“The Path of the Righteous”

“The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.”

Proverbs 4:18

on the transformation and development of the inner aspects of the human person. These practices nurture the heart and soul of the believer. They include prayer, Scripture reading, meditation, silence, fasting, and journaling.

Outward – The outward disciplines focus on the social and behavioral aspects of spiritual formation. The outward spiritual practices include blessed subtraction (taking away specific things in your life), solitude, acts of mercy, physical exercise, and tithing.

Corporate – The corporate disciplines help us participate in practices of accountability through community and worship. The corporate spiritual practices include public confession of sins, participation in public worship, celebration, and accountability by a spiritual director or small-group leader. This aspect of spiritual formation acknowledges that our formation takes place in the context of community and social interaction.

Dallas Willard takes a different approach and divides the disciplines into disciplines of abstinence and disciplines of engagement.⁶

Abstinence – The disciplines of abstinence detach us from hurry, clutter, and busyness. They help to create space to be with God alone. The word “*asceticism*” is the correlate of a Greek word for “*training*,”⁷ as in an athlete training for a race. If you practice self-denial, then you will know that those who deny themselves will be sure to find “their strength increased, their affections raised, and their inward peace continually augmented.” The disciplines of abstinence include solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, chastity, secrecy, and sacrifice.

Engagement – The disciplines of engagement connect us to the needs of others and the call to be God’s heart and hands in this world. They help the soul to be properly engaged in and by God. The disciplines of engagement include study, worship, celebration, service, prayer, fellowship, confession, and submission.

The spiritual disciplines are truly God’s gifts to us. They are a means of grace—a spiritual practice—a way we connect to God and participate in our relationship with Him. As we open up our souls to God, He pours His own life and the grace we need into our hearts. When that happens, we will change; we will be formed and transformed into the image of Christ! ■

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

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

Such a great job on the September issue featuring “GBS and the Pilgrim Connection”! I’ve heard some good feedback here at the Wesleyan Publishing House. God bless!

SUSAN LeBARON
Westfield, IN

Thanks for the incredible job with the Taylor/Lamb account in the October *God’s Revivalist* (“Ministry of Mr. Taylor,” pp.22-23). Very well done. May this story from my grandfather’s life bless many others in encouraging them simply to follow the Lord’s leadings and leave the results with Him.

STAN R. ELLINGSON
Dayton, OH

Stan Ellingson’s article was so impactful. It’s amazing to me that a simple letter from a farmer to my great-grandfather could cause such a dynamic shift in my family’s history! I am here today, working at GBS, because three generations ago a servant of Christ was willing to write a letter!

KENT STETLER
Cincinnati, OH

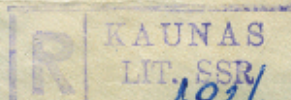
Thank you for the great job you do! As an alumnus, I enjoy hearing about people affiliated with GBS and activities there, and I appreciate the thought-provoking, convicting, and inspiring articles that point my heart toward God.

CAROL WEST
Gentry, MO

We look forward to receiving and reading your excellent publication. Thank you for your work, and keep bringing the Holiness Movement together through the printed page.

JIM BREWER
Marcy, NY

NOVEMBER 2018





SERGEANT ALVIN C. YORK



CHRISTIAN HERO OF WORLD WAR I

by Larry D. Smith

VALOR. This word—defined as “bravery,” “courage,” or “heroism,” especially on the battlefield—is inscribed on the Congressional Medal of Honor presented by General John J. Pershing to Sergeant Alvin Cullum York, one of the most revered of our nation’s military heroes. Without doubt, York deserved this medal, which is the United States’ most distinguished personal military decoration. For his name became almost synonymous with valor as he fought with unbelievable gallantry against German forces in France during America’s brief participation in World War I (1917-1918).

His Medal of Honor citation succinctly explains what happened there deep within the Argonne Forest: “After his platoon suffered heavy casualties and three other non-commissioned officers had become casualties, Cpl. York assumed command. Fearlessly leading seven men, he charged with great daring a machine gun nest which was pouring deadly and incessant fire upon his platoon. In this heroic feat the machine nest was taken, together with four officers and 128 men and several guns.”

Nor was his own country alone in celebrating his heroism, as he eventually received almost 50 wartime decorations from other countries. When awarding York the Croix de Guerre, France’s Marshall Ferdinand Foch told him, “What you did was the greatest thing accomplished by any soldier of all the armies of Europe.” But the young soldier always pointed to God as his helper. “So I am a witness to the fact that God did help me out of that hard battle, for the bushes were all shot up around me and I never got a scratch.... A higher power than man power guided and watched over me and told me what to do.”

For Sergeant Alvin C. York—he was promoted to that rank soon after his noble exploits in France—was a true Christian: humble, obedient, and sincere. As we honor all of America’s veterans of its military services, we focus espe-

cially on him, not only for his courage on a bloody battlefield, but also for his steadfast Christian life and outspoken public witness. This is even more exciting when we realize that Alvin York was a “holiness boy,” sharing the same warm-hearted Wesleyan/holiness tradition that we cherish; and also a friend of God’s Bible School and for many years a loyal member of its extended Revivalist Family.

He was born December 13, 1887, “in a two-room dogtrot log cabin in Pall Mall, Tennessee, and raised in a rural backwater in the northern section of Fentress County.... The third oldest of a family of eleven children,” he and his family “eked out a hardscrabble existence of subsistence farming, supplemented by hunting, and York became a competent marksman at an early age.”¹ After his blacksmith father’s death in 1911, he helped support his family not only by hunting and fishing, but also by hiring out as a logger and construction worker. As a result, Alvin only attended school as a youth for a total of nine months.

Under the influence of his godly mother and her earnest prayers, Alvin regularly attended church. However, as a young man he earned a reputation not only “as a deadly accurate shot,” but also as a “hell raiser,” given to heavy drinking, gambling, and fist fighting.

But, in 1914, Alvin York had a profound spiritual conversion, renounced his sinful lifestyle, and became an earnest and consistent Christian. He also intensified his loyalty to his family’s local holiness church, a congregation of the Church of Christ in Christian Union in which he became a song leader and Sunday school teacher.

It was on April 6, 1917, that the United States declared war on Germany, thus entering World War I, the enormous conflagration that had already savaged Europe for three years. Like thousands of other young American men, York received his draft notice. At first he claimed conscientious objector status because his church was



Photos top to bottom: York's appeal for "conscientious objector" status (National Archives and Records Administration Holdings). Aboard the USS Ohioan (PD). Posing on the hillside that brought him fame (PD). Back home with his mother (collection of Wes Humble). William Jennings Bryan, prosecutor for the famous Scopes Trial; Henry Clay Morrison, president of Asbury College; and Alvin York (collection of Wes Humble). Back home in Tennessee (PD). York's medal of honor shown here is on display at the Tennessee State Museum.

Page 8: York in 1919 (George Grantham Bain collection at the Library of Congress).

against all forms of violence. Finally convinced that Christian conscience permitted certain types of military service, he joined the 82nd Division as an infantry private, leaving for France in 1918. As a newly-promoted corporal, York was one of a group of 17 soldiers assigned to infiltrate German lines and silence a machine gun position. The oft-repeated account of his heroics are truly amazing.

After the American patrol had captured a large number of enemy soldiers, German small arms fire killed six Americans and wounded three. York was the highest ranking of those still able to fire, so he took charge. While his men guarded the prisoners, York attacked the machine gun position, dispatching several German soldiers with his rifle before running out of ammunition. Six German soldiers charged him with bayonets. York drew his pistol and applied exceptional marksmanship, killing them all.

The German officer responsible for the machine gun position had emptied his pistol while firing at York, but failed to hit him. This officer then offered to surrender, and York accepted. York and his men marched back to their unit's command post with more than 130 prisoners.... His feat made York a national hero and international celebrity amongst allied nations....

[Upon returning to his brigade his commander] remarked, "Well, York, I hear you have captured the whole...German army." York replied, "No, sir. I got only 132."²

After the war had ended, the young veteran returned to his homeland in Tennessee, quickly married his sweetheart Grace (Gracie) Williams, with whom he was to have six sons and two daughters, and settled down to live in a home located on a farm given him by his admirers. He turned down a variety of offers worth many thousands of dollars for product endorsements, publication rights, personal appearances, and movie rights for his story, disdaining personal profit for doing his patriotic duty. Resolutely he threw himself into civic and patriotic causes, going on speaking tours especially to raise funds to enhance educational opportunities for "the mountain boys and girls I grew up among." He finally did permit a film of his life story, "Sergeant York," released in 1941. He remained a faithful Christian, loyal to his Savior, church, and family.



When he became first acquainted with God's Bible School we do not know, but the revivalistic holiness heritage shared by the school and the national hero naturally drew them together. He became a much-admired speaker on campus, telling the GBS camp meeting crowd in 1922 that "it was harder to stand the temptation of the world than to enter the battlefield" and that "self is the greatest thing we have to battle against." Alvin and Gracie York and their son George Edward endeared themselves to GBS supporters, as for decades they regularly attended GBS events like the annual camp meeting. In an interview during his retirement years, George had fond recollections of attending GBS as a student in the 1940s. An archival photograph from that era shows Alvin, Gracie, and George posed outside the Knapp Memorial Building with President and Mrs. Meredith Standley.

Yes, "valor" is a word aptly applied to Alvin York, the military hero. It also appropriately relates to his entire life and ultimately to his death after years of debilitating sickness. He died on September 2, 1964, age 76. After a funeral service at which General Matthew Ridgway represented President Lyndon Johnson, Alvin Cullum York was buried in the Wolf River Cemetery in Pall Mall, Tennessee. His funeral sermon was delivered by the Rev. Richard G. Humble, General Superintendent of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, who later served on staff at GBS.

Alvin and Gracie's farm is now open to visitors wishing to add their tributes to the valor of Alvin Cullum York. ■

Larry D. Smith is the former editor of God's Revivalist (1995-2015). He and his wife Carol (Wiseman-Eddleman) (BA '78) live in Cincinnati, OH.

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Above: George Edward Buxton York, son of Alvin and Gracie, playing a guitar at God's Bible School (photo courtesy of Kevin Moser). Right: L-R, Gracie York, Bessie Standley, George York, Sgt. Alvin York, and Pres. Meredith Standley outside the Knapp Memorial Building (photo from GBS archives).



George Edward Buxton York, 94, of Pall Mall, TN, passed away on January 17, 2018. He was the third child born to WWI hero Sgt. Alvin and Gracie (Williams) York on July 27, 1923. He was named in honor of Major George Edward Buxton, under whom his father had served.

George attended York Agricultural Institute but felt a call to preach. He enrolled at God's Bible School just as WWII began. Instead of obtaining a deferment because of his ministerial student status, he decided to volunteer for the military. At the conclusion of his basic training at Camp Campbell, KY, his superiors discovered he was Sgt. Alvin York's son. His father's old WWI unit was just beginning basic training in another section of Camp Campbell, so George was transferred to Company G, 328th Infantry, and he had to endure a second basic training. He often remarked that this was one time that there was a downside to being Sgt. York's son! While still on active duty, George married Clara Marie Williams on December 25, 1943. They were happily married for over 44 years until Clara's death in 1988. George pastored in Baton Rouge, LA, where his only son, Gerald Edward, was born. The family then moved to Tennessee to live with George's parents in Pall Mall, and George established and pastored the Church of the Nazarene in Jamestown.

George is survived by his son, Gerald; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; a brother, Andrew Jackson York; and a sister, Betsy Ross York-Lowrey. He is preceded in death by his wife, Clara Marie; brothers, Alvin C. York, Jr., Woodrow Wilson York, and Thomas Jefferson York; and sister, Mary Alice Franklin. Funeral services were held at the Jennings Funeral Home Chapel, Jamestown, TN. Burial followed at Wolf River Cemetery with military honors provided by American Legion Post 137.



