

GOD'S REVIVALIST

October 2019

and Bible Advocate





about this issue

FAITHFULLY CONNECTING

WITH BOTH YOUNG AND OLD

It must have been the way I was raised, but I've always had an affinity for people at both ends of the age spectrum: children and "older folk." I enjoy talking to children. The bantering and teasing brings joy to this elderly man. Yes, elderly. I am now part of this growing demographic.

I have always been comfortable around seniors. After my grandfather died, my grandmother moved in with us. Over the next 26 years, our home was also her home. I watched my mother take care of Grandma, especially the last 15 years of her life when she was bedfast. I remember going home to West Virginia, sneaking into her room, leaning over the hospital bed, and giving her kiss after kiss on her cheeks, waiting for her to guess who it was. By that time, she was blind, but, grinning from ear-to-ear, she would run through the names of several grandchildren before settling on "Kenny." Some of my fondest memories of her are how appreciative she was for even the smallest things done for her. She was effusive with her thanks. She expressed the same sentiments in her nighttime prayers, which I enjoyed listening in on.

My father was my biggest hero. I also kissed him when I greeted him, just not as ferociously as with my grandma kisses! My other heroes were, as I have mentioned before, Dr. R.G. Flexon and Dr. Leslie Wilcox. I enjoyed talking and teasing with them. After retiring as Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2013, I was privileged to work with Larry Smith, then editor of *God's Revivalist*. He is a dear friend and a lot of fun! Phone calls and visits since his retirement in 2016 are enjoyable. I love to make him laugh!

Having said all that, I must admit being taken aback by the results of a recent study of 1,896 seniors over the age of 65 which shows that 22% will have a conversation with no more than three people over the span of an entire week (see p.17). How sad!

This issue's emphasis on "faithfulness" made me think about our obligation to be faithful in our interactions with those outside of our age group. Acknowledge children. Talk to them. Listen to them. Go out of your way to converse with the elderly. While we may take a friendly greeting and warm conversation for granted, it may well be the highlight of the day, week, or even month for a senior! —KF ■

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COVER: Back to School at GBS for Autumn Quesenberry and her friends. Photo by Rachel Pohl.

the president's page



FAITH LEADING TO FAITHFULNESS

by Rodney Loper, President

Our relationship with God comes through the entry point of faith. God extends His love to us by and through His Son, Jesus Christ. It is because of His Son that grace is extended to all mankind. Man, if he desires this fellowship, must respond to these overtures with faith. Therefore, for humankind, faith is the entrance to fellowship with the divine, essential to starting and continuing our walk with God. Faith isn't an historical artifact, something we only read about. It is—indeed must be—a present reality in the everyday life of every Christian. In other words, while faith is the starting point, it must be present all along the way in the life of a Christian.

Hebrews chapter 11, known as the “Faith Chapter,” gives specific examples of faith. The Old Testament saints show us what faith looks like in the warp and woof of life's difficulties. These vignettes of faith provide us with examples to follow, as well as encouragement, knowing that if those saints made it, so can we!

Some of the examples in this chapter are not glamorous. In fact, some make us a bit confused and nervous. After all, Sampson isn't a role model we hold up for our sons. Rahab is not the kind of woman we want our girls to model their lives after. One of the beauties of Scripture is that it lets us know that people who were struggling, sometimes failing, could still reach out to God in faith. God doesn't wait for us to become perfect people before He responds to our cry of faith. God takes us where we are, not where we should be. Through His loving hand of guidance and our humble obedience, the process of becoming the person God wants us to be gradually becomes a reality.

In addition to these accounts of faithful Christians being examples to follow and encouragement to keep us inspired, they are also truths that we

should embrace. Here are some practical steps we can take to express faith in our daily lives.

First, we are to seek God diligently.

If we are to have biblical faith, we must seek God. Scripture gives us an idea of how we are to seek Him when we are challenged to seek Him with all of our hearts (Jer. 29:13). In Hebrews 11 we are told to seek Him “diligently” or earnestly. This is a call to an all-out pursuit of God rather than a half-hearted effort.

Second, we must believe that God exists.

Another way of saying this is that we believe God is who He says He is. While this is easy to say, it is sometimes difficult to apply to our lives. If we believe this, we, by default, are accepting His claims and His commands. So, while faith originates in our heads and hearts, it is expressed by our will in how we live. This is why James declares, “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:26).

Third, we know that He rewards those who seek Him.

Hebrews confirms this truth: “He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (11:6b NKJV). An essen-

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talks about little faith. Paul commends the Thessalonians for their growing faith. In his letter to the Romans, Paul talks about unwavering faith and strong faith. But even faith as small as a mustard seed is powerful enough to move mountains.

tial truth that I believe this passage would have us grasp is that God is the One who rewards. We often get caught up in the *rewards* rather than in the One who *gives* the rewards. Keep the focus on Him!

We may struggle under a heavy burden of “oughts”: “I ought to have a better prayer life”; “I ought to read the Bible more”; or “I ought to witness more.” Although these

are all worthy sentiments, it is more important for us to realize that God wants to be known! If we keep intently focused on knowing Him (Phil. 3:10), there is a better spiritual balance to our lives. When our quest is “to know Him,” then our daily prayer transitions from “I ought to” to “I get to!” He joyously reveals Himself to those who seek Him. He wants us to find Him! Again, our focus should not be on seeking the reward, but rather seeking the Giver of rewards.

But what is the reward we are to expect when we diligently seek God? It is not the accumulation of stuff which is so temporal and transitory. It is intimate fellowship with the Divine—both present fellowship and future fellowship. We can enjoy intimate fellowship with the Divine now and have the blessed hope of this fellowship continuing forever!

Fourth, we leave the results of our faith up to Him.

The comforting aspect in how this faith mechanism should work is that since we know the “Who” of the reward—God—we can leave the “how” up to Him. This allows us to relax in Him.

Now, I know that the “how” is something humans like to focus on. How does this look? How does this feel? How will my life go? How will I make it? How? Proper faith embraces the first three components mentioned earlier and involves a high level of attention and activity on our part. However, the final component—the how—is something that by faith we leave up to Him. The simple yet profound reality is that He is God and we are not!

A question may be asked: “Do all Christians have the same “level” of faith? Various New Testament verses mention different types of faith, such as “genuine faith” (2 Tim. 1:5) and “weak faith” (Rom. 14:1-3). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talks about “little faith” (Matt. 6:30). Paul, in his letter to the church at Thessalonica, commends the believers there for their “growing faith” (2 Thess. 1:3). In his letter to the Roman believers, he talks about “unwavering faith” and “strong faith” (4:20). Although there are many similar references, let me say this: The bottom line is that even faith as small as the size of “a mustard seed” is powerful enough to move mountains (Matt. 17:20). We need to hold fast to our faith and ask God to help us grow it!

Yes, faith is the entry point for our relationship with God. This faith enables a steadfast belief in God’s Word and all that He has done for the world, the entire human race, but, most importantly, for us personally. Our faithfulness is living in the reality of all God’s truth.

How is your faith? Is it leading you to greater levels of faithfulness?

