

GOD'S REVIVALIST

December 2019

and Bible Advocate

the Fruit of
the Spirit
is...

...Self-Control





about this issue

THOUGHT CONTROL

The headline from the results of a recent study grabbed my attention—"Excessive brain activity linked to a shorter life." After hearing the standard maxim of use-it-or-lose-it for years, could a key to a longer life really be a quieter brain without too much neural activity?

It turns out that a brain protein called REST (RE1-Silencing Transcription Factor) tamps down genes involved in sparking brain activity. The brain tissue of people who died before their mid 80s had lower levels of REST, compared to those who lived to be 100 or older. So, we all need some REST.

Relax. I am not going to quarrel with the idea that keeping your brain active in later life will help keep cognitive function normal, but the study did find that "excessive activity" could be harmful. It caused me to think...

Relaxing is not a bad thing. There is always a clamor for our attention, usually coupled with a demand for some response. We just need to unplug. I am not talking about sitting cross-legged on the floor chanting some nonsensical mantra. However, we need to give ourselves permission to relax without feeling guilty about it. Even in the spiritual realm, rather than feeling compelled to engage in lengthy Bible reading, exhaustive commentary study, and a strict prayer regimen, why not occasionally meditate quietly on one of the attributes of God, or sit in grateful reflection for something God has recently done? Simple contemplations might mean less hectic neuron activity. Who knows!

Exercise thought control. Yes, you do have some control over what you are thinking, but it will take some effort. You don't have to pick up that book, pop in that DVD, click on that link, or engage in that conversation. Not that these are necessarily bad, but sometimes they are just too much. It reminds me of the economic concept of "marginal benefit" which identifies the small but measurable change in consumers' advantages if they use an additional unit of a good or service. This marginal benefit tends to decline as a consumer decides to consume more of the good. The rewards for "more and more" are usually "less and less." However, as behaviors become routinized, they are continued, even though the payoff has diminished.

The caution is to be careful. Exercise discretion on the front end of this process. Pause. Calm your thoughts. RELAX. Maybe you'll live longer. —KF ■

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the president's page



SELF-CONTROL

by Rodney Loper, President

Recently I read about an experiment on self-control in which young children were led to believe they were taking part in an evaluation of various games. During the process, the children were offered cookies. They were told that they could have *one* cookie right away; or, if they agreed to wait until the facilitator returned after going outside “to set up for the next game,” they could have *two* cookies. One cookie NOW versus two LATER. Some of the preschoolers grabbed the single cookie immediately, even before the adult left the room. Others were able to wait for what must have seemed to them like an endless 15 minutes. To sustain themselves in their struggle, they covered their eyes so they wouldn’t see the temptation, rested their heads on their arms, talked to themselves, sang, even tried to sleep. Those who endured to the end received the two-cookie reward.

While we may smile at that cute little study, the reality is that self-control is not just a struggle for kids. It is not something we easily outgrow. In fact, our culture is awash with adults struggling with substance abuse, addiction, overeating, and a host of other unhealthy behaviors rooted in a lack of self-control. This should be a concern for every Christian. Every congregation of believers should have a desire to be a lighthouse of God’s grace to those who are “out of control.”

But dig a little deeper. Yes, get personal. Even Christians need to be concerned with the issue of self-control. We are encouraged to “make every effort” to add self-control to our lives of faith, because possessing this quality “in increasing measure” keeps us “from being ineffective and unproductive” (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

SELF-CONTROL DEFINED

Self-control can be defined simply as the mastery of oneself. It is the capacity of individuals to restrain their own emotions, desires, and impulses so that they can more effectively serve God and others. The good news is that we do not have to create self-control on our own. It is the fruit of the Spirit that is a natural result of the Holy Spirit at work in our surrendered lives. Paul reserves the mention of self-control to last in the list of fruit (Gal. 5:22-23), deliberately emphasizing it as the capstone of all the graces of the Spirit. This self-control reflects the work of the Spirit in our lives, but it also becomes apparent in our relationships with other people.

Paul contrasts the spirit-filled life with characteristics of the old life: “sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness and orgies, and the like” (Gal. 5:19-21). All these categories reflect behaviors that are out of control and were common in New Testament times. But if we walk in the Spirit, we are under the Spirit’s direction and control, and not under the flesh or carnal desires.

Living the overcoming Christian life was no small problem for many in the congregations to whom Paul wrote. Yielding to sinful passions was the order of the day. He was writing to many believers who did not come from a Jewish background, where the precepts of the Old Testament were rigorously followed. He was writing to many who were saved from the vilest of conditions.

The self-control which comes from walking after and walking in the Spirit, however, is undergirded by the power of God as believers yield themselves to the Lord in obedience to His will. Here are some verses that are key in this matter of self-control.

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16 NIV).

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose” (Phil. 2:13 NIV).

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Rom. 8:9).

AREAS THAT REQUIRE SELF-CONTROL

Thoughts and attitudes—Proverbs 23:7 says, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” What type of thinking are we talking about here? Thinking about God? About others? About the church? Yes, yes, and yes to all of these, and more. You see, it is what is in your heart that is important. If you allow it in, you will be consumed by it. This is why it is so important not to allow

thoughts and attitudes of hate, bitterness, envy, malice, etc. Rather, “*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things*” (Phil. 4:8).

Affections—Did you know that it is not necessarily wrong to love things? There are some things in life that you will have an affinity toward. It could be cars, homes, learning, four wheelers, plants, guns, clothes, shopping, books, and whatever you are thinking about right now. None of these things are intrinsically bad things. However, they can become bad if they are not controlled.