Hope *of a* Happy Reunion

by Harry Plank

I grew up on a farm in Westfield, Pennsylvania, the oldest of three brothers: Harry, James, and Tom. Actually there were two farms—Dad's farm as well as Grandpa's farm that adjoined it. But rather than growing up to be a farmer, I got saved, received a call to the ministry, and ended up going to Bible school about 1,400 miles from home. None of my family wanted me to go, but I knew God wanted me to go; so I went.

During my time away, my brother Jim got saved. I was elated, of course. But, shortly after he was saved, he was drafted into the Army. This wasn't in his plans. In fact, he had aspirations to become a farmer. He was in the Future Farmers of America, loved dairy cattle, and was slated to get his grandpa's farm. But Vietnam intervened.

While growing up, we had all heard the stories of the Planks who had served our country. My grandpa, Joseph D. Plank, had been a doughboy in WWI. He turned 21 while he was stationed in France. My dad, Harold F. Plank, was an Army Ranger—a radio man in the 2nd Ranger Battalion. On D-Day, the Rangers landed between Utah Beach and Omaha Beach, shot harpoons up over the edge of the cliffs, and climbed to the top. However, they were met by a strong German

Top to bottom: Joseph D. Plank, WWI infantryman; Harold F. Plank, WWII Army Ranger; Harold's first day home from war; The Plank Family says farewell to Jim; James (Jim) Duane Plank in Vietnam.

Below: The New Testament that three generations of Planks carried with them to war.



contingent that had just reconnoitered there. With nowhere to escape, the Rangers fought on the top of Pointe du Hoc. After two days of fighting, 287 men were reduced to fewer than 100. Dad was one of those survivors. He later turned 21 in the Battle of the Bulge. He made it through the war and back home without a wound.

But now my brother was heading to Vietnam. I vividly remember it. I had graduated from Bible school, was newly married, and had just started my first pastorate. Rachel and I drove out to the Elmira/Corning Regional Airport in Horse-

heads, NY, to see Jim off to the war. I will never forget that goodbye. There was my younger brother—tall, broad-shouldered. He looked good in his uniform! We were all a little scared. Nobody wanted him to go. He did not want to go. He just knew that his country had called him and he was going to answer the call. After bending down to kiss Mom, Jim walked out on the tarmac to board the plane. I jumped the fence and walked out with him. I was concerned about him, especially since he had just recently been saved. He was carrying a Bible—the one that our grandpa carried through France during WWI and our dad had with him at Pointe du Hoc

and through the Battle of the Bulge.

I said, “Jim, read your Bible, pray, and keep close to God. Remember to do that, and God will help you.”

And he said to me, “Harry, I promise you. I promise you I will. I will keep true.”

I shook his hand and he looked me in the eye and said “Goodbye.” That was the last time I would ever see him alive.

Some months later, I was visiting Mom and Dad on the farm. That morning my car wouldn’t start and Dad and I were tinkering with it. The phone rang. It was my uncle, the postmaster in our little community.

“Is Harold there?”

When Mom responded “Yes,” he continued, “Well, see that he stays there, someone is coming out to see him.”

We thought it would be somebody from the post office, as Dad was trying to get a job there. But it was a military car that drove up the dirt lane.

I will never forget thinking out loud, “I wonder who that is?”

But Dad knew.

“Something is wrong with Jim. Something has happened to Jim.”

Two military men got out of the car, walked up to us, and asked my father, “Do you have a son, James Duane Plank, PFC 199th Light Infantry Battalion, Vietnam?”

Dad said, “Yes, I do.”

“We regret to tell you that he has been wounded in action and has died as a result of those wounds.”

I staggered back on my heels. Our lives have never been the same since.

We had prayed for Jim many times every day. There were a lot of questions in my mind. I was not yet very spiritually mature myself.

It was providential that Uncle Durwood was postmaster, because he could intercept everything that came back from Vietnam. Jim was killed one week before his twenty-first birthday, so Durwood intercepted and discarded the birthday cake that Mom had sent. He intercepted other things, including Jim’s dog tags. But the stuff that *did* come back to us included one item that haunted me for almost 30 years. It was a picture of a platoon of soldiers dressed in camo surrounded by a jungle. Jim wasn’t in the photograph, but each of those pictured was holding a can of beer, and there was a can of beer sitting dead center on the ground.

The devil seemed to say to me, “You know why your brother is not in that picture? He took the photo. It is his. And you see that can of beer?”

That’s his. Your brother backslid over there. And that can of beer is his.”

In the years following, I struggled for an explanation that might bring satisfactory closure to the dread I felt at the memory of that one photograph. In a recurring dream, I would see Jim and hear him speak. In the moments after waking up, I would think, “Jim, did you keep true?”

When I preached about a happy reunion in heaven, I would see a picture of a can of beer, and the devil

★ ★ ★
That photograph was constantly before me. I couldn’t get that can of beer out of my mind.
★ ★ ★



would whisper in my ear, “But you’ll never have that happy reunion, because your brother went to Vietnam, and Vietnam is hell.”

War is not glamorous. In distant theaters of conflict, many a boy who had grown up in a church somewhere, under the rigors of combat pressure and fear, turned to the readily available drugs and alcohol. So that photograph was constantly before me. I couldn’t get that can of beer out of my mind.

But the devil is a liar.

Thirty years passed.

We came home one day to find the little light blinking on our answering machine. A simple message came from a voice with a strong southern accent: “I am Rodney Lewis, call me if you want.”

We didn’t know a Rodney Lewis, but I gave him a call. He answered the phone.

“You don’t know me, but I was in Vietnam. You had a brother, James Plank?”

I said, “Yes.”

He said, “You were his older brother?”

I said, “Yes.” My suspicion was now aroused. Was this some kind of scam? His questions continued.

“You are a preacher?” “You were going to have a baby?”

By now he had my full attention. My mind flashed back. Yes, Rachel and I had been expecting our first child and had in fact written Jim in Vietnam to tell him. We hadn’t received a reply from him at the time of his death; but a few days later a letter arrived in our mailbox acknowledging that he had received our letter and congratulating us on expecting our first son. Jim had written, “Maybe I will be home before he is born.”

Rodney Lewis continued talking. “James was my radio man. I was his sergeant. Your brother was the best radio man I ever had. Everywhere we were—under fire, anywhere, he was there with me.” He continued, “A courier came in, and he brought your letter stating that you were going to have a baby. James made him stay while he sat down on a log and wrote a letter back to you. I sat beside him while he wrote that letter.”

The discussion which followed turned to the struggles Rodney had experienced upon returning from Vietnam. Nobody seemed to respect the service of vets.

“They laughed at me. They mocked us. I had seen so many people who had died like James that I couldn’t take it.”

His life had spiraled out of control. He left his wife, ran away, and ended up on skid row. But now he was trying to get his life back together. After he

returned to his wife, he thought of James. Since then he had hunted “Planks” all over until he found us.

“I wanted to call and tell you about your brother. We’d come back from a fight, and I would say, ‘James, come on, we’re going into town. There is liquor. There are drugs. There are women. Come on, we are going into town.’ But James would say, ‘Rodney, we are not going. I won’t go with you. You shouldn’t go. Rodney, if you do go, I am going to be praying for you.’ When I would get back from town, your brother would be reading his Bible or praying. So, I am calling you to tell you that your brother was the godliest man I ever knew. Your brother never took drugs, never went into town after the women, and your brother never touched a can of beer.”

Hallelujah! Needless to say, that picture which had plagued me for so long has never bothered me since!

A number of years later, I met three guys in Texas who had been in battle with my brother. One of them said, “When we sent your brother’s personal items back home, I think my camera and my film were mistakenly sent with his stuff. I hadn’t been with the outfit long, and I had pictures of some of my other units.”

So that is why Jim wasn’t in the picture. It wasn’t even a photo of his platoon! I am thankful for the new clarity—thankful that the Lord brought those people across my pathway all those years later. I can proclaim to all that the devil is a liar!

Remember this story of a young soldier who got saved in a little country church. He didn’t have long to study theology. Never had the opportunity to go to Bible school. Never knew much. But God helped him to keep true. Even in war. Even in Vietnam.

All the lying whispers of the enemy are now faded memories. The reality is that I now look forward to seeing my brother in heaven—a happy reunion! ■

Harry F. Plank began pastoring in 1969 and has served as conference president of the God’s Missionary Church from 1996 to 2015. He remains active in evangelism, speaking at camp meetings, revivals, and conventions. He and his wife Rachel live in Penns Creek, PA. This article was adapted from one of his sermons entitled “The Devil is a Liar.”

★★★
**Remember
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helped him
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Even in war.
Even in
Vietnam.**
★★★



FALL REVIVAL

Semiannual campus revival services were held most recently September 6-9, with Rev. Jack Hooker as the speaker.



Many students spent time fasting and praying prior to the scheduled services, and some expressed a strong sense that God wanted to do something unusual.

Sermons covered topics such as listening to God's voice, walking in the Spirit, and the fact that Jesus is praying for us. Insightful truth borne by well-told stories enabled spiritual victories that in many cases were hard fought and long in coming. True to expectations, God worked in extraordinary ways, and the effects of the revival continue to be seen in students' spiritual lives.

SECOND COMMANDMENT DAYS

Every year, GBS celebrates "Second Commandment Days" in an effort to remind the campus community what it means to "love your neighbor as yourself." This year the special emphasis was scheduled September 17-19. A highlight of this celebration was a special Wednesday night prayer meeting

hosted by Student Affairs. Special music was provided by our students, and a beautiful worship sequence focused our hearts on the topic at hand. Dwight Welch gave a short exhortation on the importance of loving each other, after which Dean of Women Caslyn Rice challenged the students to complete a tangible act of love and kindness that evening. Students were asked to form groups and choose from a list of different activities that specifically focused on showing God's love in practical ways. Suggestions included writing notes of encouragement, visiting elderly members of the campus family, buying coffee or other food for strangers, making gift baskets for someone in need, etc. They were then instructed to send pictures of their group to the Dean of Men or Dean of Women to document their activities. Students enthusiastically participated and many were blessed by both showing and receiving God's love. It is our hope that purposefully loving each other will not just be a special event for our students but a way of life every day.

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.

BIRTHS



To **Katie (Newman) (BA '13) and Josh Ranke**, a daughter, **Alexis Kate**, born July 4, 2018, at Ball Memorial Hospital, Muncie, IN. While a GBS student and during the year following graduation, Katie worked as Aldersgate Distance Education Program (ADEP) coordinator. She is now a case manager for Children's Bureau and Josh does field work for insurance companies.

DEATHS



Homer "Leon" Hudson, 89, of Scott Depot, WV, formerly of Spring Hill, went home to be with the Lord on Saturday, September 15, 2018, at Hubbard Hospice House following a short illness. Leon retired from Putman County Schools after 24 years of bus driving. He was a bricklayer for Leon Hudson Construction, which built many homes and churches in the Kanawha Valley for six decades. Leon led the music at Grace Wesleyan Church, Culloden, for 30-plus years until he became a member of Dunbar Nazarene Church. He was passionate about his local church and was very involved in many ministries. His son and

OPEN AIR CAMPAIGN

Our fall Open Air Campaign was a great week of evangelism training and ministry. In the afternoons, the team (led by Eric Briscoe of the Open Air Campaigners) went downtown to neighborhood parks, where trained GBS students shared the gospel with children, using object lessons and a sketch board. Lunch times were spent at the University of Cincinnati.