“Therefore, my brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58). ■

Faithfulness

*Be thou faithful
unto death,
and I will give thee
a crown of life.*

—Revelation 2:10



by Steve Stetler

The Monday morning “red-eye” from McAllen to Dallas was full as usual with a plethora of businesspeople shuttling across the country to seminars and power lunches as they commenced another work week. Reaching our cruising altitude, the captain dimmed the lights and people settled down trying to grab a few more broken moments of sleep. Normally I would have done the same, but this morning I was restless. My mind was racing as it tried to process a variety of ideas concerning faithfulness—God’s and ours.

Looking out the window, watching the first rays of color streak over the horizon to illuminate the sky, my musing was interrupted by the conversation between two businessmen in the row behind me. It went like this:

“I don’t know, Juan. I feel uncomfortable with that. It just feels unethical.”

“Come on, man! You know what Mike always says, ‘Faithful to the team. Do what you have to do to stay on top.’”

“I just don’t know.... Is being loyal to the team more important than being true to myself? Sometimes I wonder.”

“Of course it is, man! That is, if we are going to get what we want—what we deserve. Anyway, we can always ask for forgiveness later. Ha! Ha!”

Sadly, we live in a world where principles and loyalties are habitually manipulated to achieve one’s own selfish agenda. The “do what you have to do to stay on top” paradigm has become the touchstone of success, while faithfulness and fidelity are overshadowed by the ensuing chaos. By contrast, faithfulness—the ensign of divine constancy—is woven into the very fabric of a biblical worldview. For the believer, the immutable faithfulness of God to every soul is the cornerstone of our temporal existence as well as our eternal hope.

Wikipedia defines faithfulness as “the steady devotion to a person, place, or concept. It is the concept of remaining unfailingly loyal and exhibiting that loyalty regardless of extenuating circumstances.” Other dictionary sources include words such as “reliable,” “constancy,” “devotion,” “fidelity,” “steadfast,” “trustworthy,” “dependability,” and “allegiance.”

“Faithfulness” is a multifaceted word with a wide range of specific or implied meanings. Obviously, we cannot

peruse each thread, but it is imperative that we recognize God's faithfulness to us, reciprocate the same, and allow the Holy Spirit to reproduce faithfulness in our lives as we interact with our broken world.

For the Christian, God's faithfulness is the benchmark by which other examples of commitment and devotion are measured. It is not just an adjective that describes God. Rather, it is a noun declaring the very essence of His character and being. God Is Faithful! Every word, thought, act, interaction, punishment, limitation, command; it all exudes faithfulness because it is who He is. This concept is never expressed more clearly than it is in 2 Timothy 2:13: *"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."* It is impossible for Him to be less than faithful in anything.

The startling reality is that His faithfulness **to** us is not dependent **on** us. We don't earn it by being good, nor lose it by being evil. Romans 5:8 reminds us that, *"While we were yet sinners Christ died for us."* He laid it all on the line fully understanding that millions would reject Him and walk away. Why would He do that? Because His death was for "whosoever," including the ones who chose not to believe, and His faithfulness demanded that they be given that choice. Regardless of their decision, He chose to be faithful. The same impetus that presents us with a choice also provides us with a cure. *"If we [choose to] confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9).

Every interaction between God and His creation flows from His faithfulness. Several verses of Scripture coalesce to illustrate how His faithfulness fosters a life of victory for each of us:

- *God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* (1 Cor. 1:9)
- *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* (1 Thess. 5:24)
- *The Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.* (2 Thess. 3:3)
- *God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.* (1 Cor. 10:13)
- *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.* (Heb. 10:23)

Clearly, His faithfulness extends to each of us and is limited only by our response to it. *"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations"* (Deut. 7:9).

Faithfulness is the golden thread running through the whole narrative binding it together. God displays His

faithfulness to us but also demands that we reciprocate it. The kingdom of God is never about competition or comparison. God is not concerned about who reached a higher level or had better numbers. Seniority, speed, position—none of that matters. How many times you've fallen is not a factor, only whether you got back up. God doesn't keep records of the times you started over or how insecure you felt along the way. Heaven's only measuring

Membership in the Biblical Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 was not decided by fame or fortune. The prominence of the display did not depend on power or position. They were a dirty, disheveled, wounded group who stubbornly refused to quit.

stick is faithfulness. Even then, it's a "yes" or "no" proposition. Either you are faithful or not. His promise is: *"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life"* (Rev. 2:10).

When God founded the Jewish nation, He chose a man with whom He could communicate face-to-face and establish covenants. He chose Abraham—Father of the Faithful. The early Church looked for someone to lead the fledgling assembly, and they chose *"Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 6:5). Paul, nearing the end of his ministry, admonished Timothy to teach the things that he had been taught to faithful men who in turn would teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

There are numbers of biblical characters about whom we know many details. We know their strengths and weaknesses having followed the accounts of each victory and defeat. These teach us many principles about life and following Christ. However, those who capture my attention are the ones about whom the only thing mentioned other than their names is that they were faithful. These include people like Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord (Eph. 6:21); Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother (Col. 4:9); Epaphras, a faithful minister of Christ (Col. 1:7); and Timotheus, faithful in the Lord (1 Cor. 4:17). God Himself sees and acknowledges any soul that is faithful to Him.

Friend, your struggle never goes unnoticed. Your faithfulness is documented and Heaven applauds when you survive with nothing but the assurance that you did your best and were faithful. God never asks us to be he-

Faithfulness

Quotes



roes or even successful. According to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, the only thing He requires is that we be found faithful!

Membership in the Biblical Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 was not decided by fame or fortune. The prominence of the display did not depend on power or position. To be sure, there are some truly powerful and famous people listed there. However, once we get beyond the fifteen or so who were actually named, what we see is a rag-tag army of men and women who were tortured, mocked, beaten, imprisoned, stoned, dismembered, destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandering through deserts and mountains in animal-skin clothing, and hiding out in dens and caves. These are the heroes of Heaven's army. The author describes them as those who *"out of weakness were made strong."* They were a dirty, disheveled, wounded group who stubbornly refused to quit. Verses 13 and 39 declare that these all died *"not having received the promise."* By earthly standards, they were not even successful. God however declares that these are those *"of whom the world was not worthy!"* Their only claim to fame was faithfulness.

Finally, God desires to interface with this broken world through us. It is incumbent on us to represent Him accurately. Think of it in the terms understood by those who collect miniatures. To have value, they must be proportionately and aesthetically exact—true to the original in every way. Any deviation renders it a "fake" negating its value completely. If people are willing to go to such great lengths to validate something with no intrinsic value, how imperative it is that our faithfulness replicates His when investing in eternal souls! Another concern for us relates to the concept of fidelity. The etymology of fidelity connects it to technology. We recognize the concept more readily when it's called Hi-Fi or high fidelity. It is the degree to which a device accurately reproduces its effect. That is, how close an audio or video recording comes to the live performance. You get the point. We must ask God to ensure that the fidelity of our actions and attitudes is high—that they are an accurate reflection of how He would like others to see and experience Him. God wants us to be so faithful that the world will recognize Him from having seen His face exhibited in real time through our lives.

"Lord, help me to recognize your faithfulness working in me, may I reciprocate that faithfulness with fidelity in every word, attitude, and deed, and may You reproduce your faithfulness in my life so that one day I'll hear the words, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.'" ■

Rev. Steve Stetler (BRE '82; BA '83) is Director of Member Care for Florida Evangelistic Association Ministries, Hobe Sound, FL. He and his wife, Beth (Sankey) (BA '85), served as missionaries to Mexico for nine-and-a-half years and currently live in Pharr, TX.