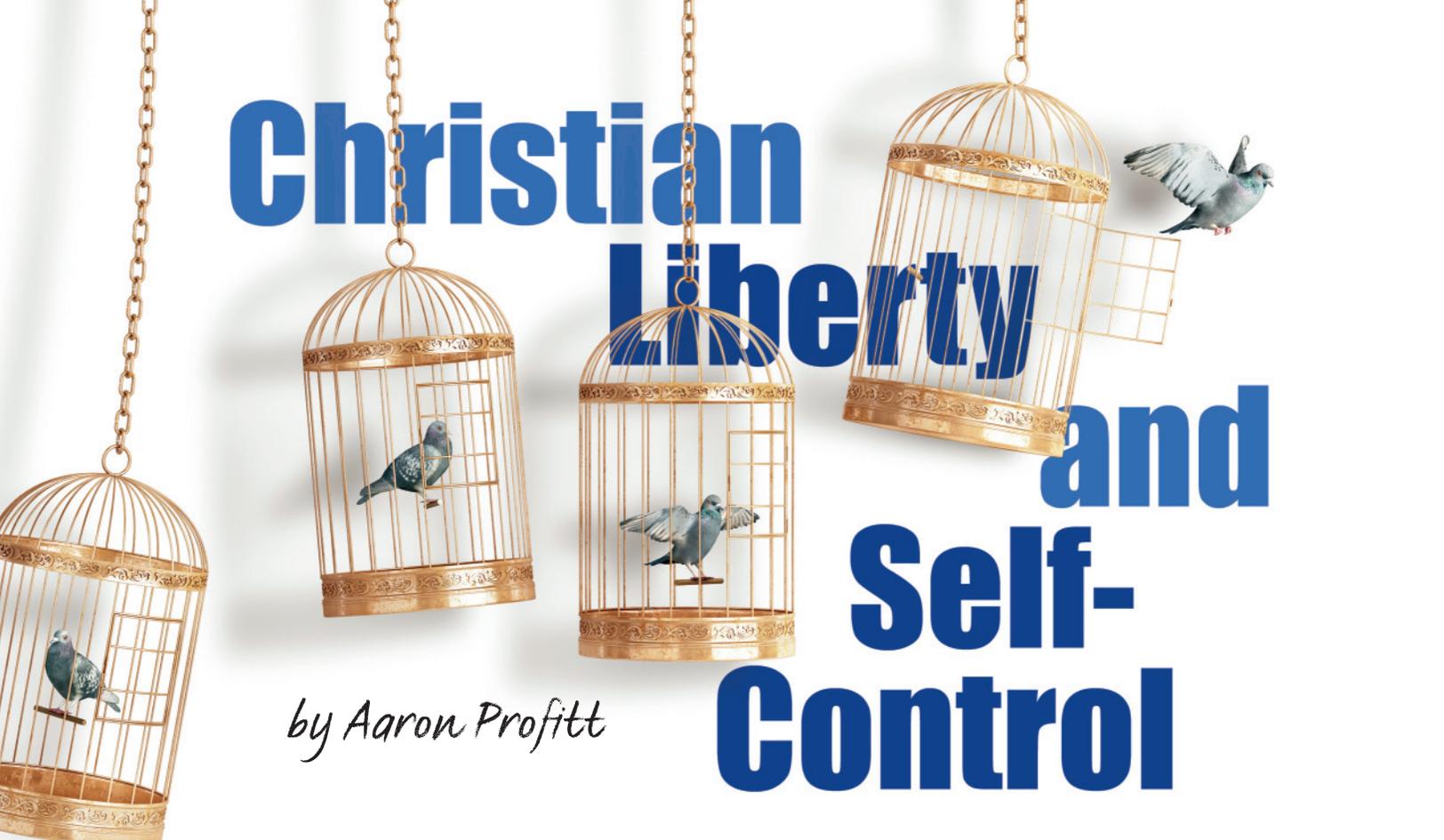
Scripture also warns us that there are some affections over which Christians must be on guard and exercise heightened self-control. “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world*” (1 John 2:15-16). What is meant by “the world”? Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defines it like this: “The whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which, although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God, and are obstacles to the cause of Christ.” Self-control needed?

Appetites—This includes practicing self-control in what we take into our minds—entertainment and even informational and educational pursuits. Christians should always be thoughtful when selecting what to read, what to listen to, and what to view. Appetites also involve what we take into our mouths. Of course this would negate the use of illegal and harmful things, but it also speaks to overconsumption. This would involve consistently overeating. Yes, bodily exercise can be profitable, but it can be overdone as well; it is godliness that is “profitable unto all things” (1 Tim. 4:8).

CONCLUSION

It is worth noting that in this life no one is perfect—no one achieves all the fruit of the Spirit equally. Remember what Paul wrote to the Philippian believers: “*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 3:12). The Spirit, who works in our hearts to help us live above sin, also enables the fruit of self-control to grow for the glory of God. As a result, we can model God’s values, demonstrate in our behaviors His power to aid us daily, and more effectively share His love for others.

Stay connected to the True Vine and watch the fruit of the Spirit grow in your life! ■



Christian Liberty and Self-Control

by Aaron Profitt

"Everything that frees our spirit without giving us control of ourselves is ruinous." —Goethe

I am not by nature and personality what you'd call a controlled person. I laugh loudly. I cry easily, for joy or sorrow. I like food so spicy it hurts. I like things clearcut, up or down, left or right, perfect or terrible.