Greg Hinton, one of the students who received sketch board training, reported: "After I preached the message [at U.C.], several people in the group were



Eric Briscoe, Open Air Campaigners

able to talk to some of the listeners. I talked with one student and ended up leading him in the sinner's prayer! Awesome!" Ellianna Harmon, one of the trainers, commented: "I had a wonderful week

doing OAC with GBS! It is something I look forward to every year. I love to see the students jumping in and sharing the gospel with the paint board for their first times.... I pray that the meetings we had for both the kids and adults

will have some kind of eternal impact on those we encountered."

NEW COMMUNITY SERVICE

For several months, GBS has been involved in picking up trash around Mt. Auburn. This is another way that GBS staff and students can involve themselves in our community. Jessica Smith, the new GBS Director of Christian Service, leads such a group into the community on a monthly basis.

GBS NAMED A TOP CINCINNATI WORKPLACE 8 YEARS IN A ROW!

The *Cincinnati Enquirer* has recognized 125 companies and organizations in Cincinnati as Top Workplaces for 2018. These companies have been identified based on surveys about the workplace completed by their employees. For the eighth consecutive year, GBS made the list! GBS Vice President Aaron Profitt notes, "God's Bible School and College is ranked 14th in our size category, and, as in several



daughter-in-law, Greg (BA '97) and Julie (Brindley) (BA '92) Hudson, are both GBS alumni. Additionally, Leon's wife Freda was, as former PR Director Don Davison attests, "a household name in the PR Office 'back in the day.'" Freda, with the assistance of Leon, opened up the Charleston, WV, area to GBS many years ago.

Leon is survived by his loving wife of over 47 years; children Melody and Gregory; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at the Church of the Nazarene, Dunbar, WV, officiated by Revs. Greg Hudson, Joe Kusimo, and Randy Lanham. Burial followed at Graceland Memorial Park, South Charleston, WV.

Arthur Lee Scott, 80, died in his home in Overland Park, KS, surrounded by his family on his birthday, Sep-



tember 16, 2018. He was born in 1938 in Clinton, MO, and grew up on the banks of the Osage River in west central Missouri, where he helped his parents, Lonnie and Lena Grimes Scott, as they ran a fishing camp, built cabins, and operated a grocery and gas store near Brownington. At an early age, Arthur gave his heart to the Lord, a decision that guided his entire life. After graduating valedictorian from Deepwater High School in 1956, where he was president of Youth for Christ, Arthur enrolled at Kansas City College and Bible School (now Kansas Christian College). While there, he met and married his wife of 60 years, Ellen Hood. In addition to receiving a bachelor's degree from KCC, Arthur earned a teaching certificate at Pittsburg State

➡ of the other years, is the only higher-education award recipient from any of the categories.”

It is good to know that our employees value the working environment here at GBS. If you would like to join the GBS team, give us a call. ■



REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ College, and a Master of Administration in Education from the Southwest Missouri State College, Springfield, MO. While he never felt called to preach, he had a call to serve God through serving others. Arthur Scott was a builder of buildings, of organizations, and of the kingdom of God. He served as principal and business manager at Mt. Zion Bible School (Ava, MO), business manager at both KCC and the Herald and Banner Press (Overland Park, KS), on various Church of God (Holiness) boards, including Youth Council, Foundation Board, Overland Park Church of God (Holiness), and he was the “go-to guy” for all sorts of issues. It is worth noting that two relatives of Arthur have served as presidents of KCC: cousin Noel Scott and nephew Delbert Scott.

Survivors include his wife Ellen; two daughters, Arleen and Teresa; and siblings, Gary and Kay. The funeral was held at Church of God (Holiness), Overland Park, KS, with Rev. Steve Elsey officiating. Burial followed at the Lowry City Cemetery, Lowry City, MO.



Darrell D. Joslin, 52, of Cedar Springs, MI, went to be with his Lord and Savior on September 15, 2018. Born in 1966 in Grand Rapids, MI, to Elwyn and Goldie (Sicard) Joslin, Darrell was an insur-

ance agent and district sales coordinator for AFLAC. He suffered a traumatic brain injury from an auto accident in 1990. He had enjoyed working with wood as a handyman. Although Darrell did not attend GBS, his wife, Sherry Walker did, as well as all six of his siblings and all but one of their spouses.

Surviving are his wife; parents; siblings Dennis, Denise, Darla, Daniel, Dewayne, and Danella; and many nieces, nephews, and great nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Pilgrim Bible Church, Cedar Springs, MI, Pastor Knox Bullock officiating. Interment followed at Elmwood Cemetery, Cedar Springs, MI.



Larry E. Slavens, 78, passed away September 15, 2018, at Mt. Carmel East Hospital, Columbus, OH. He was born May 4, 1940, to the late William H. and W. Pauline (Cummins) Slavens of Washington Court House, OH. He attended GBS, and while there met and married fellow student Shirley R. Trouten (1957-59) on August 29, 1959. Following Larry’s graduation from GBS (ThB ’62), ministry led them to New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia, where they pastored for the Pilgrim Holiness, Wesleyan Methodist, God’s Missionary, Churches Of Christ in Christian Union, and Wesleyan denominations. Larry was also a teacher in the founding years, 1966-1970, of Penn View Bible Institute, Penns Creek, PA. Several extended family members of Larry and Shirley are also GBS alumni: daughter-in-law, Maureen Jones (BRE ’85); and two granddaughters, Heather Forney (AA ’08) and Phoebe Spangler (AA ’14).

Larry was predeceased in death by his wife of 50 years, who passed away in 2010. He is survived by sons, Thomas and Timothy; one daughter, Charidith Collins; thirteen grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at God’s Missionary Church, Beavertown, PA, with Rev. James Plank officiating. Interment was at the church cemetery.

NOTICES

Information Request. I am looking for information on behalf of a friend. We would like to know if there were any missionaries from GBS (GBS alumni) serving in South Vietnam during the years of 1955-1965 or right around that time. If you have any information, please respond to Sonja Vernon at svernon@gbs.edu.

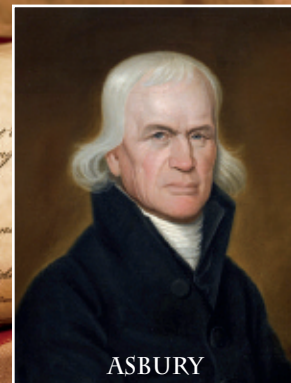
Pastorate Available. The Bible Mission Church at 649 East Church Street in Lock Haven, PA, is conducting a pastoral search. For more information, contact: Elizabeth Matthiesen, secretary, either by email at Exc3@psu.edu or by phone at 814-880-8270. ■

The People Called METHODISTS and the REVOLUTIONARY WAR

by David DeStefano



WESLEY



ASBURY

Brooklyn, New York, was a hilly collection of dirt paths, fruit orchards, and other farms in 1776. George Washington, with his army of ploughboys and old men, was struggling in the Battle of Brooklyn that summer against the intimidating British. The masts of the British frigates looked like a great pine forest in New York Harbor. Washington lost the battle, escaping into what is now Manhattan with the blessing of a rainy, foggy cover. Meantime, the Continental Congress was meeting in a sweltering Philadelphia that July.

Why did all this effort at independence engulf the Colonies? Feeling abandoned by England's King George III, Colonial leaders George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams, all of whom thought of themselves as British, decided they would fend for themselves. After much thought, and after much debate among those gathered in Philadelphia that hot summer, the leadership declared their independence on July 4, 1776.

Where were the Methodists in July of 1776? They also viewed themselves as quite British. However, Wesley encouraged the Methodist preachers (all ordained by the Church of England) to remain passive but helpful in promoting the peace. There was a problem with that pacifist approach. It was viewed as "Tory" (pro-British) by the separatist colonists. The Methodist Church suffered large losses in congregations, and Wesley surrendered to the inevitability of sending his preachers back to England.

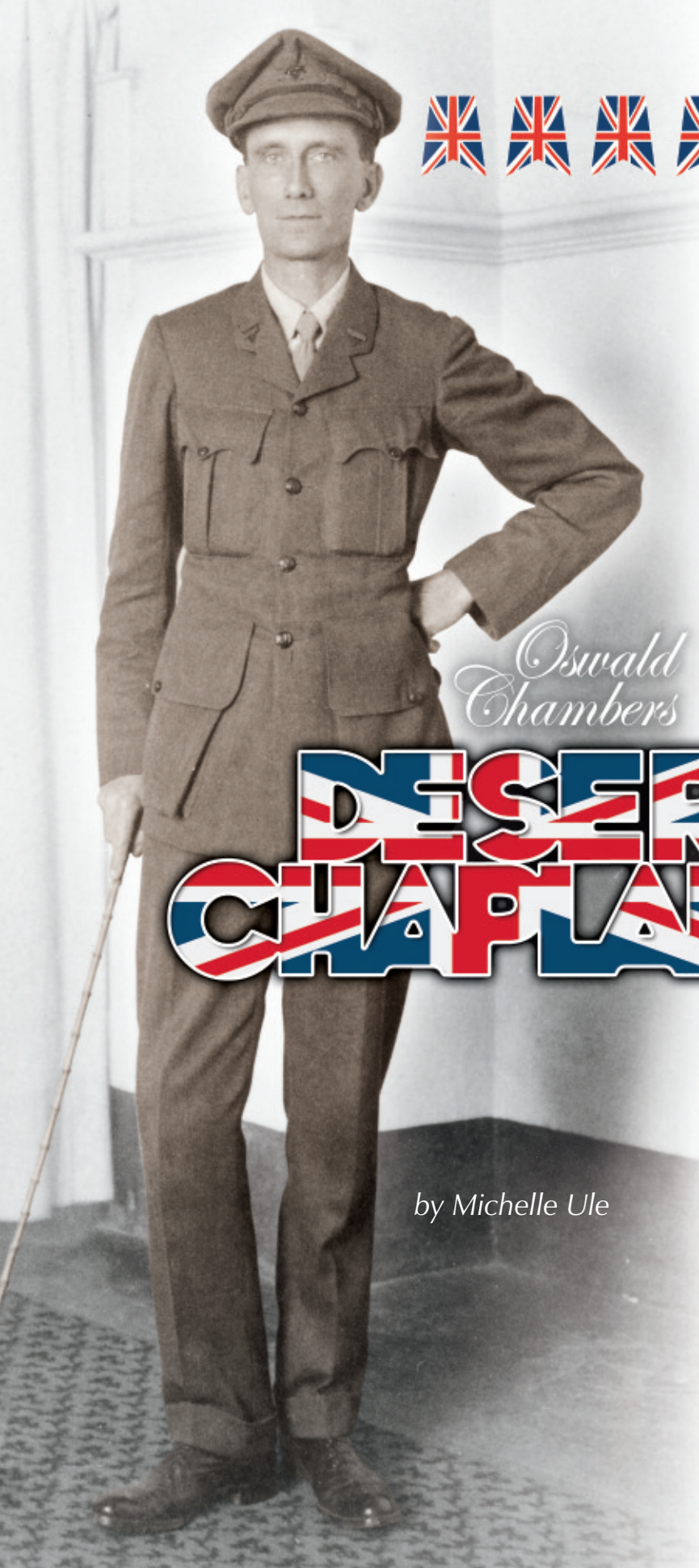
Francis Asbury, though, thought that leaving would bring dishonor to the Methodist Church in America. He stayed, and, indeed, it was he who held the nascent

Methodist Church together during the war. This prevented Methodism's first possible schism. The issue was the ordaining of pastors in America in order for them to administer sacraments such as baptism and communion. Asbury cautioned the American pastors to wait for the advice and consent of John Wesley.

After the war, it must have surprised the Methodist leadership that, though their numbers had diminished, the Methodist movement was strongest among the colonists rather than among the British loyalists. The Church prospered, and by 1783 there were thirty-eight circuits. Most of these circuits were south of the recently established Mason-Dixon Line. The Methodist Episcopal Church (episcopal because it was to be run by bishops) was born in 1784 at what came to be known as the Christmas Conference at Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore (see *God's Revivalist*, December 2015, p.21).