"Kindness and faithfulness keep a king safe, through kindness his throne is made secure." —King Solomon

"Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind." —Marcus Tullius Cicero

"Your faithfulness makes you trustworthy to God."
—Edwin Louis Cole

"There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls and the person directed by him. They ought...to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their words directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men; but these are peculiarly the things of God." —John Wesley

"Our responsibility is simply to make our witness faithful; it is God's responsibility alone to make it effective." —John MacArthur

"Do daily and hourly your duty; do it patiently and thoroughly. Do it as it presents itself; do it at the moment, and let it be its own reward. Never mind whether it is known and acknowledged or not, but do not fail to do it." —James H. Aughey

"Spiritual advancement is measured by faithful obedience."
—Watchman Nee

"Faithful servants never retire. You can retire from your career, but you will never retire from serving God." —Rick Warren

"Wait for the Lord. Behave yourself manfully and be of good courage. Do not be faithless but stay in your place and do not turn back."
—Thomas a Kempis

"Being faithful in the smallest things is the way to gain, maintain, and demonstrate the strength needed to accomplish something great." —Alex Harris

"Faithfulness is not doing something right once, but doing something right over and over and over and over." —Joyce Meyer

"The Church does not need brilliant personalities but faithful servants of Jesus and the brethren. Not in the former but in the latter is the lack." —Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"Faithfulness is not holding the fort. It's storming the gates of hell and taking back enemy territory that belongs to God."
—Mark Batterson



Dear Timothy: Set Your Eyes on Faithfulness

by Jeff Robinson

Dear Timothy,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The last time I wrote you, recall that I sought to stir up your mind by way of reminder, to use the words of our dear brother Peter, that you must find your contentment in Christ alone, else you will be habitually frustrated in your ministry. Remember, that was my first watchword for you in the ministry: contentment. Today, I write to you and commend to you a second, equally vital, watchword: faithfulness.

My dear brother in Christ, the world will try to press you into its God-denying mold when it comes to gauging your success in ministry. The world, and perhaps a good many well-meaning but carnal-minded people in your congregation, will tell you that for your ministry to be considered a success, you will have to exhibit regular conversions to Christ, have a lakeshore lined with candidates for baptism and possess attendance numbers that increase astronomically overnight within your congregation. They will seek to sell you on the notion that those are the marks of ministerial success, and you may be allured by such cheap reasoning. Don't buy it.

While we certainly desire healthy church rolls and want to see untold numbers experience the effectual grace of Christ, you must remember that conversion and church growth are God's business. (Recall what happened

after Pentecost when God added more than 3,000 to his church in one day? Wasn't that glorious?) Those may be measures of what God is doing in your ministry, but not necessarily. Recall the false prophets I have warned you about, the ones who have roiled the church in Ephesus, and remember also those super apostles with whom I contended at the church in Corinth? They were gaining quite a following, and who among us would assume that the fruit of their false teaching was healthy?

Timothy, God is not calling you to be omnipotent, for you are merely a weak, clay pot—common, expendable crockery. God is not calling you to be omniscient, for all men are ignorant to such a degree that James had to remind us that he who makes plans without considering God's sovereignty is sinfully presumptuous. God is not calling you to be omnipresent, for you minister in vain if you seek to be everywhere all at once out of a sinful fear of man. God is not calling you to please men, for men are fickle. The church members who are today praising you are just as likely to be calling for your ouster when your ministry threatens to upset the peace within the kingdoms over which they occupy the throne. He is not calling you to earn their praise. You must please Him alone. God is not calling you to fear men. You must fear Him. If you will fear God and nothing else, and hate sin and nothing else, God may



turn the world upside down through your ministry.

No, God is calling you simply to be faithful. He is calling you to be faithful in feeding and leading His flock. Remember, it is His flock. It is His kingdom, not yours. You have been called to build it, by His grace, faithfully. What does such faithfulness entail? It's not going to look like that which the world calls "success," and you must settle this notion in your heart and mind now. God has called you to faithfulness in preaching His Word, being ready at all times to proclaim His truth. Forsaking all else, God has called you to set the oracles of God before the people of God to the glory of God every Lord's Day. Do not worry about results. Results are God's business. He has called you to faithfulness in studying to show yourself approved, a workman who is able to divide His Word rightly. That will always be priority one: Many hours in study and prayer will establish you in this crucial endeavor. He has called you to be faithful in guarding the gospel He has deposited into your care, which means you must know sound doctrine and teach sound doctrine. He has called you to be faithful in refuting false doctrine as well. Therefore, my dear son, you must work hard to be a pastor/theologian. That is an irreducible part of faithfulness in ministry. Studying God's Word and learning theology are hard work, but such labors will pay dividends into eternity, for this is the way God, in His infinite wisdom, has ordained it.

So God is calling you to be faithful in guarding your doctrine, but He is also calling you to be faithful in keeping a close watch over your life and conduct, what Solomon in Proverbs calls "guarding your heart with all

vigilance." Though you are young, you must be faithful in living out the theology of grace that has been given to you through God's Word. Will your people find your theology compelling if the theology you claim to hold dear has had little discernible effect on your life? How can you commend grace to others if you are not willing to live a godly, gracious lifestyle? A man of grace must be a gracious man, a wise and godly sage once told me.

You must be faithful in asking God to form those character traits in you that I passed down to you in another letter, traits that God gave me as qualifications for His undershepherds. You must be a faithful family man, loving your wife as Christ loved the church and training your future children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. You must petition our Lord for daily grace in being sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, and gentle. You must plug the ears and shield the eyes of your heart to the deadly lure of money, and you must be able to teach and debate the truth with others in a gracious and winsome manner. Living out these attributes by God's grace and praying that God will bear the full range of the fruit of His Spirit in you are all a part of what it means to be a faithful herald of God's Word.

And you must persevere in faithfulness even when war has broken out all around you in the ministry. Remember, you are a soldier of Christ. Until our Lord returns, you will be at war, not at peace. Thus, you must fight the good fight of faith on behalf of yourself and your people. You must persevere in loving the members of your congregation, even those irascible, (p21)➡





A NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS!

During the afternoon of August 13, new students began arriving on campus to begin their college days at GBS. Ready to welcome and assist them in unpacking their vehicles were current students, staff, faculty, and area pastors. The next several days were full of information and fun activities, culminating in a Saturday trip to the Creation Museum in nearby Petersburg, KY. All enjoyed

the hours spent at the various exhibits there and the picnic lunch.

Sunday Morning.

In the opening convocation of the 120th school year on Sunday, August 18, Marc Sankey, Vice President for Constituent Relations, presented scholar-

ships (see p.14). In addition to the recurring endowed scholarships, two new endowed scholarships were unveiled (see p.12) and four one-time scholarships awarded (see p.13).

The total amount of endowed scholarships was \$90,459. Divisional scholarships and Wingrove Taylor Scholarship Legacy Awards were also distributed, bringing the grand total to \$165,409.