I have friends who seem temperamentally much saner than I. They laugh politely and express emotion in general with admirable restraint. They enjoy vanilla. They have preferences, but without fervor.

Humanly I feel that my friends have an unfair advantage with this self-control business. They maintain a calm exterior. They appear always to be under *control*.

To both my moderate friends and to immoderate me alike, though, Paul says that self-control belongs among the fruit of the Spirit. We feel this, perhaps, as a conflict: is this virtue self- or Spirit-generated? Today we generally want to believe we can fix our own problems. Perhaps we need a little help from our friends—from medicine or essential oils, from more sermons or more therapy. But the Western value of independence leads us to want to help ourselves. Even God, we sometimes say, helps those who help themselves.

As if anticipating our culture's abundant production of self-help materials—blogs, commercial programs,

shelves' worth of books—Paul ends his list of the virtues that compose the fruit of the Spirit by telling us the hard truth: we cannot work our way to Christlikeness.

The first eight listed virtues perhaps more easily seem like fruit the Spirit produces, but self-control? It seems wrong, irresponsible, to ascribe temperate governance of the self to the Spirit. Ought not this be my part? How do we make sense of the apparent contradiction?

Commentators point to Scripture's repeated use of fruit-bearing imagery. Jesus told us that to bear fruit we must abide in Him, like branches in a vine (John 15). Psalm 1 talks about the person planted well, producing seasonable fruit. In Matthew 7, Jesus talks about false and true teachers being identifiable from their fruit. At least some of these passages seem to depict fruit growing, showing up without effort. It's the nature of the tree to produce the fruit.

Here in Galatians, Paul seems to focus on nature (character) more than action. While the works of the flesh (vv. 19-21) are largely actions, the fruit of the Spirit seems mostly focused on identity, character—on *being* more than on *doing*.



Including self-control in this discussion allows Paul to tie up several threads. To see this, we need to look back and forward in the passage. The fruit of the Spirit most obviously contrasts in Galatians 5 with the works of the flesh, that dark list of, mostly, behaviors: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies (Gal. 5:19-21, ESV). The broader context of chapter 5, and surrounding passages, adds two pairs of metaphors: freedom/slavery and progressing/being hindered. This context also brings action into the discussion.

A metaphor operates by equating two things that are not the same. In the Old Testament, God frequently uses marriage as a metaphor for His relationship with Israel. And writers for millennia have found metaphor fruitful, from Plato's cave to depict human existence to Shakespeare's "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day" to Robert Frost's "Good fences make good neighbors." The power comes in helping us see truth about one thing (often abstract) by literary equation with something else (often concrete).

The freedom/slavery metaphor begins Galatians 5, as Paul contrasts freedom in Christ to slavery to Jewish ceremonial law (vv. 1-4). Presumably anticipating an opportunistic antinomian



Paul warns us against taking freedom as license for evil.

response, in verse 13 he warns us that freedom can be used or abused. Abuse of freedom would be "an opportunity for the flesh," while Christian use of freedom involves loving God and others.

Interwoven in the first part of chapter 5 is the other metaphor, progressing/being hindered. Progress here looks like running (v.7), walking (v.16), being led (v.18) and keeping in step (v.25). Hindrance is ceremonial legalism (v.7) as well as gratification of the desires of the flesh (v.16).

Paul aligns his two metaphors: freedom is walking in the Spirit, slavery is being hindered by sin or self-made righteousness. And it is in this context that he adds the contrast of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, including self-control.

Seeing self-control as part of the fruit of the Spirit could lead a careless reader to abnegate responsibility for holy living. After all, if the Spirit is going to produce self-control in me, I may as well simply keep living and wait for it to appear! But as Wesley Gerig writes in *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, this is not so: "Naturally good fruit is produced without any effort by a good tree; however, the fruit of the Spirit does not come into being that automatically. Regularly it requires effort on the Christian's part."

In the context of Paul's discussion, this looks like walking in the Spirit or living by the Spirit. It involves crucifixion of the flesh, which verse 24 says is something we do. The fruit of the Spirit is produced as we walk in the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, then, is bracketed by Paul's insistence that if Christians are to be free in Christ (Gal. 5:1-13), we must exercise. We must walk in the Spirit (v. 16), even keeping step with the Spirit (v.25). This depicts action, ongoing engagement.

This understanding harmonizes Paul and Peter. In 2 Peter 1:3-11, Peter includes this same word "self-control" in his catalog of virtues: "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love" (vv.5-7 ESV).

A surface reading might conclude that Paul emphasizes the necessity of the Spirit's work to produce self-control, while Peter emphasizes our effort in the process. But Peter's context shows the same tension as Galatians 5. In verse 3, Peter notes that Christ's "divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (ESV), helping us understand that we can only add these virtues by drawing on that provided power.

Consider again Paul's slavery metaphor. Paul insists that in Christ we are free and warns us against taking freedom as license for evil, and in that context he mentions the need for self-control. There is a deep truth here, one captured in the German philosopher Goethe's maxim, "Everything that frees our spirit without giving us control of ourselves is ruinous." Christ's freedom, far from ruinous, includes the freedom to obtain the Spirit-fruit of self-control.

How does this work? Paul tells us in verse 25: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit" (ESV). We do the walking, but the Spirit enables a walk free from slavery, a walk marked by fruit not of this world, including what we call self-control. Self-control—that power we crave and know we need, but which comes only from God's work in us. ■

Aaron D. Profitt, an employee of GBS since 2004, has served as Vice President for Academic Affairs since 2013. He and his wife Lisa have three boys: Elliott (13), Simon (9), and Eben (6).