This new birth, and its organization implementing a presbytery of bishops, was spurred onward by the whole atmosphere of the grand experiment that was an independent America. Had it not been for stalwarts like Wesley and Asbury, the Methodist Church and all it means for modern day Christians of Wesleyan persuasion would have been lost in an unadventurous and rather stodgy British Church of England. ■

David DeStefano (BA '75, BRE '76), of Lewisburg, PA, enjoys substitute teaching in three local public school districts. He previously served 23 years at Penn View Bible Institute, 17 of them as the academy principal, a position now held by his wife Bernice. They have three adult children, Nathan, Michael, and Judith. Michael teaches music at GBS.



*Oswald
Chambers*

DESERT CHAPLAIN

by Michelle Ule

When a World War I soldier faced the prospects of the trenches of France or the burning desert leading to Jerusalem, what did he need? With his soul teetering on eternity and his friends succumbing to heat stroke, disease, or even ammunition misadventures, where could he seek respite at Zeitoun army camp north of Cairo?

Between 1916 and the end of World War I, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) provided a spot of personal and spiritual relief through the ministry of British Bible teacher Oswald Chambers. When Chambers volunteered to provide "spiritual first aid," as a YMCA "secretary" in 1915, he was running a Bible Training College in London. In his personal goal of preparing people for Christian ministry, Chambers thought shifting into active missionary work himself made sense.

Working with Soldiers

Founded in 1844, the YMCA provided morale boosts and spiritual encouragement for soldiers during WWI. Most soldiers regarded the YMCA as merely a spot to write a letter or buy refreshments; spiritual issues didn't interest them. As one soldier wrote, "Christianity was at a very low ebb in our camp when along came Oswald Chambers, with a positively unquenchable spirit alight in his face."

Chambers prayed with a calm, unpretentious assurance and lectured from the Bible. To everyone's surprise, hardened troops fresh from Gallipoli's horror began packing the hut to hear Chambers' teaching.

Fellow YMCA secretary Douglas Downes was surprised by what he saw. "Men, whom no one could accuse of being religious, turned up in large numbers to hear a religious talk."

Downes recognized Chambers as an unusual preacher. "It was no ordinary talk, and the man who gave it was no ordinary man. There was no appeal to the emotions, no cant religious phrases, no anecdotes, just a flow of clear convincing reasoning—stark sincerity, speaking with the authority of deep personal experience."

Chambers focused his daily talks on subjects the soldiers feared as the war dragged on. The men longed for encouragement and consolation in the face of a grind-



ing, grim war. Chambers liked to end his teaching by telling the men, "Whether you agree with what I've said is a matter of moonshine as long as you begin to think."

One soldier told Chambers it was worth enlisting to hear his talks. Soldiers took their convictions with them as they headed to the front lines and formed small Bible study groups within their units.

YMCA director William Jessop recognized Chambers' gifts. "Mr. Chambers was a man of remarkable mind" who "taught the Scriptures in a unique, arresting way. He had a peculiar gift in dealing with men, being able to sense and solve the difficulties of many an honest and dishonest doubter."

A Family Ministry

Chambers knew the importance of his wife Biddy and toddler Kathleen for ministry. They were the only family serving with the YMCA in Egypt during WWI. In addition to taking notes of all Chambers' lectures, Biddy ran an open house ministry with other volunteers. They listened to, prayed with, and fed anyone who needed a welcoming smile and hope.

Chambers invited men who disagreed with him during his evening talks to continue the conversations around the late night supper table. "God kept open house for the universe," Chambers liked to say, while Biddy stretched the soup to accommodate more guests.

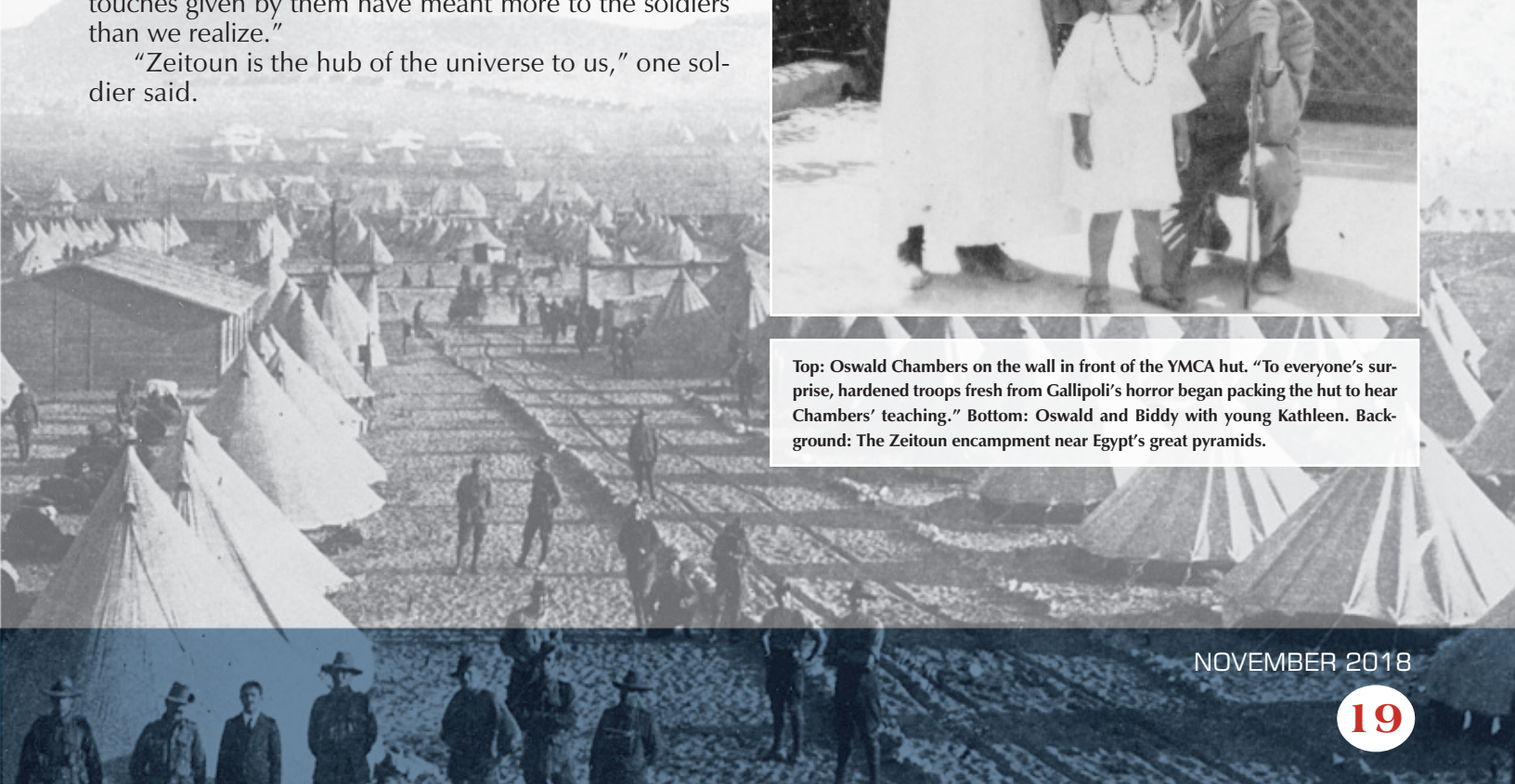
Jessop spoke highly of Biddy and the other volunteers, particularly in their effect on the men. "Their 'bit' has been equal to that of the secretaries and the dainty touches given by them have meant more to the soldiers than we realize."

"Zeitoun is the hub of the universe to us," one soldier said.

Young Kathleen also proved an enormous draw. Most soldiers had not seen their children since the war began. Battle-hardened men baptized her soldier dolls, savored



Top: Oswald Chambers on the wall in front of the YMCA hut. "To everyone's surprise, hardened troops fresh from Gallipoli's horror began packing the hut to hear Chambers' teaching." Bottom: Oswald and Biddy with young Kathleen. Background: The Zeitoun encampment near Egypt's great pyramids.



her prattle, and stopped by simply to watch her sleep. One soldier donated a small donkey and taught Kathleen how to ride.

"We began to feel almost as if we were home again," wrote another.

Choosing Love over Judgment

In choosing not to be an "amateur providence" and recognizing God works in individual lives at different paces, Chambers influenced many soldiers.

Private Stephen Pulford saw his life change under the Zeitoun ministry. He had avoided the religious aspects of the YMCA, even though a friend assured him, "No one will quiz you on the state of your soul."

Given time, however, Pulford recounted, "the open-hearted welcome I received overcame my reserve and their bungalow became a home from home." While visiting on leave, he became as "one of the family...no doubt, subconsciously absorbing a way of life which was new to me. Not once, however, was I approached on spiritual matters. If I had been, it might have put me off forever."

In another case, Chambers oversaw the conversion of rough riding Australian trooper Peter Kay. Kay explained, "When I realized what Almighty God had done for me, I realized I would be a cad if I didn't own Him as my Lord and Master."

Kay deployed with the light horse brigade across the Sinai to the Battle of Beersheba and was absent for several years. When concerned friends visited Zeitoun on leave, they warned Chambers about Kay's return to his old, hard-living ways.

"The Holy Spirit will teach him," Chambers replied, "and by degrees, those things will drop off like dead leaves, and he won't do them anymore."

The soldiers were skeptical, but, on their next visit, reported Kay had recognized the errors of his behavior and adopted a God-honoring lifestyle once more.

Giving His Utmost for God's Highest Purposes

As the war tempo increased in 1917, Chambers' sense of urgency for men's salvation grew. He taught on the book of Job that spring, believing Job's life served as an example of a "heartbreaking devotion to God in the midst of complexity of sorrow."

The push across the Sinai desert and up to Jerusalem promised to be bloody and difficult. The ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) high command re-

quested a YMCA secretary at each casualty clearing station once the fighting began. Chambers purchased his kit and made arrangements to go up the line. He prepared Biddy to run the camp in his absence.

So keen was Chambers' concern for the soldiers' welfare that when he fell ill in late October, he did not go to the army hospital. He shrugged off his symptoms as a minor bug, not wanting to displace an injured soldier. Finally prevailed upon to see a doctor, Chambers died two weeks later from a ruptured appendix.

The soldiers he loved so much honored Oswald Chambers with a full military funeral. They buried him November 16, 1917, among the soldiers at the Old Cairo cemetery. Peter Kay carved a stone Bible to lie on the grave. It was "open" to Chambers' favorite passage while in Egypt, Luke 11:13: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

God used Oswald Chambers' gifts even after his death. Biddy stayed on at Zeitoun through the end of the war, arranging Chambers' talks into free pamphlets provided by the YMCA. Her YMCA work led to compiling 30 books using Chambers' notes, including *My Utmost for His Highest*. Private Stephen Pulford became a clergyman in the Church of England, as did his son and grandson.

Oswald Chambers' "spiritual first aid" during WWI resulted in many more people being saved for eternity than anyone could have imagined at the start of the war. ■



Above Left: Kathleen Chambers on a donkey with Peter Kay, a "rough riding Australian trooper," directly behind. Above Right: The stone Bible carved by Peter Kay on the grave of Oswald Chambers. The Scripture quotation is Luke 11:13: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.



Michelle Ule is the biographer of Kathleen "Biddy" Chambers (Mrs. Oswald Chambers, Baker Books, 2017) and the author of *A Poppy in Remembrance* (CreateSpace, 2018), a WWI coming-of-age novel featuring Oswald and Biddy Chambers as characters. You can learn more about Michelle at www.michelleule.com.