After the presentation of scholarships, President Loper took his sermon text from 1 Kings 17:1-12,



Staff and faculty assist with moving

which tells of the dire circumstances experienced by the widow of

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 **Renee (Langworthy) (BA '14) and Shane Muir (BA '09)**, a daughter, **Lucy Ann**, born September 9 at Good Samaritan Hospital, Cincinnati, OH. Shane is a digital media specialist at GBS. Lucy Ann is welcomed by the campus family, and especially by her



big brothers Peter (3) and Erik (2), and her two cousins, Kallie (4) and Dayton (2) Muir. To **Jananne (Glick) and Kent Stetler (BA '15)**, a son, **Kaden Kent**, born August 18 at The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati, OH. Both Kent and Jananne work at GBS, Kent as registrar and Jananne as an admission counselor.

DEATHS



Paul Enoch Bliton, 78, passed away July 25, 2019. Born in Madison, IN, to William and Opal Bliton, Paul attended God's Bible School as a young man while his father, William "Bill" Bliton, served on the maintenance crew (1954-62). Paul graduated from the GBS high school in 1959 and earned a BS in Education from the University of Cincinnati. He began his diverse careers teaching high school for three years before becoming involved in commercial and residential real estate development, owning several restaurant franchises, and founding his own company.

Paul was a longtime member of Lakewood United Methodist Church, Jacksonville, FL, Kairos International Prison Ministry, Rotary Club of Deerwood, and the Deerwood Country Club. As a gifted speaker and Bible teacher, he interjected his style of humor with the truth.



Zarephath. Often that passage is quickly summarized as “widow had a need, and God supplied,” but it wasn’t necessarily that simple. It is likely that the widow had been praying for some time about her dwindling supply of oil and flour and may have waited for weeks before help came.

President Loper reminded the students and staff that we must not trust our own *resources* in place of the *Source*. God is our Provider. “He’s got you. I promise you.”



Sunday Evening. In the evening service, Dr. Allan Brown, chair of the Ministerial Education Division, spoke on God’s will for every Christian to be entirely sanctified (1 Thess. 5:23). He walked the congregation through four practical steps. First, know that you are saved. This means that you are walking in the light, have a teachable spirit, and that everything is surrendered to God. Second, learn what general sanctification means. It undoubtedly requires keeping “spirit, soul, and body” blameless. Third, believe that it is

God’s will for every Christian to become entirely sanctified. Although He is the One who does it, it requires our cooperation—He will not do what we don’t want Him to do. Fourth, claim the promise in verse 23b, “The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.” Believe Him!

We must maintain a relationship of full surrender and full obedience to God and renew our commitment regularly. Entire sanctification is not instant maturity. It doesn’t make all decisions easy. It doesn’t mean we will not be tempted. But it *will* establish our focus, purpose, and will.

Enrollment. Current enrollment is 325 undergraduate students, 21 graduate students, and 195 K-12 students in Aldersgate Christian Academy. We are grateful to God for exceeding our enrollment goal and are especially thankful that so many students have made the commitment to prepare for God’s calling. Pray with us that this will be ➡



Paul is survived by his wife, Janet; two daughters, Gail Broadbent and Julia Kite-Powell; son, Douglas; five grandchildren; sister, Margo Johnson; and many beloved nieces and nephews. A service was held at the Lakewood United Methodist Church, Jacksonville, FL. Burial followed at Greenlawn Cemetery, Jacksonville, FL.



John Wetzel LeBaron, 82, passed away August 6, 2019, in Westfield, IN. He was born in Lock Haven, PA, on April 7, 1937, to William and Mary (Wetzel) LeBaron. John attended Frankfort Pilgrim College, Frankfort, IN, and Acme Technical Institute, Cleveland, OH. He worked for nearly 40 years as a senior tool manufacturing engineer at Best Lock Corporation, Indianapolis, IN, retiring in 2002.

Along with his family, John loved the Lord and was a methodical supporter of church ministries, foreign missions, and Christian education. He served as a board member at Village Park Bible Methodist Church, West-

field, IN, and previously served as treasurer for several churches and church plants.

John is survived by his wife of 57 years, Linda; daughters, Susan LeBaron and Johnna Shaferly (BRE ’92); son, Timothy (HS ’87); and many cousins and extended family members. All three of his children attended GBS. Funeral services were held at Village Park Bible Methodist Church, Westfield, IN, Revs. Duane Quesenberry and David Easley officiating. Burial followed at Summit Lawn Cemetery, Westfield, IN, Rev. Paul Easley officiating.



Benjamin “Ben” C. Colburn, 68, of Bedford, IN, passed away at his residence on August 10, 2019. He was born in 1950 to George and Mary (Roberts) Colburn of Bedford, IN. He married Sue Goldsberry on November 24, 1971. Ben was a pastor and evangelist for 47 years and a member of The Wesleyan Church. He served as organist for Interchurch Holiness Convention for 42 years. Ben graduated from ➡

➡ a great school year as we train the students entrusted to us.

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

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

Jimmy and Maudine Wilcox Scholarship. Established through the generosity of Jimmy and Maudine Wilcox and family, this scholarship will provide an annual full scholarship to a college student who is a committed Christian, is involved in ministry, has a financial need, and is in good academic standing. Jimmy Wilcox served on the GBS board from 1986-2008. His son, Mark Wilcox (HS '78) writes: "We are grateful for the impact of GBS on

many members of our family and extended family in providing them with a quality Christian education. Members of our family have served God and been in churches in Alabama, Oregon, Washington, Indiana, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, and Ohio. With this in mind, we want this scholarship to help provide for a student or students to encourage them on their journey."



Tyler Edwards receives Wilcox Scholarship

On behalf of the Wilcoxes, Mr. Jonathan Womelsdorf presented the Jimmy and Maudine Wilcox Scholarship to its first recipient, Tyler Edwards.

Charles Ray McWilliams Scholarship. Established through the generosity of Charles R. and Debra K. McWilliams, this scholarship provides an annual scholarship to students enrolled in



Chris McCain receives McWilliams Scholarship

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ Kansas Christian College, Overland Park, KS, with a ThB. He spent his life serving the Lord in a variety of capacities, most recently on the District Board of Administration for the Kentucky-Tennessee District of The Wesleyan Church for the past seven years.

Survivors include his wife, Sue; three sons, Jason, Benjamin, and Joshua; six grandchildren; two brothers, John and James; and one sister, Joanne Adams. Funeral services were held at Faith Mission Church, Rev. Paul Gray officiating.



Rev. Robert E. England, Sr., 78, of Fortville, IN, was welcomed home by his Heavenly Father, August 20, 2019, following a lengthy battle with cancer. He was born on June 30, 1941, near Bedford, PA, to John and Maxine (Price) England.

Bob grew up in Salem, OH, where he graduated from high school in 1959. He then enrolled at GBS. While there he met fellow student Marilyn Hofacker (BA '62). In 1963, Bob graduated with a ThB and he and Marilyn were married. Together they served in pastoral ministry for 21 years at five churches in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Dr. England had a passion for higher education, serving as a college administrator and professor of Bible and theology for 43 years at Allegheny Wesleyan College, God's Bible School, and Union Bible College. He completed an MA and an MDiv from Cincinnati Bible Seminary ('84 and '92 respectively), Cincinnati, OH, and earned a DMin ('02) through Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO. Dr. England served as an evangelist for camp meetings and revivals in at least 29 states and seven foreign countries. He also owned and operated a nursery and landscaping business for 20 years.