*"I have never seen someone consistently stick to positive habits in a negative environment." **

—James Clear (*Atomic Habits*, p.94)

That's pretty blunt, isn't it! He explains his conclusion in a chapter entitled, "The Secret to Self Control":

You can break a habit, but you're unlikely to forget it. Once the mental grooves of habit have been carved into your brain, they are nearly impossible to remove entirely—even if they go unused for quite a while. And that means that simply resisting temptation is an ineffective strategy. (p.94)

That's pretty hopeless, isn't it!
But it's not.

A Reason for Hope

First, because, even if it's true that bad habit grooves are engraved in our minds, we can often change our negative environment. The author highlights research into the people who appear to be the most self-disciplined and self-controlled. Their secret?

It turns out those individuals aren't all that different from those who are struggling. Instead, "disciplined" people are better at structuring their lives in a way that does not require heroic willpower and self-control. In other words, they spend less time in tempting situations. (pp.92-93)

That gives us all hope doesn't it?

The people with the best self-control are typically the ones who need to use it the least. It's easier to practice self-restraint when you don't have to use it very often. So, yes, perseverance, grit, and willpower are essential to success, but the way to improve these qualities is not by wishing you were

a more disciplined person, but by creating a more disciplined environment. (p.93)

The secret to self-control, says Clear, is, "Make the cues of your good habits obvious and the cues of your bad habits invisible" (p.95). And the Christian does this, of course, in dependence upon God for guidance and decisiveness.

A Second Reason for Hope

There's a second reason for hope, and that is Romans 12:2—"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (NKJV).

As other science has confirmed, our brains are remarkably "plastic" and can be rewired, regrooved, or renewed, not only by psychological training, but by spiritual training; and if anyone has reason to hope here, it is Christians. After eleven chapters of filling the mind with the most sublime truths, the Apostle Paul says his great point is mind transformation and the great aim is proving, or demonstrating in practical ways, what God's good will is for us in this world.

This doesn't guarantee that God will eradicate all the old grooves of sinful habits. He may leave some traces of these to remind us of our past, to humble us, and to keep us dependent upon Him for daily deliverance. But it does mean that as we absorb and imbibe God's truth, we can expect not just internal but also external transformation.

The secret to self-control, therefore, is truth-control. ■

* Clear, James. *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*. Avery, 2018.

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the **STILL,** **SMALL**voice

you have to wait for

by Michael Kelley

I don't like to wait.

Neither do you.

To be fair, it's not all our fault, is it? Part of our hatred for waiting involves the culture in which we live. Everyone, everywhere, and in everything is constantly looking for a more efficient way to do whatever they are trying to do. We want shorter wait times at the airport. We push for fewer cars on the roads and more people using public transportation to reduce traffic and, therefore, to reduce our time spent waiting in vehicles. We want people to answer our email or text message quickly, on our time table, so that we can move on to the next task. It is important that we maximize our time and not waste any of it in waiting.

This is problematic for the Christian because, in a culture that's bent on eliminating the need to wait, we are the people who believe (supposedly) in things that we cannot see—things that are not readily apparent—that are coming, but have not yet come. To be a Christian means to be someone who waits, whether we like it or not.

This is not a new thing. The people of God have always had to grow in this characteristic. There were the 400 years of slavery in Egypt when the people waited. There were the 70 years spent in captivity when the exiles waited.

There were another 400 years between the Old and New Testament when the faithful waited. And now we still wait for Jesus to split the sky and come back to make everything good that has been bad.

So, too, waiting is essential for those who truly want to hear the voice of God.

Maybe you know the story—it's one of the classic texts that shows us the nature of God's voice. The setting is one of danger, for the prophet Elijah had made an enemy of the wicked Queen Jezebel. Under threat of his life, God's man fled to the wilderness, and there he heard the voice of the Lord:

Then the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of Hosts, but the Israelites have abandoned Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are looking for me to take my life."

Then He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the LORD's presence."

At that moment, the LORD passed by. A great and mighty wind was tearing at the mountains and shattering cliffs before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake, there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after



the fire there was a voice, a soft whisper. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave" (1 Kings 19:9-13).

There is much to see here about the Lord who speaks. We see, for example, that the Lord speaks to those who have dedicated themselves to listening. We also see that the Lord often doesn't speak in the grand and miraculous, but in the small and quiet. But here, too, is a question of timing.

What I mean is that there is really no indication of how much time actually passed between when the Lord first began to pass by and when He spoke in the whisper.

I've always read this text and implicitly thought about it as a series of moments—as if this mighty wind that shattered the cliffs was about 10 seconds long. Then the earthquake came and went. And then the fire raged through, and when it was all said and done, Elijah had endured about 10 minutes of catastrophes. But that's not what the text says. Instead, it says that "at that moment, the LORD passed by," and that's it. That's the last indication of time we have.

We don't know if this wind lasted for two minutes or two weeks. Similarly, we don't know how long the earthquake was, or how long after the storm it occurred. And then we don't know how long this fire took to really get going, and how long Elijah had to endure the heat of the flames. The text doesn't tell us, but upon reading it again and again this week, I had to wonder. Perhaps this wasn't a quick experience for the prophet. Instead, perhaps it involved days and days of enduring the big and mighty and disastrous before finding the gentle whisper at the other end.

Can that be so? Can it be that hearing the voice of God is not a ready-made formula that happens quickly? Perhaps instead it is a commitment to endure and persevere through what threatens us because we are so hungry for His Word that we are willing to wait for it.