All photos courtesy Wheaton College Special Collections.



NOT GOOD TO BE ALONE

Over the last 75 years, Harvard researchers have tracked the lives of 724 subjects, recording the state of their home life, work, health, and outlook. The current director of the study says that the clearest message to emerge from this effort has nothing to do with fame or wealth or working harder. The real lesson from these lives is this: "Good relationships keep us happier and healthier.... Over these 75 years, our study has shown that the people who fared the best were the people who leaned into relationships—with family, with friends, with community." This is scientific proof of Genesis 2:18: "It is not good for the man to be alone."

EUROPE NOT AS SECULAR AS PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT

A new survey by the Pew Research Center looked past the headlines showing dwindling rates of attendance at religious services and rising numbers of churches closing and discovered a more nuanced picture. Despite the region's widespread secularization, 64% of the 24,599 adults Pew surveyed in 15 countries still identify as Christians, even if only 18 percent say they attend church at least once a month. Nearly half (46%) of the total sample described as "nonpracticing Christians" were the largest single group in the survey, almost

double the 24% of religiously unaffiliated (atheists, agnostics, and "nones") which are often the focus of explanatory commentary.

PERKINS NAMED TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM COUNCIL

Tony Perkins, the longtime leader of the Family Research Council has been appointed to a two-year term on the influential U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Perkins, 55, has led FRC since 2003 after serving as a Louisiana state legislator and serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. He is also an ordained minister. Perkins stated that Christianity "advocates for freedom of people to choose" their religion and that the commission focuses on that right, too.

PROBLEMS FOR EVOLUTION THEORISTS

Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis said that a new genetic study published in the journal *Human Evolution* shows that 90% of animals appeared on the Earth simultaneously and at the same time as humans, thus affirming the biblical account of creation. "Evolution doesn't expect the vast majority of our species to have arrived at the same time, nor does it expect species to have these clear genetic boundaries," he said. "But this is what we'd expect in a biblical worldview—indeed it's what creationists have been saying all along." ■



student focus

CHRISTOPHER DEAN CRAVENS is one of four children of Chris and Julie Cravens of Findlay, OH. He looks to his parents as great examples of what it means to be a Christian—what it means to be kind, compassionate, and polite. "If not for my parents example, I know for a fact that I would not be a Christian today," he says.

"Since I have been at GBS, God has shown me time and time again that this is where I am supposed to be." One of the things he enjoys at the Bible college is "the spiritual atmosphere among the students, staff, and faculty." Being at GBS has helped him "on a journey of growth that I never even imagined could happen...." The school is "helping me to learn valuable lessons and giving me tools that I will need for ministry." Although he is a ministerial student, he would also like to be involved in music ministry. He traveled in a GBS singing group last summer and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity. ■

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***

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www.gbs.edu/givenow***

MY DAD... MY HERO!

Almost every little girl thinks of her daddy as a hero. I am no exception. I grew up hearing my dad tell war stories, but it wasn't until I got older that I really appreciated all that happened to him. This is his story.

by Kathryn Farmer Hamlin

Elmer Clayton Farmer graduated from high school in the spring of 1940. As war was already underway in Europe, he felt an inner pull to patriotic duty and was sworn into service on September 25, 1940, at the age of nineteen. After basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, Elmer was sent to the Armed Forces Clerical School where he served as company clerk for about a year.

Meanwhile, the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 was passed, instituting the first peacetime draft in the United States. As part of the mechanization of the U.S. Army during this buildup, the cavalry and reconnaissance units were brought together to form the 1st Armored Division at Fort Knox on July 15. It included tanks, artillery, and infantry and was to be the first armored division to see combat in the war.

REASSIGNMENT

Elmer had transferred from his clerical position to become a tank driver in this newly created Army division when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, ushering the United States into WWII. While the U.S. was understandably more worried about the Japanese than the Germans, the decision was made to confront Germany and Italy first through an invasion of northern Africa.

As a tank driver in Company H of the 1st Armored Regiment's 3rd Battalion of medium tanks, Elmer's division boarded a train on April 9, 1942, for Fort Dix, New Jersey, the staging area for their assignment overseas. On May 30, Elmer and his company shipped out on the *Thomas H. Barry*, an old Caribbean luxury liner that had been con-





verted into a troop transport. Eleven days later, they arrived at Belfast, Northern Ireland, where his division set up camp along the Dundrum Bay of the Irish Sea near Newcastle. What ensued were four more months of training, maneuvers, and intense physical conditioning.

In October, Company H moved another step closer to the battlefield. Crossing the Irish Sea to England, they disembarked at Liverpool harbor and were cheered as they paraded through the suburbs toward their barracks at Olton Park. They were the first American troops to arrive in force in England. While there, they traded their M3 tanks for the new M4 (Sherman) tanks that had just been delivered from Detroit. The new design had many improvements, not least of which was a big 75mm gun that revolved 360 degrees.

FIRST COMBAT

Operation Torch, the initial campaign in northern Africa, was the largest naval force ever assem-

bled. Under the command of Lt. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, several groups, including some elements of the 1st Armored Division, attacked the 50-mile beach-head at Oran, Algeria. As the first efforts didn't fare well, combat was suspended and troops were pulled back in order to reform.

In early December, it was time for Company H to go to war. Boarding the *Duchess of York*, a Canadian liner that had been impressed into service, they passed Gibraltar, moved into the Mediterranean, arrived in the Oran area, and docked at the French naval base at Mer el Kabir. At this bivouac, the 1st Armored Regiment was reassembled in full force. There was no enemy there, so things were calm; but with nowhere else to go and nothing to do, the men retired to their tents shortly after dark each evening.

On the last day of 1942, 376 men of the 3rd Battalion, along with all of their tanks, boarded landing craft in Oran and put out to sea the next day. Four days and 400 miles later they landed at Phillipeville, Algeria. As a part of Combat Command B, Company H moved to Tunisia in order to assist the French in guarding Tunisian passes at Faïd, Fondouk, and Gafsa.

On January 31, 1943, two years and four months after joining the service, Elmer Farmer finally got his first taste of actual combat as part of a group that was ordered to take control of Faïd Pass, supposedly an easy objective. Elmer remembered singing lustily as they approached the destination in combat formation.

Four German Me-109s suddenly appeared, flying low and firing rapidly. The tanks opened fire and shot one of the four. It struck the desert floor a glancing blow, bounced high up in the air, and burst into a tremendous ball of flame. As the Battle of Faïd Pass commenced, the allied forces were confronted by ferocious artillery, tank, and mortar fire. Elmer's tank sustained a direct hit that left the steering mechanism nonresponsive. Elmer radioed his leader who ordered him to "abandon tank!"

Unfortunately, the turret position at the time of the hit made it impossible for the occupants to open their hatches more than a few inches, and the escape hatch was blocked by ammunition. With the turret on fire, the tank was only moments from exploding. As Elmer frantically pushed on his hatch, another German shell struck the tank, shearing off the hatch and smashing the little finger on his left hand. He slumped back into his seat thinking, "This is the way they'll probably find me." The shock of that thought seemed to give him new strength, and he and the assistant driver cleared the vehicle just before it blew up, presumably killing the other three



INSIDES





men. (One was listed as "killed in action" while the other two were listed as "missing in action.") Of the 17 tanks of Company H, nine had been destroyed. Two were badly disabled, but made it back to the base, later to be taken apart and reassembled into one tank.

Taken to a British tent hospital, Elmer's hand injury and multiple facial wounds were assessed. The damage to his hand was so severe that the little finger had to be amputated. A few days later, he was flown to another hospital in Oran. His eyes were bothering him so much that he could hardly tolerate being outside during daylight. A doctor discovered that there were little pieces of shrapnel in them. A new and experimental magnetic medical device was used to extract the tiny metal shards.

BRONZE STAR

After about three months of recuperation and retraining, Elmer was reassigned to his outfit in Africa. By this time, the war there had been won and the Axis powers in Africa surrendered on May 13, 1943.

Receiving new orders, the 1st Armored Division arrived in Italy in mid-November and bivouacked 30 miles north of Naples at Capua. As they continued to travel up the "boot," the enemy fought their every move.

Elmer, now a tank commander, was on assignment at the Anzio beachhead on January 30, 1944, when his tank was disabled by enemy fire. After ordering his men to abandon the damaged vehicle, he discovered his wounded driver lying on the ground outside. Elmer helped him crawl down into the tank tracks out of sight of the enemy where there would be some measure of shelter. He then went to another tank under heavy fire to get a first aid kit and ask them to cover his tank so that his three other companions could get off the hill safely. Upon returning to his driver, Elmer treated his wound with sulfa powder and arranged for another vehicle to transport the wounded man away from the battlefield. According to one of his comrades, "During all this time, Sergeant Farmer was under heavy enemy fire. For the coolness, initiative, and disregard for his own personal safety, Sergeant Farmer deserves the highest praise and recognition for this action in helping his wounded comrade." All the members of his tank survived that day, and Elmer received a Bronze Star for his act of bravery.

CAPTURE AND ESCAPE

On another maneuver around Anzio, Elmer's unit was ordered to press through the enemy lines and push the battlefield toward Rome. On May 23, 1944, Elmer's

tank shook violently, disabled by a mine explosion. As he and his four companions escaped through the hatch, they were faced by two Germans in a foxhole with a machine gun pointed directly at them. The Germans motioned for the five Americans to surrender.

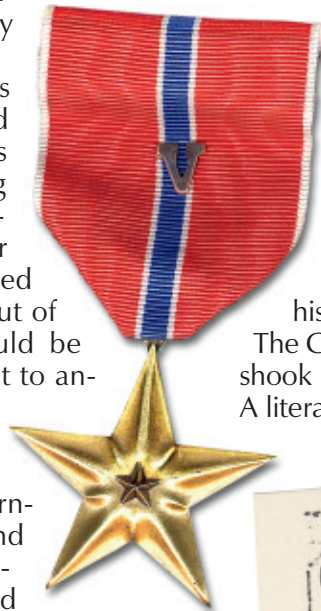
One of the Germans was assigned to take the American captives to the rear of the enemy line. Elmer's lieutenant, who had lost his glasses, whispered that he was going to kill the German captor. Elmer glanced over to one side and saw another soldier whom he described as "the biggest German I had ever seen, holding the biggest gun I had ever seen." He told the nearsighted lieutenant this, but without his glasses he could not see that the other soldier was a German.

"No, that's one of our men."

After an extended, vigorous, but hushed, exchange, Elmer gave up arguing and whispered, "Well, go ahead then." For some reason the lieutenant abandoned his foolhardy intention.

As they continued their journey toward an internment camp, they frequently had to throw themselves to the ground in order to escape becoming a target for gunfire. During one such time a bullet struck Elmer's right thigh. When their captor ordered the men to get up and move on, Elmer pointed to his wounded leg. As he was unable to march, the group abandoned him and continued their trek.

Elmer rolled into a small ditch for cover, but was discovered sometime later by a fully armed German soldier. Elmer thought for sure that his time had finally come. The German raised his hand and called out "Comrade." Elmer pointed to his leg to let the soldier know that he was wounded. The German looked at his leg, gave him a first aid pouch, shook hands, turned, and crawled away. A literal miracle!





At a later time, when Elmer passed by some dead Germans, He couldn't help but wonder if his benefactor was one of them. It gave him pause. He knew now that some of these "enemies" were "real" people who, by whatever circumstances, found themselves in their country's military uniform. This sentiment was quite different from his pre-combat disposition.

Elmer finally made his way to safety. His wound was so severe, however, that it necessitated the removal of a large thigh muscle. After recuperating, he again went back to battle with the 1st Armored Division. After liberating Rome on June 4, 1944, they moved north and continued fighting until May 2, 1945, when the war in Italy ended. Five days later, Germany surrendered, followed by Japan on September 2. WWII was over.