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Marilyn; five children, Joanna Pears, Becky Ellis, Daniel, Robert Jr., and Kristin Foster; 17 grandchildren; and a brother, J. Clyde. All of his children attended GBS, and Robert Jr. (Robbie) has been on the GBS board since 2000 and is its current chair. Kristin taught in GBS's Aldersgate Christian Academy from 2006 to 2014. Funeral services were at the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Salem, OH, Pastor Stanley Grabill and Dr. Leonard Sankey officiating. Burial followed in Franklin Square Cemetery, Salem, OH. ■

the Graduate Program who are actively involved in ministry.


Mr. Charles and Debra McWilliams presented the Charles Ray McWilliams Scholarship to its first recipients: Christopher McCain, Deron Fourman, and Shane Walters.

ONE TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

Mission Helps Scholarship. This scholarship is provided by friends of Mission Helps, Inc. to assist and encourage students in their preparation for the mission field. Recipients must demonstrate a fervent love for the Lord, a keen interest in and dedication to intercultural mission work, Christian integrity, academic



Alissa Blankenship receives scholarships



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ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE | 2019-20 ACADEMIC YEAR

Endowed scholarships are investments held in perpetuity, the earnings of which are awarded to deserving students annually. Our goal is to ensure our education remains affordable for students and families, and we are grateful for the generous donors who have helped make that possible by partnering with us to establish the listed scholarships.

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➡ achievement, a mind to work, and a servant's attitude.

Hope International Missions Internship Scholarship. This scholarship is provided by Hope International Missions to assist mission students preparing for missionary work by practically applying and practicing skills during a student internship. Recipients must demonstrate spiritual fervor, desire for academic excellence, and exemplary Christian character and conduct.

President Loper presented the Mission Helps Scholarship and the Hope International Missions Internship Scholarship to Alissa Blankenship.

Yocum Memorial Missionary Scholarship. This scholarship was established by Evangelistic Faith Missions to assist students in their preparation for service on the mission field. It is named in honor of Dr. Dale Yocum whose disciplined, Spirit-filled life was an inspiration to all who knew him. His example was a safe guide for all to follow.



Cearse Rice receives Yocum Scholarship

President Loper presented the Yocum Memorial Scholarship to Cease Rice.

Anna Tremaine Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is provided by God's Bible School in memory of Anna Tremaine who, along with her husband Jim, has been a longtime friend of the school. Anna was a God-fearing lady who loved people and especially had a heart for young people. She had a winsome balance of fun-loving personality with a clear sense of a prin-



Caitlan Womelsdorf receives Tremaine Scholarship

ciple life and a concern for others and their relationship with the Lord.

President Loper presented the Anna Tremaine Memorial Scholarship to Caitlan Womelsdorf.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND GBS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DECEMBER 6, 7, 8

Written by Michael and Judith DeStefano, *Promise*, adapted from the original Christmas musical drama (Penn View Bible Institute, 2015), is an invitation to rejoice! Christmastime reminds us that God's unfailing plan to bring redemption and hope is cause for celebration!

Join us as we trace the story—from the first glimpse of hope amid the brokenness of Eden, through miraculous provision to patriarchs and prophets, to glorious fulfillment in the birth of the Messiah, and His transforming work in the lives around Him! Let your heart be lifted as, with festive music and drama, we adore the Savior Who keeps His promises—always.

Promise will be staged in the Adcock Chapel on Friday, December 6 (7:30PM) and Sunday, December 8 (6:00PM). **The Saturday, December 7, performance will be held at an off-campus venue this year.** Exciting details will be released through the GBS website, social media pages, and in the November *God's Revivalist*. Festive prelude music will begin sixty minutes prior

to each campus performance. A combined choir, orchestra, and cast of actors come together in the production. Special features this year, weather permitting, will include pre-program outdoor scenes, music, and complimentary coffee bar. You may want to consider this in planning your arrival time.

TICKET INFORMATION for Friday and Sunday: Each family may request up to five free tickets, available beginning October 14, for one night only. After the fifth ticket, the cost is \$5 per ticket. For large groups (6+), please send payment by mail along with name of purchaser. Phone/email orders will not be accepted. Orders may be sent to the school with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Include



A Scene from the 2018 GBS Christmas Program

the date you prefer and the number of tickets needed. Please contact the ticket coordinator at (513) 721-7944 if you do not plan to use your tickets. Orders for five or less (no charge) may also be placed online and tickets printed yourself by going to www.gbs.edu. Please bring tickets for entry.

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

Seats may not be saved for members outside of your immediate family. Late entries and re-entries will be assisted by an usher. Child care and a designated room for nursing mothers will be available. A freewill offering will be received at the close of each performance. ■

Dear Phil

PROHIBITION AGAINST TATTOOS AND BEARD TRIMMING

I recently reviewed your October 2016 article addressing tattoos. It appears that your argument of “our bodies do not belong to us but to God” and the command not to tattoo being an application of the principle of “be holy because Yahweh is holy” could also be used for the preceding verse about not rounding off the hair on our temples or marring the edges of our beards. Why do we keep the prohibition on tattooing, but not the prohibitions of verse 27? —Jon

Dear Jon,

Good question. I’m honored you asked and didn’t simply dismiss my argument.

Leviticus 19:27-28 reads, “You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard. You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am Yahweh.” Two Old Testament texts help me understand this passage. They are Leviticus 21:5-6 and Deuteronomy 14:1. These passages forbid cutting practices associated with mourning for the dead. Leviticus 21:5-6 reads, “They shall not make any baldness on their heads, nor shave off the edges of their beards, nor make any cuts in their flesh. They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they present the offerings by fire to Yahweh, the food of their God; so they shall be holy.”

This passage occurs in a larger discussion (21:1-6) of ways in which priests are not to profane themselves for the dead. Leviticus 21:1-3 pro-

hibits priests from touching a dead person, unless they are an immediate relative. Leviticus 21:4 prohibits a priest from burying any of his relatives by marriage (as opposed to the blood relatives of vv. 2-3), including his wife (NET Bible note). Given this understanding of verses 1-4, Leviticus 21:5-6 prohibits practices associated with mourning for the dead. Priests must not shave their heads, cut their beards, or make cuts in their flesh because they are holy to God. That is, they have been separated to God for the special purpose of presenting the offerings by fire to Yahweh.

What strikes me about this passage is that God says such practices “profane the name of their God.” Expressing grief by such cutting practices failed to sanctify Yahweh’s reputation as He deserves. As God’s people and priests (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5) we bear His name. How we act sanctifies or profanes His name before a watching world.

Deuteronomy 14:1 reads, “You are the sons of Yahweh your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of

the dead. For you are a holy people to Yahweh your God, and Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.” Here Yahweh calls His people “sons” and repeats the prohibition against self-cutting for the dead. Such practices are inconsistent with being sons of Yahweh, a holy people, chosen out of all the peoples on the earth.

Here’s the bottom line: Shaving of beard, head hair, or forehead hair, as well as gashing one’s body, were all pagan mourning practices for the dead (see also Jer. 16:6; 41:5; 47:5; Isa. 22:12). The prohibition against cutting the corners of the beard does not appear to be a universal prohibition against all beard-cutting. It appears to be a specific prohibition related to mourning practices. Should such practices exist today, I would argue they are prohibited on the grounds that God has the right to tell us how to mourn—not as the gentiles who don’t know God.