If that is so, then perhaps we have not heard the Word of the Lord not only because our lives are too loud for this gentle whisper, but also because we have not waited for it as we would wait for the very bread that sustains our souls.

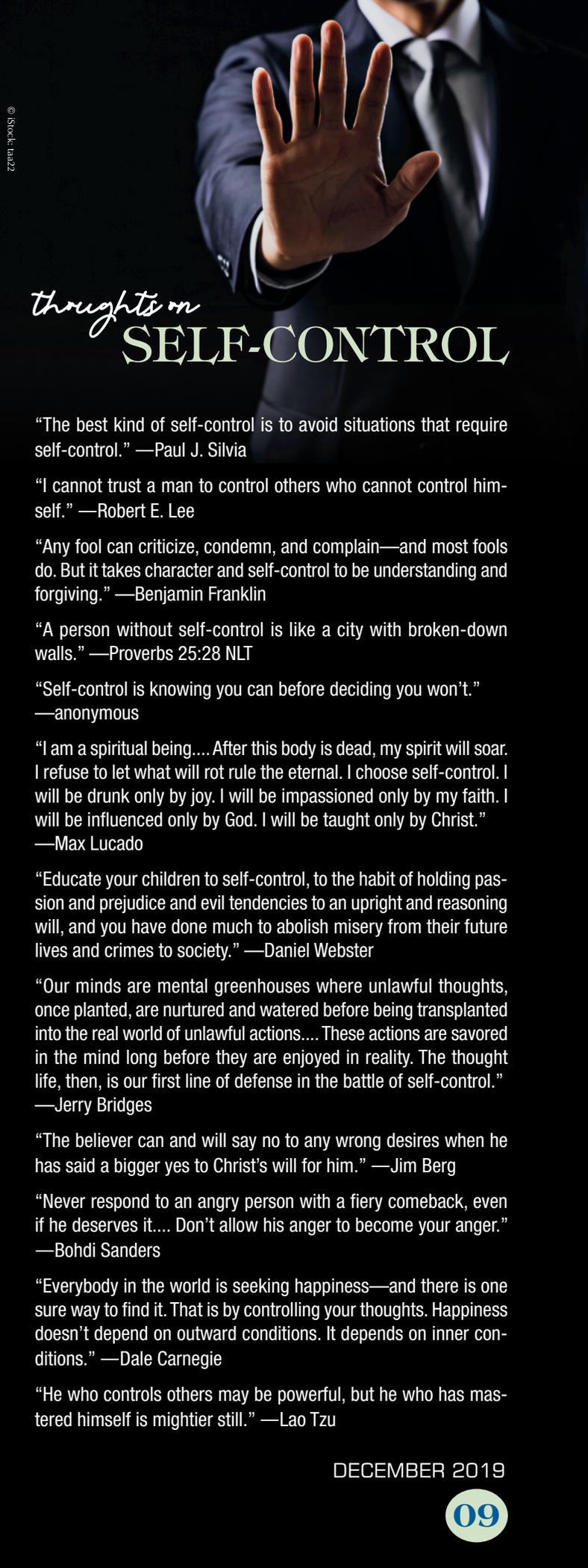
If you want to hear the Lord speak, then don't be hasty. Understand that you might have to wade through a storm, and an earthquake, and the fire. And know that those things might take awhile. A long while.

But know, too, that there is the Word on the other side that brings life, like the bread of heaven.

Don't be hasty, Christian—linger over God's Word. Take the time in faith to wait for Him to speak again through what He has spoken. 📖

Michael Kelley leads a team at LifeWay Christian Resources that creates biblical content for churches. He also speaks in churches, conferences, and retreats, and has authored several books. He lives in Nashville, TN, with his wife and three children.

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thoughts on SELF-CONTROL

"The best kind of self-control is to avoid situations that require self-control." —Paul J. Silvia

"I cannot trust a man to control others who cannot control himself." —Robert E. Lee

"Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain—and most fools do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving." —Benjamin Franklin

"A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls." —Proverbs 25:28 NLT

"Self-control is knowing you can before deciding you won't."
—anonymous

"I am a spiritual being.... After this body is dead, my spirit will soar. I refuse to let what will rot rule the eternal. I choose self-control. I will be drunk only by joy. I will be impassioned only by my faith. I will be influenced only by God. I will be taught only by Christ."
—Max Lucado

"Educate your children to self-control, to the habit of holding passion and prejudice and evil tendencies to an upright and reasoning will, and you have done much to abolish misery from their future lives and crimes to society." —Daniel Webster

"Our minds are mental greenhouses where unlawful thoughts, once planted, are nurtured and watered before being transplanted into the real world of unlawful actions.... These actions are savored in the mind long before they are enjoyed in reality. The thought life, then, is our first line of defense in the battle of self-control."
—Jerry Bridges

"The believer can and will say no to any wrong desires when he has said a bigger yes to Christ's will for him." —Jim Berg

"Never respond to an angry person with a fiery comeback, even if he deserves it.... Don't allow his anger to become your anger."
—Bohdi Sanders

"Everybody in the world is seeking happiness—and there is one sure way to find it. That is by controlling your thoughts. Happiness doesn't depend on outward conditions. It depends on inner conditions." —Dale Carnegie

"He who controls others may be powerful, but he who has mastered himself is mightier still." —Lao Tzu

NEWS

from the Hilltop



enable them to experience a day in the life of a student: attending classes, participating in a chapel service, and eating in the cafeteria.

The group enjoyed a trip to downtown Cincinnati, where they visited Washington Park, ate world-famous

Graeter's ice cream, and ascended to the top of Carew Tower for a bird's-eye view of the entire city.