Elmer was honorably discharged May 30, 1945, at the Separation Center at Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

CONCLUSION

I well remember listening with awe as my dad told me his war stories when I was a little girl. Afterward, he would let me climb up on his lap and feel the pieces of shrapnel around his eyes. Then I would trace the dent that a bullet's path had left on his cheek. After I would hop down, he would wiggle the stump of his little finger at me. I remember thinking that he was the bravest man on earth. He was my hero! I thank God for my father.

A few years after the war, on Mother's Day 1948, my parents were invited by my uncle to attend a church service. That day they both surrendered their hearts to Jesus. Dad answered a call to preach, studied at GBS, and pastored the rest of his life—43 years! All of his children—Harry, Kenny, Sam, and I—are grateful

that God protected him throughout nearly three years of battle. Perhaps that German soldier who crawled up the ditch, spared my dad's life, and gave him aid was really an angel! ■

Kathryn "Kitty Lou" Farmer Hamlin (HS '79) is a registered nurse at the VA hospital in Huntington, WV, where she has worked for over 27 years. She and her husband Brent live in Barboursville, WV. They have two children and two grandsons: Katryn (BA '07) and Steven Sanders; Bryan and Jamie Hamlin; Bryan Liston (5); Anakin Clayton (3). Sergeant Bryan Hamlin is following in Papaw Farmer's footsteps as the gunner on a battalion commander's tank in the U.S. Army at Fort Riley, KS.



Top: digging ditches. An army buddy wrote on the back of the photo, "This is one time you can prove you worked!" Above: Farmer (second from left) and his squad following drills with instructor Corporal Smith. Left: Elmer Clayton Farmer graduated *cum laude* with a ThB and was salutatorian of his class at God's Bible School in 1956. He was a district superintendent for The Wesleyan Church 1981-1986 and served on the GBS board of trustees 1987-1991.

NOVEMBER 2018



Just after midnight on July 3, 1945, torpedoes ripped into the starboard side of the *USS Indianapolis*. What unfolded in the next frantic moments was to become the most infamous tragedy in the history of the United States Navy. The sinking of the *Indianapolis* resulted in the greatest loss of human life on a single ship in American history. Yet, in the midst of the carnage, God was working out His purpose.

World War II was nearly over. The Portland class heavy cruiser navy ship had just completed a secret mission to Tinian Island (North Mariana Islands north of Guam and east of the Philippines) carrying parts and the enriched uranium for the "Little Boy," the atomic bomb later dropped on Hiroshima. On that mission she had set a speed record of 74½ hours with an average speed of 29 kn (33 mph), which still stands to this day. After sailing to Guam where a number of crew members were to be replaced after having finished their tour of duty, the *Indianapolis* set sail for Leyte, Philippines, where her crew would receive additional training before continuing to Okinawa.

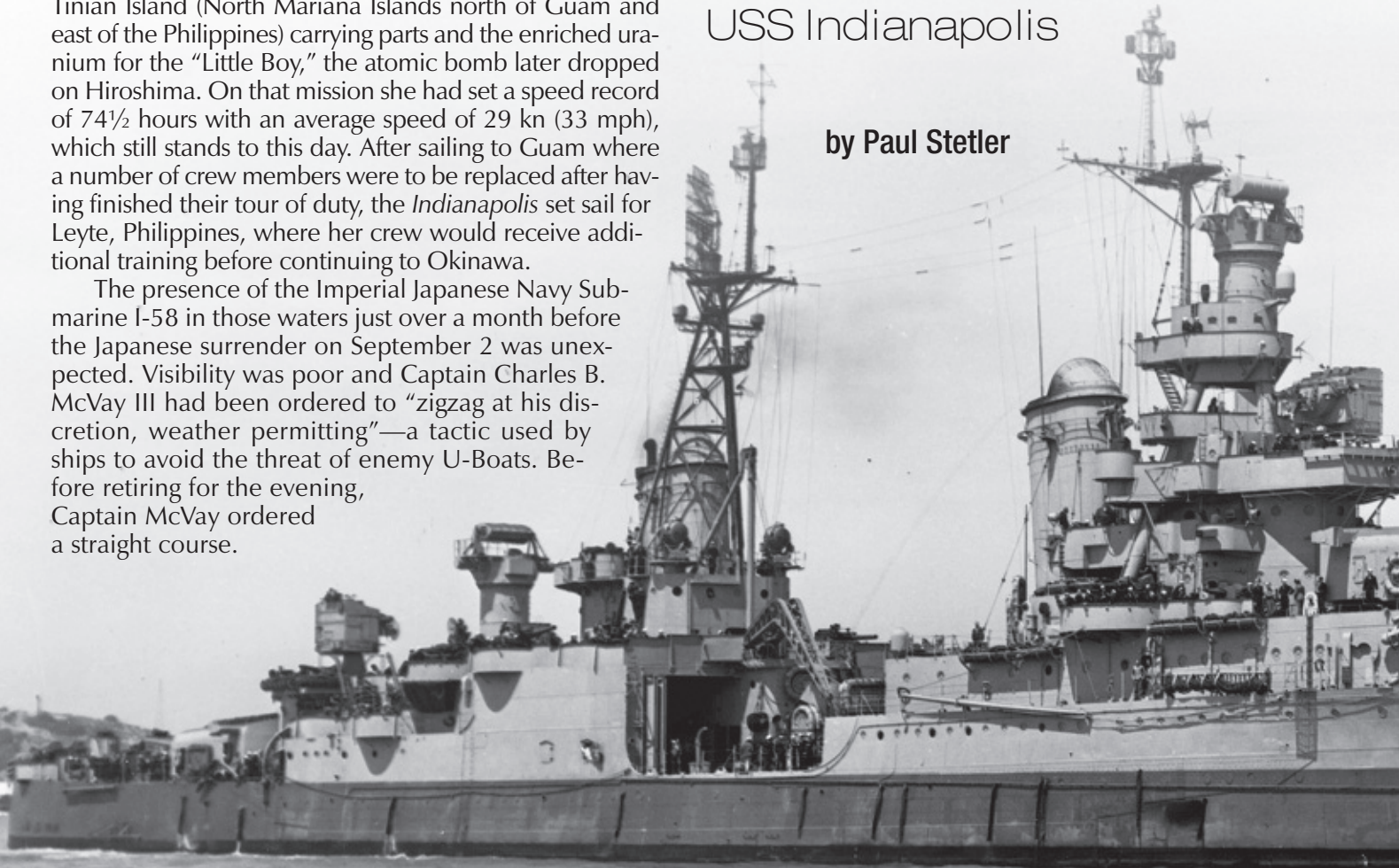
The presence of the Imperial Japanese Navy Submarine I-58 in those waters just over a month before the Japanese surrender on September 2 was unexpected. Visibility was poor and Captain Charles B. McVay III had been ordered to "zigzag at his discretion, weather permitting"—a tactic used by ships to avoid the threat of enemy U-Boats. Before retiring for the evening, Captain McVay ordered a straight course.

Salvation at Sea



Willie Hatfield on the
USS Indianapolis

by Paul Stetler



Indianapolis crewmen

© US Navy, National Archives



Indianapolis at anchor, 1944

GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE



Willie Hatfield, a 33 year-old native of Salt Lick, Kentucky, had gone to bed that evening like any other sailor. Due to the fact that the sleeping quarters aboard ship were tight and poorly ventilated, most sailors slept unclothed. A local newspaper quoted Willie in his own words describing the attack:

"At approximately midnight on July 30, I was awakened by a terrific explosion. I grabbed my clothes and ran up topside and found that the whole bow was aflame. Everything was in an uproar, men running around, some not knowing just what to do. After attempting to get a life-jacket, without success, I was tossed toward the starboard side as the ship began to list, and [I] ran up along the port side, finally being thrown into the cold water. Not long after I was in the water, the ship nosed upon her bow and sank quickly out of sight, taking with her many of the crew. Large groups of men tried to keep together, all hanging onto their life jackets. I was with a small group who were lucky enough to grab a life raft."

The ship sank in 12 minutes. Of the 1,195 crew members, approximately 300 went down with the ship. The 900 who survived faced exposure, dehydration, salt-water poisoning, and shark attacks while clinging to a few lifeboats with almost no food or water. Willie described the scene as follows:

"The hours dragged on, and we could see sharks trying to find out our exact position. Many times we were

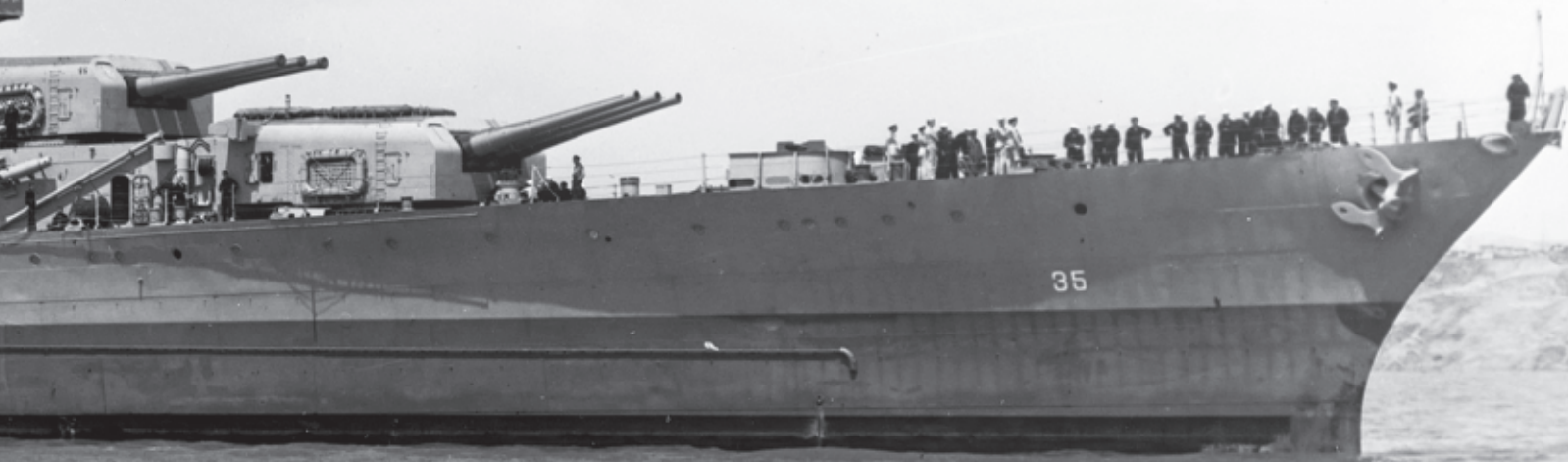


alarmed as a shark's tail would swish and slap against the little, light, rubber, life raft. As days passed by, we grew weary, and our spirits became weakened and several times men would all but give up. After being afloat for 108 hours, we were picked up aboard a transport."

He would later tell his family stories of fellow crewmen losing their senses and drinking salt water or diving into the sea to swim to their death. He spoke of sharks snatching dead sailors from the rafts. Desperate attempts were made by him and his mates to boost the spirits of those who seemed to be weakening. He told of catching small fish and eating them raw to survive.

Declassified records show that three stations received distress calls from the *Indianapolis*, but carelessness and fear of a Japanese trap caused each station to ignore the calls. When the ship failed to reach Leyte on the 31st as scheduled, no report was made. The Navy was informed of the sinking when survivors were spotted four days later by the crew of a PV-1 Ventura on patrol in the region. Out of 1,195 total crew members, only 316 survived.