Admittedly, one might argue that the tattoo prohibition is also related to pagan mourning practices. However, there are three reasons this doesn’t seem to be the case: (1) Moses groups unrelated prohibitions in Leviticus 19, e.g., eating blood and practicing divination (v. 26), harlotry and keeping sabbaths (v. 29-30). (2) No other OT passage associates tattoos with mourning practices. (3) Our knowledge of the Ancient Near East does not suggest that it was a common practice to tattoo oneself for the dead.

What questions does that raise for you? Thanks for having a conversation with me! ■

Blessings,
Phil

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



SIX “NATURAL” DAYS

At the 67th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, a resolution was passed affirming the belief that God created the Earth in six natural days. “We confess that the duration of those natural days is proclaimed in God’s Word: ‘there was evening and there was morning, the first day.’” The resolution also declared that the creation of Adam as the first human being was an “historical event” and rejected the claims of the theory of evolution.

LONELY SENIORS

A recent study of British elders revealed that hundreds of thousands of people often go a week without speaking to a single person. In the survey of 1,896 seniors over the age of 65 in the United Kingdom, 22% report having conversations with no more than three people over an entire week. Those figures mean that nearly 2.6 million elderly do not experience regular human contact on a daily basis, and 225,000 individuals will go an entire week without talking to anyone face-to-face.

Caroline Abrahams, charity director at Age UK, says, “Loneliness can affect your health, your wellbeing, and the way you see yourself—it can make you feel invisible and forgotten.” The survey revealed that 38% of seniors admit to feeling lonely at times, with 12% agreeing

that loneliness has kept them from leaving their home. Knowing this gives opportunities for individual Christians, churches, and para-church organizations to minister to this growing demographic. A friendly conversation can go a long way. Take time to chat with elders in your community.

BEGINNING OF LIFE SURVEY

The doctoral dissertation of Steven Jacobs, a PhD student at the University of Chicago, found that even committed pro-choice respondents believe that human life begins at conception.

Jacobs began by asking 2,899 American adults who they would consider to be the “most qualified to answer the question of when a human’s life begins,” and found that 81% said “biologists.” Jacobs then interviewed thousands of biologists, asking them three questions: (1) Does the development of a mammal began at the moment of fertilization? (over 90% said yes); (2) Does fertilization mark the beginning of a human’s life? (over 75% said yes); (3) When does life begin? Ninety percent of respondents who described themselves as “very pro-life” said life begins at the moment of fertilization, as did 75% of those who called themselves “pro-choice” and around 60% of those who identified themselves as “very pro-choice.”

Jacobs successfully defended his dissertation and received his PhD. ■



student focus

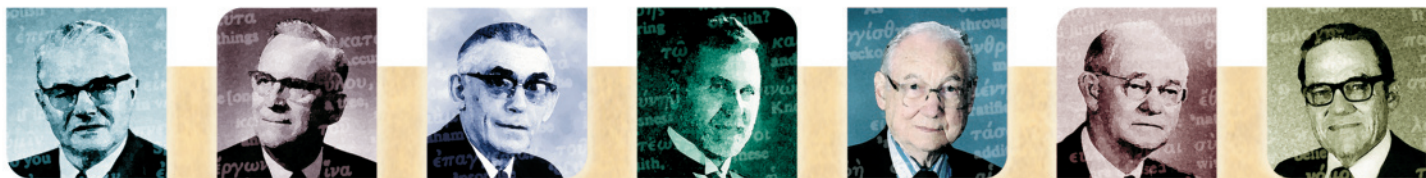
ELIZABETH ALBERTSON was not interested in college—not even Bible school; but over the course of several visits to GBS while her brother was enrolled, God began to change that attitude. Sitting in on Dr. Allan Brown’s Christian Beliefs class made her decide, “This is so good! I need to be studying here.” Being a student at GBS has provided her with so many opportunities to expand her comfort zone and understand the world, life, and relationships. She says she has gained skills and confidence that have prepared her for being a Christian professional, communicator, and minister, in and out of church contexts.

Elizabeth has finished all course requirements for a BA in Integrative Studies with two focus areas: Children’s Ministry and Intercultural Studies and World Missions. She is now working on a BA in Elementary Education with plans to graduate in 2021. She hopes to be in cross-cultural, full-time Christian service. ■

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
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Cincinnati, OH 45202

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



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

TEMPTATIONS WILL CONTINUE—THAT IS NORMAL

by Hannah Whitall Smith

People seem to expect that, after the soul has entered into its rest in God, temptations will cease; and to think that the promised deliverance is not only to be from yielding to temptation, but even also from being tempted. Consequently, when they find the Canaanite still in the land, and see the cities great and walled up to Heaven, they are utterly discouraged, and think they must have gone wrong in some way, and that this cannot be the true land after all.

Then, next they make the mistake of looking upon temptation as sin, and of blaming themselves for what in reality is the fault of the enemy only. This brings them into condemnation and discouragement; and discouragement, if continued in, always ends at last in actual sin. The enemy makes an easy prey of a discouraged soul; so that we fall often from the very fear of having fallen.

To meet the first of these difficulties it is only necessary to refer to the Scripture declarations, that the Christian life throughout is to be a warfare.... As a fact, temptations generally increase in strength tenfold after we have entered into the interior life, rather than decrease; and no amount or sort of them must ever for a moment lead us to suppose we have not really found the true abiding place. Strong temptations are generally a sign of great grace, rather than of little grace....

The second mistake is not quite so easy to deal with. It seems hardly worthwhile to say that temptation is not sin, and yet most of the distress about it arises from not understanding this fact. The very suggestion of wrong seems to bring pollution with it, and the evil agency not being recognized, the poor tempted soul begins to feel as if [he or she] must be very bad indeed, and very far off from God to have had such thoughts and suggestions.... It is the enemy's grand ruse for entrapping us. He comes and whispers suggestions of evil to us, doubts, blasphemies, jealousies, envyings, and pride; and then turns round and

says, "Oh, how wicked you must be to think of such things! It is very plain that you are not trusting the Lord; for if you were, it would have been impossible for these things to have entered your heart." This reasoning sounds so very plausible that the soul often accepts it as true, and at once comes under condemnation, and is filled with discouragement; then it is easy for it to be led on into actual sin.

One of the most fatal things in the life of faith is discouragement. One of the most helpful is cheerfulness. A very wise man once said that in overcoming temptations, cheerfulness was the first thing, cheerfulness the second, and cheerfulness the third. We must expect to conquer. That is why the Lord...says to us, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The power of temptation is in the fainting of our own hearts. The enemy knows this well, and always begins his assaults by discouraging us, if it can in any way be accomplished....

An old writer says, "All discouragement is from the devil"; and I wish every Christian would just take this as a pocket-piece, and never forget it. We must fly from discouragement as we would from sin. But this is impossible if we fail to recognize the true agency in temptation. For if the temptations are our own fault, we cannot help being discouraged. But they are not. The Bible says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation"; and we are exhorted to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations." Temptation, therefore, cannot be sin; and the truth is, it is no more a sin to hear these whispers and suggestions of evil in our souls than it is for us to hear the swearing or wicked talk of bad men as we pass along the street. The sin only comes in either case by our stopping and joining in with them. ■

Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) was a Holiness Movement lay speaker and author who was also active in the Women's Suffrage and Temperance movements. This excerpt was taken from *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* (Christian Witness Company, 1875, pp.149-160).