The evening included intramural sports and the opportunity to spend a night in the dorm.

On day two, the visitors were invited to attend the annual Student



Government Harvest Party at the Justice Farm along with students and employee families. The weather was a bit chilly but perfect for an evening around a campfire while enjoying coffee, chili and nachos, games, pumpkin carving, and hayrides. Everyone had a great time!

FRIEND & SIBLING DAY

On October 22 and 23 GBS students hosted over 30 friends and siblings for the annual Friend and Sibling Day. Those attending joined in a number of exciting activities to

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.

BIRTH



To **Kayla (Hayes) and Tyler Mitchell (AA '15)**, a son, **Tyler James**, born October 15, 2019, at The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati, OH. Tyler works in construction (drywall and painting). Kayla is an RN who works in the emergency department at The Christ Hospital. The Mitchells reside in Cincinnati, OH. Tyler's parents are GBS staff members: Gary (BRE '84), facilities/maintenance; and Denise (BA '84), Resource Room.

MARRIAGES



Bob Hunt (ThB '77) to Susan Coleman, October 5, 2019, at the Bible Methodist Church in Easley, SC, officiated by Pastor Jonathon Slagenweit and with Rev. Bill French offering the wedding prayer. Bob works for the Oconee County School District and will be retiring in 2020.

Susan graduated from Kentucky Mountain Bible College, attended Southern Wesleyan University and Clemson University, and taught many years in public and private schools before retiring. The Hunts will be living in Liberty, SC.



Maria Stetler (AA & BA '12) to Bryan Robledo, October 19, 2019, at the First Baptist Church, Cold Spring, KY, with Rev. Michael Avery officiating. Maria worked in advancement at GBS in various capacities (2012-2017). She maintains her GBS connection by serving as adjunct faculty. Maria is the owner of MediaSense Solutions, and Bryan, a graduate of Hobe Sound Bible College, is the Associate and Youth Pastor at Parkway Church of God Holiness at Fort Scott, KS, where the couple will be living.

DEATHS



Connie Laretta Andis, 75, passed away August 5, 2019. She was born on December 17, 1943, to J. Fred and Vivian (Seville) Kingen of Indianapolis, IN. Connie attended college at GBS. While there, she met fellow student, Ronald Andis (1961-1965) and the two married on August 15, 1964.



Carving Pumpkins at the Justice Farm

ALDRSGATE FORUM

The Aldersgate Forum, October 22-24, featured Allan Brown's newly published *Holiness for Growing Christians*. Tuesday evening, Randall McElwain proposed that holiness

should be viewed as both a journey and a particular milepost on the journey in "Christian Perfection: Destination, Journey, or Impossible Dream? Holiness for New Believers."

Wednesday, Leonard Sankey gave a devotional on moment-by-moment surrender to the Spirit. Dr. McElwain's second paper focused on the vital role of hymnody in teaching doctrine.

Before Allan Brown's paper, "Holiness for Growing Christians: Why I Wrote This Book," he gave an impromptu personal history of growing up in Nazarene, Bible Missionary, and Wesleyan-Holiness churches and

how he came to value biblical theology. Following his paper a panel engaged the topic "Teaching Holiness in the Local Church." Many practical suggestions were offered. That evening, Philip Brown offered ways to present holiness using more Scriptural language in "Toward a



Tim Keep shares devotional thoughts at the Aldersgate Forum.

Connie graduated with a ThB in 1965. Connie had been a resident of South Bend, IN, since 1982. She was a secretary for the state welfare department for 13 years and later became a cashier with the Target department stores in South Bend for 25 years before her retirement in 2013.

Along with Ronald, her husband of 55 years, Connie is survived by sons, Nathaniel and Kevin; four grandchildren; and three sisters, Carmen Phillips, Janice Carlton, and Brenda Linn. Funeral services were held at the Beaver Creek Wesleyan Church, North Liberty, IN, with Pastor Scott Hollebrands officiating. Funeral services were also held several days later at the Greenfield Wesleyan Church, Greenfield, IN, with Pastor Michael Frausto officiating. Burial followed at Reeves Cemetery, Greenfield, IN.

Ronald writes: "Thank you for the years at GBS which helped us to get established in life."



Izetta Jewel (Brock) Sparks, 94, passed away September 11, 2019, in Springfield, OH. Jewel was born on September 29, 1924, to Forrest and Dessie Brock of Wileyville, WV. She had three siblings, Roma, Helen, and Kathleen.

Graduating valedictorian of her God's Bible School high school class in 1950, Jewel then earned a

bachelor of arts degree from the college department in 1954, followed by a master's degree in education from the University of Cincinnati. She taught high school at GBS for 40 years and served a term as principal. On August 26, 1972, Jewel married Richard Sparks, to whom she had been introduced by GBS President Sam Deets. Richard (Dick) became the campus painter and was known for his campus beautification efforts—planting and maintaining flowerbeds—as well as for collecting clothing and other items for distribution in the school's various city missions. Following retirement, Jewel and Dick left GBS in 1995 and lived in Norwood, OH, until Dick's passing in 2000. Jewel then lived with her sister, Helen Graden, until Helen's death in 2010, after which she moved to Springfield, OH, to live with her sister and brother-in-law, Kathleen and Elton Moose. After several falls and hospitalizations, she moved into Allen View Care Nursing Home and lived there until her passing.

Jewel is survived by one sister, Kathleen; two nieces; one nephew; and several great nieces and nephews. Memorial services were held at the Richards, Raff, and Dunbar Memorial Home, Springfield, and at the Cedars of Lebanon Chapel, Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, where Jewel was buried.