In the midst of the chaos and tragedy, God was at work. Willie had never taken religion very seriously. He had been raised in a nominal church and taught that those who merely prayed a sinner's prayer would be eternally secure. But he later told his wife, Julia, that God used the trauma of the sinking of his ship to make him aware of his need of salvation. Just as the first torpedo hit, he told of



Julia, Betty, and Willie Hatfield

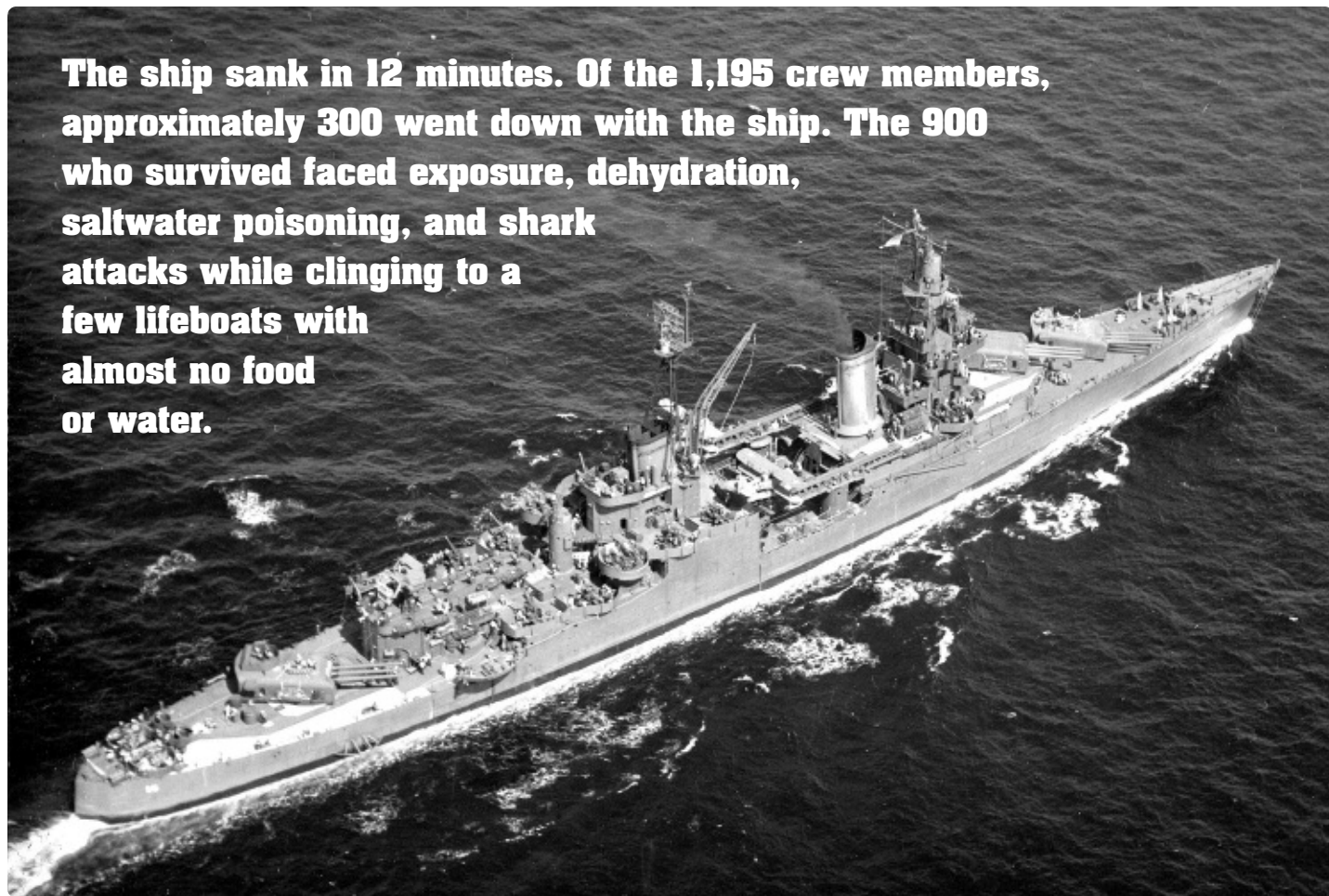


survivors going home



survivors taken to Guam

The ship sank in 12 minutes. Of the 1,195 crew members, approximately 300 went down with the ship. The 900 who survived faced exposure, dehydration, saltwater poisoning, and shark attacks while clinging to a few lifeboats with almost no food or water.



© Naval History and Heritage Command

receiving a powerful impression to get fully dressed. Consequently, he escaped the severe burns many of his fellow crewmen experienced as they floated, exposed in the hot sun. He attributed this blessing to the prayers of those back home. He told of being caught in the powerful undertow that resulted as the ship sank and thinking, "This is the end." His assumption of salvation suddenly evaporated as God impressed upon him his unpreparedness for eternity. He testified that as he struggled in the water, it was as though God reached down and pulled him to the surface, giving him another chance. Willie believed God had spared his life, and from that moment on he was forever changed.

Upon returning home, Willie and his wife, Julia, began attending

a Church of the Nazarene where they were saved and brought under the influence of holiness teaching. Throughout the decades that followed, the Hatfields became a wonderful blessing to churches and camp meetings in the area around Dayton, Ohio. Though a layman, Bro. Hatfield was known for occasional preaching, testimonies, and his visitation of those who were sick or in need. Though he was haunted and disturbed by his traumatic experiences until his death, he used the stories to bring glory to God and witness to others. The Hatfields went on to raise children who would become a great blessing to the Kingdom through their ministry efforts.

I personally have been blessed by the ministry of Willie Hatfield and his family at the Bible Methodist Church,

Franklin, Ohio. I recall him visiting and praying with my father at a time of crisis when a serious car accident nearly took his life. I vividly remember his testimonies in church services. Willie and Julia Hatfield were genuine Christians to whom we as young people could look for inspiration. His son and daughter-in-law, Paul and Bonnie Hatfield, led children's services at Franklin throughout my childhood years. His daughter, Betty Hatfield Jewett, was my Sunday school teacher in my early teen years. History calls the sinking of the *USS Indianapolis* a tragedy. But God used it to bless the lives of many and add souls to His Kingdom. ■



Julia and Willie

Paul D. Stetler II (HS 1994-95) is Director of Institutional Advancement at Hobe Sound Bible College, Hobe Sound, FL, where he lives with his wife, Jacinda (Edwards).



an HONOR *to* SERVE

David Miller
and the
Special Forces

Where does one begin when describing his military experiences? I was no different from most young men of my era, trying to figure out what the future held for me. But those were extraordinary times, as a military conflict was taking place in a far-off corner of the world—Southeast Asia.

There were several complicating factors in play for me: the military draft had been activated, my number was in the mix, and I was not serving the Lord at that time. Because of my spiritual condition, my parents were understandably concerned when I decided to enlist in the Armed Forces in 1971. There were many options available, but I wanted something exciting. And what's more exciting than jumping out of an airplane! My father's reaction was priceless: "Have you lost your mental faculties?" During those years, Special Forces was being glamorized by the media through music and movies, and it all sounded good to me. So I asked, "Where do I sign?" and off I went.

INITIAL TRAINING AND JUMP SCHOOL

There were three phases to my preparation: initial training, jump school, and Special Forces training. The initial training was very basic. It wasn't until I arrived at jump school that the full effect of my selected military career began to sink in. A billboard posted on base gave the number of jump fatalities as well as the total number of successful parachute jumps during training there at Fort Benning, Georgia. I converted those numbers into a percentage that thankfully was extremely low. However, I made sure that I was in church on base the Sunday before my first jump, even as an unsaved man. I was making sure the good Lord knew that I was counting on Him!

SPECIAL FORCES

After jump school, I boarded a bus for Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to start what would be an eight-month training period to obtain my Special Forces qualification and wear the coveted green beret. The glamour Hollywood had advertised about Special Forces rapidly disappeared upon arrival at the training site—a remote camp that was a dilapidated leftover from WWII. When we parachuted from the C-130, I twisted my ankle upon landing and knew immediately that I was in trouble. My superiors wanted to send me back to Fort Bragg to recover, but I talked them out of that. I was determined to tough it out.

We started every morning with a run. I laced up my boots as tight as possible to protect my bad ankle. On the first few days of those runs, I was dead last. But, by the end of the week, I had moved up and was finishing in the lead group. During the classroom sessions, my ankle would constantly throb, but it served to keep me awake and alert. Never had I imagined seeing myself running six miles on a bad ankle, but somehow I did it.

Phase One of Special Forces training was a weeding out period. We were placed under constant stress to see if we had what they were looking for in this special group of soldiers. While physical strength was a factor, I believe mental strength played a larger part in enduring those four weeks of long runs, the obstacle course, constant training, and days with little or no sleep. It seemed like we were always cold and miserable. Compounding our difficulties were the instructors recruited from the Special Forces. Even while training us, they were making critical observations about who they thought fit the mold of what a Green Beret should be. Because they themselves might end up on a mission with the men they were training, they were asking, "Do I want to serve on the same team, shoulder-to-shoulder, with this soldier?"

Every day was a test of mental and physical endurance, pushing us far beyond our perceived limits. You could quit at any time. By the end of the four-week period, I was physically and mentally exhausted, but as we prepared to transport out, I looked around the compound and felt a sense of accomplishment and thankfulness for making it this far. The number of those who made it through this phase was far smaller than the group who had initially parachuted in four weeks prior.

After Phase One, we spent months in specialized training and learning survival skills from the "best warriors the world has to offer." Today I can still recall much of it. It was not easy for me, especially physically. However, looking back, I realize that the training that I received was essential for preparing me to handle the missions and operations in which I would be asked to participate. It also instilled a level of confidence in my ability to succeed in stressful and difficult conditions.

THE MISSIONS

My first mission took me to the Far East where I was put on a team that was assigned to Southeast Asia. I'll never forget walking into headquarters and receiving my orders from a senior non-commissioned officer, who was a man of few words. "Sergeant Miller, you need a haircut. You are assigned to a team that leaves for Thailand in six days. Welcome to Special Forces."

My travels and assignments carried me to many countries and different roles in the two years I was abroad. I trained indigenous soldiers

to fight as part of the counterinsurgency in Southeast Asia, worked with Korean Special Forces, assisted in humanitarian missions, and took part in many other things while constantly training. It was never boring. From huddling on a jungle trail wrapped in a poncho during monsoon season in Southeast Asia to waking up on top of a South Korean mountain covered with at least five inches of snow and a sleeping bag that did not dry out for the entire mission, I sometimes questioned why I volunteered for these brutal conditions. There were times that I would have welcomed "boring," but those moments have given me a lifetime of memories.

PARENTS' PRAYERS

While I was not a Christian during that time in my life, I did say quiet prayers when faced with difficult situations. It was during those times that I took comfort from the knowledge that my parents were keeping me in their daily prayers. Words cannot describe my thankfulness for having parents who were serving the Lord. Their encouragement to mind God and to believe in Him became a common theme in our communications. I remember using a shortwave radio to contact an amateur radio operator in California who then placed a collect call to my parents from his telephone. I was able to hear their voices as we communicated across the width of the Pacific Ocean and the United States. They offered words of encouragement as our call came to an end. After the telephone call ended, the radio operator said before signing off, "You are very fortunate to have parents like that who love you and care for you." I certainly was. Their prayers followed me throughout my time in the service. I felt the protection and appreciated it. It helped me to stay aware of God and to talk to Him periodically. The example of my parents in their personal lives, including the sacrifices they made to further the Kingdom of God and serve Him, were instrumental in leading me back to the fold. And, yes, I do think the Lord took notice of all those times when I said short prayers. He kept me safe through tough situations. He brought me home safely. It was later that I asked for His forgiveness and allowed Him to change radically the course of my life.