FAITHFULNESS

by Mark Cravens

Scripture: *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” —Galatians 5:22-23 ESV*

INTRODUCTION

Faithfulness is truly one of the highest of spiritual virtues. Whether it be in a friendship, a marriage, or a ministry, nothing is any more noble or honorable than the consistent display of faithfulness. Sadly, faithfulness is often a rare commodity in our highly uncommitted society deeply marred by unfaithfulness and disloyalty. The scattered debris of broken promises and shattered trust can be seen throughout our culture. But in contrast, God has called those who belong to Christ to put to death the passions and desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:24), and to demonstrate faithfulness, which is one of the fruits that the Spirit produces in our lives.

I. THE UNBLEMISHED MODEL OF FAITHFULNESS

The best place to begin is by looking at the perfect example, God himself. The God we discover throughout Scripture is flawless in His faithfulness toward mankind. In Numbers 23:19 (ESV), we read, “God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?” Let us consider at least three areas in which we see the steadfast faithfulness of God beautifully demonstrated.

A. He is Faithful in His Promises

Perhaps nowhere else is the faithfulness of God more wondrously portrayed than in the unfolding saga of His covenant relationship with the Jewish people. Again and again, God robustly demonstrated His enduring faithfulness in keeping his covenantal promises. Deuteronomy 7:9 declares, “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful

God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments” (ESV). Whether it was Noah, Abraham, the nation of Israel, or David, God always was faithful to keep His covenantal promises.

B. He is Faithful in His Forgiveness

The Bible makes it very clear that all have sinned (Rom. 3:23) and stand in desperate need of God’s forgiveness. Thankfully, 1 John 1:9 reminds us that, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.” Even more sure than the sun rising in the east and setting in the west is the sureness that when the penitent soul in faith confesses his or her sins, God will grant forgiveness by His grace and through the shed blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). How wonderful it is to know that the surety of our forgiveness is not anchored in our oft-misguided feelings, but in the unwavering faithfulness of our changeless God!

C. He is Faithful in His Enduring Love and Mercy

Nestled in poetic laments of Jeremiah lies one of the most hope-inspiring passages to be found in all of God’s word. Against the dark backdrop of the author’s heart-wrenching anguish over God’s judgment upon a rebellious nation shines a grand declaration of God’s faithfulness that has brought hope to the people of God throughout the centuries: “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him (Lam.3:22-24 ESV).” It was this very passage that provided the inspiration for the lyrics of Thomas Chisholm’s much-loved hymn:

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided.
Great is Thy Faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

What a joy it is to know that we serve such a flawlessly faithful God! He is One who never changes or goes back on his word. In reflecting upon this, Charles Spurgeon wrote, “God writes with a pen that never blots, speaks with a tongue that never slips, acts with a hand that never fails.” Yes, our God is faithful!

II. THE UNMISTAKABLE CALL TO FAITHFULNESS

Because God is faithful in His character, it would only seem natural that He would desire those who

were His followers to demonstrate lives of faithfulness as well. Therefore, woven throughout the Bible we see the clarion call of God to His people to be faithful to Him. He desires to bless and prosper those who live lives of allegiance to Him. The Psalmist David reminds us that the Lord “loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones” (Psa. 37:28 NIV), and the writer of Proverbs states, “Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart” (Prov. 3:3 ESV).

A. The Call to Faithfulness in the Old Testament

Following their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage, God led Israel to Mt. Sanai in order to enter into a sacred covenant with them. It was His desire to make them His “treasured possession” above all other peoples of the earth, and to make them a holy nation, set apart to love and serve Him faithfully (Ex. 19:5, 6). Years later, God reiterated His loving desire to bless them and make them a strong and mighty nation, just as He had promised to Abraham: “Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. And He will love you and bless you and multiply you.... You shall be blessed above all peoples” (Deut. 7:12-14 NKJV).

In this covenant relationship with God, they were to demonstrate complete fidelity to Him, knowing that He would not tolerate unfaithfulness or the worship of other gods. But sadly, the story of the nation of Israel is a tragic account of intermittent faithfulness and spiritual infidelity. Following brief periods of faithfulness to the Lord, they would drift into idolatry and immorality, becoming corrupt and rebellious children (Isa.1:2). In His loving faithfulness, God would raise up prophets, calling them to repent and return. At other times, He would allow severe oppression and distress to come upon them, hoping that they would see the error of their ways and become faithful and loyal to Him once again. When you read the book of Hosea, it is heartbreaking to see how Israel, like an unfaithful spouse, chased after other lovers and turned away from God, totally forgetting the One who had so lovingly cared and provided for her (Hos. 1-3).

B. The Call to Faithfulness in the New Testament

Jesus reminded His listeners of the importance of faithfulness when He stated, “Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” In His unforgettable parable of the talents, Jesus underscored the significances of faithfulness, as reward was pronounced to the “good and faithful” ser-

vants, but punishment upon the servant who was unfaithful (Matt. 25:14-30). In His letter to the church of Ephesus in the book of Revelation, Christ encouraged them to remain faithful and fearless, even though some of them would be cast into prison; in the end, they would be recompensed with a crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

Throughout the Pauline Epistles there is a resounding call to faithfulness. In Paul’s opening remarks to the church at Ephesus, he declares them to be God’s holy people, those who are faithful in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:1), and in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians he emphasized the importance of faithfulness in regard to the sacred trust of the gospel that had been given to them (1 Cor. 4:2). He also instructed young Timothy to take the teachings that he had received from him, and to entrust those to faithful men who would then be able to instruct others (2 Tim. 2:2). These and numerous other passages clearly demonstrate that we are called to a life of fidelity and faithfulness to God.

CONCLUSION

If we are truly born of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, then our lives should be marked by faithfulness, a fruit of the Spirit. Faithfulness is a quality that God earnestly desires to produce within all of us in order that we might reflect His divine nature.

The story is told of Hudson Taylor, the great missionary to China, who was engaged to speak at a gathering in Birmingham, England, on a rather bleak and stormy night. Due to the severity of the weather, the hostess encouraged him to cancel the event, believing that no one would show up. But Taylor insisted on going, responding, “I must go even if there is no one but the doorkeeper.” As it turned out, the gathering was marked by a special sense of God’s presence, and it was estimated that half of those present either became missionaries or became faithful supporters of China Inland Missions for years to come. His faithfulness paid eternal dividends!

*Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful,
May the fire of our devotion light their way.
May the footprints that we leave
Lead them to believe,
And the lives we live inspire them to obey.
Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful. 📌*

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Rev. Mark Cravens is senior pastor of Kenwood Bible Methodist Church, Cincinnati, OH, and an adjunct associate professor at God’s Bible School and College. He and his wife, Teresa, have two sets of twin daughters, all graduates of GBS, and two grandsons.

➡(p9) incorrigible souls who withhold love from you and defame your good name to others. Remember what I told the church at Corinth: Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. You must love them with the kind of selfless love that compelled our Savior to the cross.

Timothy, no matter what the world tells you, no matter what well-meaning church people tell you, if you do all these things consistently, you will then be a worker approved by God who need not be ashamed, no matter the size of your church or the scope of your ministry. You will adorn the gospel, your message, with the sweet aroma of Christ. I close with the same words of encouragement that I told to the Corinthians, for it is a helpful summary of the Christian man's call to faithfulness: Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like a man, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

There is much more I could say, but I pray this pithy encouragement will steel your frame toward the pursuit of faithfulness. May God make you content in His Son and faithful to the end in proclaiming His Word and shepherding His flock for His glory. May our invincible sovereign Lord make His face to shine on you and your labors. Grace be with you.