➡ Constructive Biblical Theology of Sanctification.”

On Thursday morning, Tim Keep gave a devotional on being like Christ in loving service. Offering affirmations, critiques, and questions for clarification, Mark Bird, David Fry, and Steve Oliver each formally reviewed Allan Brown’s book. A second panel allowed the reviewers to interact with the author and field questions from forum attendees.

Logan, one of the forum attendees, summed it up like this: “Aldersgate Forum 2019 was the best

forum yet.” We thank God for his presence and help and welcome all to next year’s forum featuring Dr. Tom McCall and his latest book *Against God and Nature: The Doctrine of Sin*. Papers and videos from past forums are available online at s.gbs.edu/thealdersgateforum.

PHONATHON 2019

As you may have noticed, Phonathon is different this year. Instead of a three-week campaign involving many student callers, three

students—Anthony Paulus, Samuel Cramer, and Rachel Klotz—have been busy as student ambassadors, making calls for 15-20 hours a week throughout the entire semester. Their goal is to raise \$120,000 for the Student Work Program, which helps fund students—roughly 70% of the entire student body—who work in some capacity for the school in order to help pay for their education.

As the ambassadors call our donors, they are making needed updates to our contact information, answering questions, and praying for

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued



Melvin H. Kessen, 96, of Aurora, IN, went to his eternal reward, October 3, 2019. He was born November 18, 1922, to George and Lulu (Dock) Kessen of Celina, OH. In his early years, Melvin enjoyed singing in school ensembles, duck and rabbit hunting, and ice skating. During WWII, he became a highly decorated member of the United States Army Air Corp, 71st Fighter Wing, under General Patton’s command. After the war, he enrolled at GBS where he met Doris Wiegman. They were married in 1953 and were to share 61 happy years together. After his graduation (ThB ’54), Melvin earned a Stationary Engineer’s License, 3rd class, from the State of Ohio and served for 17 years as the boiler room engineer at GBS while also working in the boiler rooms of the Cincinnati YMCA and Cincinnati Music Hall. He then went to work for Novamont in Florence, KY, until his retirement.

Melvin was a member of the Wilmington Hills Wesleyan Church, where he served on the board, as a Sunday School teacher, and in whatever other capacities he was needed. A man of great faith, he spent many hours praying for his family and friends. He is survived by his three sons, all ministers, Phil, Mark, and James; daughter, Becky Rohrig; 12 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren; cousins; and many nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held at the Wilmington Hills Wesleyan Church, and military serv-

ices were conducted by members of local veterans service organizations.



George E. Watters, Jr., 90, of Adrian, MI, with his faithful wife of 67 years at his side, went from her care into the arms of Jesus on Sunday, October 6, 2019. He was born on March 28, 1929, the fourth of the twelve children of George and Hazel (Andrews) Watters, Sr. of Morenci, MI. On May 30, 1952, George married Bonnie Mae Baughey. He enjoyed hunting, camping, plowing snow, raising Collies, and his wonderful role as grandfather.

George is survived by his wife, Bonnie; daughter, Deborah Lindsay; daughter-in-law Cheryl Watters; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Adrian First Church of the Nazarene with Rev. Sonny McNear, Dr. Rodney C. Lindsay, Rev. Larry Betz, and Rev. Doug Chandler officiating. Burial followed at Lenawee Hills Memorial Park in Adrian.

George’s daughter-in-law, Cheryl Watters, has been the administrative assistant to the president of GBS since 2011. Two of his grandsons have worked at GBS: Ryan Watters (BA ’11), who served in various capacities at GBS (2011-17), including director of student affairs, and is currently an adjunct professor; and Jason Watters, who served as grounds supervisor and assistant campus administrator (2012-14). A number of great-grandchildren also attend the GBS Aldersgate Christian Academy. ■

specific needs as requested. What a blessing to hear these students pour-



L-R: Samuel, Rachel, and Anthony

ing out their hearts to God for our constituents! Please keep Anthony, Samuel, and Rachel in your prayers as they work toward our goal. Perhaps they have been unable to reach you. If you have not yet heard from them, why not initiate a call?

Ready to make a pledge? Call (513) 721-7944 and ask for “Phonathon,” or text “Give2GBSC” to (321) 316-6362. **Questions?** Call (513) 721-7944 ext.1221. 📌

TEXT TO DONATE

•
Dial (321) 316-6362
on your smartphone

•
Text “GIVE2GBSC”

•
A return text message provides a secure website link for making a credit card donation

•
An e-receipt will be sent within two business days

•
You can still donate by check, cash, Paypal, debit card, or credit card, or set up an automatic monthly gift

•
Questions? (513) 721-7944 ext.1221

TEACHER EDUCATION DEGREES NOW ACCREDITED BY CAEP!

Although all the degrees at GBS are regionally and nationally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and the Association for Biblical Higher Education, GBS is happy to report that four of our teacher education programs are now approved by CAEP, and, therefore, lead to licensure in the state of Ohio.

What is CAEP? Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) formed when the boards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) met in 2013 and consolidated to form CAEP. It is now the national accrediting body for educator preparation providers.