LIFETIME IMPACT

Today, as I look back on that time, I realize the impact military training had in better preparing me to handle the rigors of life. I was able to use the benefits from the GI bill to further my education and teach at GBS for a few years. Obtaining my flight training took me down another career path from which I recently retired as a captain for American Airlines.

I cherish the memories of my time in the service. I had the honor of serving with men who had served our country all over the world. Some of them had served in Southeast Asia before people here in the states had ever heard of Vietnam. These included my team sergeant, who was a veteran of the Korean War; my sergeant major, who parachuted into Normandy on D-Day with the 101st Airborne; and a sergeant I met in one of our camps, whose last name was also Miller. I later discovered that he was the recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. I would never have known his status except that a member of my team told me. Humility was pervasive, and valor was commonplace in Special Forces units. Most of the soldiers that I served with had already completed multiple tours in Vietnam before I ever became part of the team. They may not have had movies portrayed by Hollywood stars about their military service, but, nonetheless, they were warrior heroes.

During my military career I learned from “the best,” and I would sum it up by saying, “Expect success, train to win, plan for all contingencies, finish what you start, take action, and never give up.”

I came across this quote recently and was struck by its poignant truthfulness:

A veteran—whether active duty, retired, or released from active duty—is someone who, at some point in life, wrote a blank check made payable to “The United States of America,” for an amount of “up to and including my life.”
—unknown

It was an honor to serve my country. ■

David Miller is the older son of former GBS President Bence Miller (1975-1995) and his wife, Cordelia (Robinson) (HS '44). David was employed by GBS from 1976 to 1989 in such capacities as head of security, public relations representative, radio department supervisor, and college instructor. After nearly 30 years, David recently retired as a captain for American Airlines. David's wife, Martha (Madden) (BSM '82) has taught in the GBS Music Division since 1981. They have two adult married children, Michelle (Miller) Mater (HS '01, BA '07) and David Lee (HS '03, 2002-06). Their youngest child, Will, is a student in Aldersgate Christian Academy.



Dear Phil

forms of violence are contrary to Christ's law of love. They point to Jesus' command, "But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also" (Matt. 5:39). In the same context, Jesus said, "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).

I find help interpreting Jesus' non-resistance and non-violence sayings from two places. First, John 18:36 says, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting." This text seems to imply two things: (1) during these in-between times, Jesus' kingdom cannot be advanced through violence; and (2) fighting would be a proper response if Jesus' kingdom were of this world. We must distinguish Jesus' redemptive purpose in His first coming from His reigning purpose in the second coming.

Second, in Romans 12:19-13:7 Paul distinguishes personal and civil vengeance. The individual mandate is "never take your own vengeance but leave room for the wrath of God" (Rom. 12:19). The civil mandate is "[government] is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil" (Rom. 13:4). Navigating these two mandates is complex, multi-layered, and often situation-specific. The extent to which believers may serve as an avenging civil minister of God will be a function of their understanding of Scriptural justice, their individual consciences, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings,
Phil ■

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WHAT CONSTITUTES A "JUST" WAR?

Is it ever right to make war? Can violence be moral? Doesn't Jesus teach that all violence is contrary to His ethic? —A Friend

Dear Friend,

God is not the creator of war. It exists because of greed and rebellion against God's rightful reign (Gen. 14:2; cf. Psa. 2:1-2). But, God will end all wars! He promises to ultimately abolish war and establish eternal peace (Psa. 46:9; Isa. 2:4; Hos. 2:18; Zec. 9:10).

The answer to your question involves three periods in history: Old Testament times, End Times, and the in-between times, i.e., the time between the OT and the End Times. I'll address each period in that order. In OT times, God claims the right to end human life (e.g., the flood; cf. Gen. 9:6). God authorizes angels to take human lives (2 Kgs. 19:35; 2 Sam. 24:16). God authorizes humans to take human life in war (Num. 31; Deut. 7). Therefore, since God cannot do what is immoral, the taking of human life in war cannot be *inherently* immoral.

During the End Times, Jesus will return to receive his kingdom and order, "But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence" (Luke 19:27). When the Son of Man returns, he commands concerning the

evil, drunken slave: "cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:44-51). In Revelation 19, the Greek words translated 'war' and 'wage war' occur for their final time. The One who is called Faithful and True, whose name is the Word of God, rides forth to judge and wage war in righteousness. The armies of heaven follow Him on white horses, and "from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations" (Rev. 19:11-15). In preparation for the great battle, an angel invites birds to come gorge themselves on the flesh of the dead (Rev. 19:18-21). Jesus' teaching, whether in parables or visions, pictures the sinless Son of God and his servants using violence and waging war. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that the use of violence and waging war are not *inherently* immoral.

The problem is that in both the OT and End Times examples given, God is personally directing the wars. But what about now—the in-between times—when we don't have that kind of access to the Most High King? Some Christians hold that all



the LONG ROAD HOME

for Michael Schaub

"For some, God shows Himself powerfully in the heat of battle. For others, God protects and guides through a horrific war only to show Himself and His love in a moment of redemption. My experience in the power of God and His ability to answer prayer was different. It took time. God walked through the darkness, anger, confusion, and depression with me as he guided me back to the Light of Life—Jesus Christ.

My name is Sergeant First Class Retired (SFC) Michael Schaub."

Michael joined the Army on April 13, 1995, at the recruiting station in Big Rapids, Michigan. Several factors contributed to his decision. "I was in trouble as a kid, so a judge told me it might be a good idea; and my father had served as a Navy Seabee." However, his most important reason was that he was running from God. He felt that God wanted him to go to college and become something other than what Michael wanted to do or be.

Then Michael was saved in 1997 while assigned to the 180th Transportation Company in Muskegon,

Michigan. He enrolled in classes at GBS, which was made possible by a transfer to the U.S. Army Reserves 478th Engineer Battalion stationed at nearby Fort Thomas, Kentucky. While a student at GBS, Michael met Linda Nicodemus (AA '00, BA '02) and they married in 2002. Although he also dropped out of college that year, he later attended additional terms.

The Schaub family life settled into a somewhat comfortable pattern. They had their first child in 2004 and Linda had just informed him that they were going to have another. During a memorable hunting trip in November, 2006, he reflected on the goodness of God. "God really is a loving God and I am blessed!" Then the telephone rang at the house where the hunting party was staying. Linda was calling to inform him that his Army commander needed to get in touch with him as soon as he returned from hunting. It was then that he found out that he had received orders for deployment to Iraq. He reports, "I was honestly conflicted

when I received my orders because my family was the most important part of my life. But I also knew that I had a job to do and I never wanted to give less than my best."

When he arrived in Iraq in January, 2007, it became his duty to train soldiers in the identification of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and work in coordination with a task force to disarm them. Needless to say, it was a difficult and dangerous time. Then he suffered a severe injury to his right foot and ankle in an accident on March 8th. It wasn't a "glamorous" incident. After a mission, he had returned to base with his vehicle and was finishing the paperwork for preventive maintenance checks and services. He had just dismissed all of the other soldiers. As he jumped down from the driver's seat with about 50 pounds of gear, his right foot caught the edge of a rock, tearing nearly all of his ankle muscles and tendons except the Achilles. He was given pain medication and began using "as much as it took to complete each day's mission."

More devastating than the physical injury was the extreme trauma experienced during the missions, the fighting, and the interpersonal conflicts. "I was angry and bitter because of having to take life threatening risks while engaged in combat with the enemy. Being forced to face the mortality of both comrades and enemies took a toll. I was mad because I had to wash the blood of my fellow soldiers out of our vehicles so we could continue looking for IEDs. I hated everything! Yes, I was out of spiritual victory. The loss, the yelling, the anger, and nightmares...I wanted to escape anything that reminded me of who I was."

July 17, 2007, dawned with Michael on a flight out of Kuwait, on leave to see his second daughter's birth. "I remember chasing the sunrise all the way across the Atlantic into the airport which would finally take me home to Kentucky. I



can remember the thoughts that ran through my mind. "How will my wife and daughter look at me? Do I tell Linda about the near miss of a mortar attack? Do I tell her about the hours of constant fighting? Will my family think I'm a monster? How much has changed?"

After his daughter was born, he was sent to Fort Knox for surgery and rehabilitation. During that time, he was able to come home on the weekends to see his family. He spent the next six months trying to figure out "Just who I was and how to deal with who I was."

Pastor Darrell Stetler and his wife Regina played an integral part as prayer partners and in counseling Linda during their time of struggle. Michael acknowledged that Linda had to deal with "the anger,



hate, and emotional damage that was coming out of me.” Although she had never felt physically threatened or in danger, she just did not know how to “do her part.” Darrell and Regina continually prayed for the couple—especially for Michael to see “who God is and allow Him to reestablish Himself” in Michael’s life. Michael said that the Stetlers noted “a blackness” in his soul that they had never seen before.

Michael first realized that he was addicted to pain medications when he became ill while trying to stop taking them. “It was not that I enjoyed how they made me feel; I took them simply to reduce the pain so that I could survive four months of trying to do my job.” It took until February 2008 to break the addiction. He now avoids prescription pain medicines, knowing his body could very easily get hooked on them again.

On August 14, 2014, Michael received a 100% disability discharge. Because he has no cartilage on the front side of his ankle, he continues to experience pain. At this time he is hesitant to undergo a complete ankle replacement surgery. More problematic is the continuing emotional turmoil, anxiety, and nightmares. Michael, like many soldiers, hasn’t wanted to talk about his war experiences; and, as with many veterans, this tends to prevent recovery and healing. But he is blessed to have a supportive wife and family, as well as an involved pastoral family.

While sitting in the cabin with his mother and a close friend during a fishing trip, Michael began opening up about Iraq. “At least I made it back,” he said.

His friend’s response shocked him. “Not all of you made it back. You are physically here, but there are times when you are emotionally still back there.”

Michael realized that was true. “Yes, while part of me is still in Iraq, it is by God and His good mercies that I made it through the major battles for my soul.”

This account began with Michael, a young man in trouble, looking for a way out. It closes with Michael, an adult in recovery, working at Pineview Homes with boys much like he was himself. He now mentors “neglected, abused, and juvenile justice” boys ages 8 to 17 years.

Yes, the road back home to health and wholeness has been a long one for Michael. But God has been there with him every step, and he now feels blessed to tell “NA&JJ” boys about Christ. —KF ■



Michael Schaub (GBS various semesters 1998-2012), lives in Sears, Michigan, with his wife, Linda (Nicodemus) (AA '00, BA '02), and five children: Michaela (14), Rachel (11), Rebekah (9), Madelynn (7), and Jonathan (5).



by Sonja Vernon

A BLESSED HOPE

“...Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ”
—Titus 2:13 ESV

It was 1967. She was a young wife whose husband was serving his country overseas. She was grateful he hadn’t been sent to Vietnam, but Europe was still very far away. Each day she checked the mail for his letters and every night wrote back to the man she loved. He had told her she could join him as soon as everything was ready, and from that moment, the journey to him had become her focal point. She turned down the promotion at work. She cut her food budget to buy the coat she knew he would love seeing on her. And on the day she left for the Cincinnati airport, her sheer excitement eclipsed her fear of flying. As Ruthie boarded the aircraft, she thought, “Even if the plane goes down, George will know I’m on my way.”

In Frankfurt, Germany, the young man in the uniform of the U.S. Army paced the arrivals area. He had been there for hours. There was no way he would be late for this meeting! The love of his life was coming to join him! The long months of separation would soon be over for my parents. Anticipation would give way to reality.

As Christ-followers, we too long for the day when we will see the One who loves us more than anyone else, the One who has gone to prepare a place for us. We yearn for the blessed hope of His glorious appearing when all will finally be put right. As we wait, let us live in anticipation, preparing ourselves for His return, ready to welcome Him at any moment. ■

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