Faithfully your father
in the faith,

Paul

Jeff Robinson is a senior editor of The Gospel Coalition. He also is a pastor, author, and adjunct seminary professor. This article from TheGospelCoalition.org is used with permission.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be emailed to revivalist@gbs.edu or addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202. 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.

I enjoy the articles in God's Revivalist very much and remember going to school with some of those mentioned in the issues. In the early 1920s, my mother, Mary Waln, went to GBS when she was 16 years old. She worked in the kitchen and also at Bethesda Hospital. She passed away in 1978. You make a great difference in the lives of young people. Keep to the old paths. Love and prayers.

ESTHER ROYSE
Greenfield, OH

I so appreciate the work put into God's Revivalist. I look forward to reading each issue.

DANIEL EDWARDS
Ridgeville, IN



I am 95 years old and I thought I wouldn't live long enough to require another subscription for God's Revivalist. But I like it very much and would miss it. I've received it for many years. So sorry to be a bit late.

GRACE SANDERS
Bradford, OH

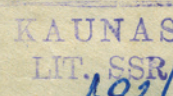
Thanks for God's Revivalist. We enjoy reading it and seeing the good news each month! I love to receive each issue. Keep up the good work and bless you all.

CAROLYN & GENE SOWDER
Eubank, KY

I love the great work you guys do with God's Revivalist. I'm enjoying the "Fruit of the Spirit" series.

JOHN PARKER
Pell City, AL

OCTOBER 2019





MARC (BRE '94) AND MELODIE (MILLER) (BA '94) SANKEY

Lives of Continuing Service

Marc Sankey was born in 1970 in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where his parents, Leonard (ThB '60) and Janet (Ferguson) (HS '59) Sankey were serving as missionaries. Marc spent the first five formative years of his life there. He says, "I have forever been impacted towards missions because of my time on the mission field even as a young child."

Marc began visiting GBS as a 10-year-old boy, when his father, a trustee, took him along for the ride when he traveled to GBS for board meetings. Marc remembers staff, faculty, and students always being friendly and welcoming. He especially became friends with Glenn Black, the editor of *God's Revivalist*, during those years.

"I fancied myself a 'secret agent,' and I would follow 'suspects' around the GBS campus at a distance. Rev. Black noticed my espionage activity and soon became my 'partner,' helping me keep tabs on various characters around campus. To this day, we greet one another by asking if there is any suspicious activity on campus, keeping up the ruse of our detective work. Great early memories!"

Being a "Sankey" was not always easy. For the first 18 years of his life, it seemed as if nobody outside his



home knew his name—he was simply "Bro. Sankey's son." However, after he was established in ministry, he noticed a change. "I preached at a camp meeting and a number of new converts attended. A few months later my dad was in the same area preaching and these same converts came to him and asked, 'Are you Bro. Sankey's Dad?' I love that story!"

Marc matriculated to GBS in the fall of 1988. He went there to find God's will for his life, but also because from his earliest memories it was a "given" that "Bible college was not optional and that GBS was the obvious choice." Although he was struggling spiritually, he really wanted to be a Christian. Finally, in



The Marc and Melodie Sankey Family

March of 1990, he surrendered his life to Christ. In the fall of that year, Melodie Miller arrived on campus. Marc remembers that well.

"I was ready to settle down and find myself a wife. At the freshman welcome banquet at which I and other upperclassmen served, I pointed out Melodie to a friend and announced, 'I'm going to marry that



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Marc Sankey's book normally sells for \$15.00. Take advantage of the discounted price through October 31 in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the attack which took place on October 23, 2009.

To purchase at discounted price, email Marc at marcsankey@yahoo.com or buy at regular price on Amazon.com

girl.' I hadn't even talked to her at that point. I fell in love with her even before we began dating. God definitely put this love for her in my heart."

On June 20th, 1992, Marc and Melodie were married at the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Barberton, OH. Two years later, they both graduated from GBS, Marc with a Bachelor of Religious Education (BRE) and Melodie with a BA in Elementary Education. Marc was employed at GBS as an expeditor from June of 1992 until May of 1994. He also served as assistant pastor to Rev. Daniel Stetler at the Bible Methodist Church, Franklin, OH, from 1992 to 1995.

In June of 1995, Dan Stetler was selected to become the president of Hobe Sound Bible College, Hobe Sound, FL. Marc became the senior pastor of the Franklin church, a position he held for 10 years. However, in 2005, Marc and Melodie felt God calling them to missions. For six years they served as missionaries to Mexico with Bible Methodist Missions focusing on leadership development and Bible training for pastors and young people. Marc then served as Vice-President of Evangelistic Faith Missions (Bedford, IN) from 2012 to 2015. He was involved in administrative duties, missionary training and placement, mission representation, and fundraising, as well as visiting mission fields to prepare for new missionaries to arrive. This was followed by two years during which he traveled in general evangelism (2015-17). In April 2017, the call came for Marc to join the GBS staff as Vice President for Constituent Relations. Melodie began serving as the office manager for the Division of Professional Studies.

In addition to giving readers a look into the life of the Sankeys, we are happy to inform you that Marc has recently written a book, *In Angels' Charge: A Missionary Survival Story* (Country Pines, 2019). Many of our readers will have heard of the tragic attack he suffered while on the mission field. This book focuses on that. Although he never intended to write a book about his missionary experiences, Marc began to feel the Lord opening his mind to the idea.

"My book would not exist except for the sovereign leadership of the Lord. Seeing the story in print has powerfully reminded me of the incredible grace and mercy of God in my life. I am overwhelmed at God's providence that has shepherded the entire writing and publishing process. I remind people that it is truly not my story. It is God's story!"

We wish to thank the Sankeys for their dedicated service in pastoral ministry, missionary endeavors, and college administration. Marc and Melodie have three sons, Jordan (married to Heidi Dewhurst), Cameron, and Logan. All attend or have attended GBS. ■



by Sonja Vernon

THE HIGH COST OF UNFAITHFULNESS

"Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will suffer for your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness."

—Numbers 14:33 NASB

The Israelites were at the border of Canaan, the land God had promised them. Twelve men went to spy out the territory. They returned bearing luscious fruit, tales of giants...and recommendations to turn and run! The protests of Caleb and Joshua were overwhelmed by the weeping crowd who began looking for a leader to take them back to Egypt. Their disobedience would prove costly, not only for themselves, but also for their children. Forty long years they would wander. Forty years they would crisscross the wilderness. Forty years their children would suffer for their unfaithfulness.

Paul says in Galatians that we will bear the fruit of faithfulness as the Spirit works within us (5:22). We will be people who can be counted on, whatever the circumstances. Why does this matter? One reason is that unfaithfulness is costly.

If you follow your fickle heart, you will not be the only one to suffer. You do not exist in a vacuum. How many young lives have been scarred forever by parents who chose not to honor their commitments, to God and/or each other? How many Millennials have abandoned the church because they saw their elders operating out of fear instead of faith? Please hear me. That cost is too great! Your faithfulness matters! Younger generations are watching, waiting, and destined to reap the fruit of the choices you make. Choose wisely. ■

Sonja Vernon is Vice President for Student Affairs at God's Bible School.

Phonathon 2019

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