GBS has been hard at work. Because of the increasing need in public schools for faithful servants who reflect Christ, the Division of Professional Studies and the Division of Music have been working toward eligibility for state teacher licensure for certain academic programs since 2017. What we have accomplished thus far:

- Achieved initial Candidacy from CAEP in 2017
- Completed a full state review from Ohio
- Received licensure from the State of Ohio in 2018

What does this mean for students? As a result of these approvals, GBS now offers programs that lead to state teacher licensure in the following areas:

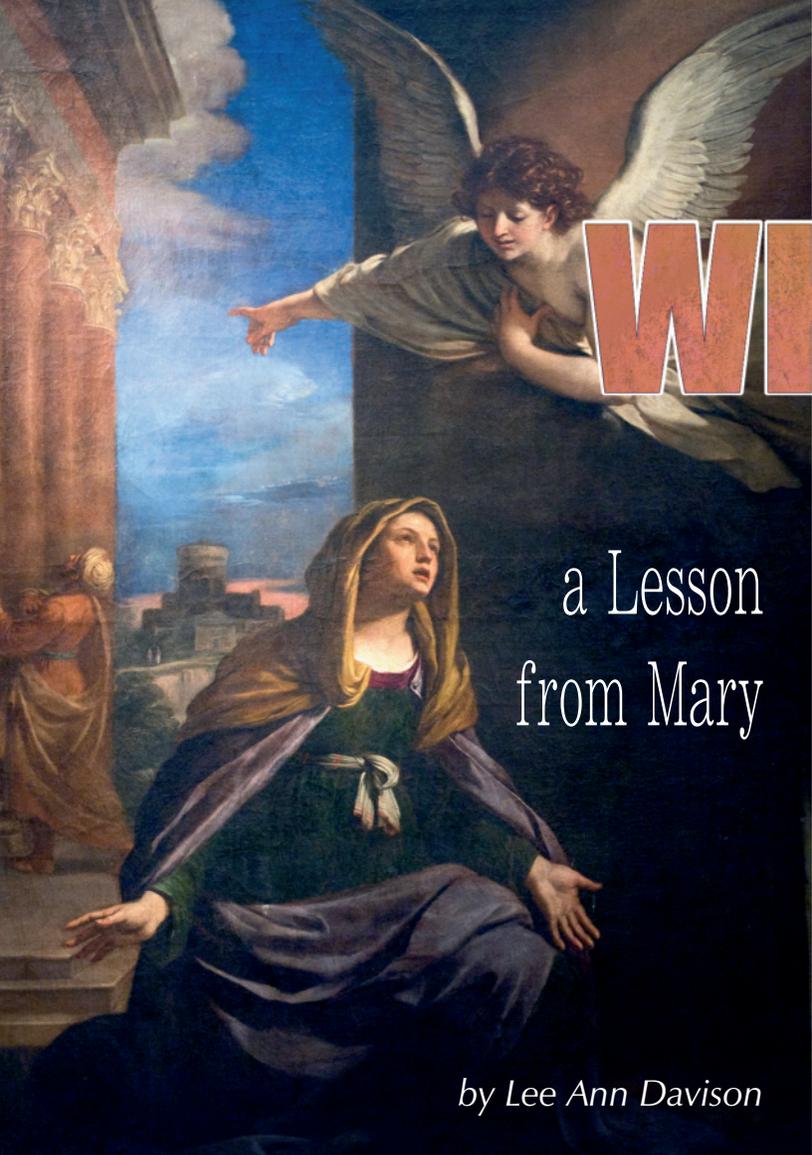
- Early Childhood Education
- Integrated Language Arts Education (7-12th Grade English)
- Choral/General Music Education
- Instrumental Music Education

Students who join these programs will be eligible to apply for state licensure after graduating and successfully passing the assessments required for all educators in Ohio. Because of the state’s high standards for licensure, Ohio holds teacher licensure reciprocity agreements with most other states, which streamlines the process for transferring a license to other states.

Additionally, graduates from these and other education programs on campus are still eligible to apply for teacher certification through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). By preparing our students for service in both public and private schools, the GBS education programs strive to continue expanding their impact for the kingdom of God. 📌



GBS faculty working on the CAEP Project are (L-R): Dr. Marcia Davis, Mr. Lyle Witt, Mrs. Kendra Muir, and Dr. Jana Pop.



"I am the Lord's servant and I am willing to accept whatever He wants."—Luke 1:39 NLT

WHATEVER!

a Lesson from Mary

by Lee Ann Davison

Whatever! Interesting response to a message from God, isn't it? We use this comment so frequently nowadays that it seems to be a type of brush off; as if the person I am speaking to has no concern or interest in what I am saying. In fact, some of us see this response as disrespectful. Whatever! Yet this was Mary's reply to the momentous news just delivered to her by the Angel Gabriel. In Luke 1:38, the NLT reads like this: "Mary responded: I am the Lord's servant and I am willing to accept whatever He wants. May everything you said come true." Whatever! Mary was certainly not giving God's heavenly messenger the brush off, she was making a TOTAL COMMITMENT to the will of God concerning her life.

This Christmas season, I have been struck with Mary's response to Gabriel's announcement. Here she was, a young maiden, speaking with the Angel Gabriel, no less, who had come to deliver a message straight from the throne room of heaven, and her answer was, "Whatever"! She was willing to accept whatever God wanted. She didn't bother the angel with questions regarding how to face what was coming her way or exactly what it would mean in her life. She didn't ask the

angel if he was REALLY sure that he had visited the right woman or had the right message.

Look at those words again. She was willing to ACCEPT. She wasn't going to argue about it, she wasn't going to worry about it, and she wasn't going to fight against it.

She was willing to accept WHATEVER. Mary did not put limits on her willingness. She did not put a timetable or conditions in place. She wasn't saying she would accept whatever the Lord wanted only for a certain period of time in her life, or only as she "felt good" about the situation, or only if it were convenient, etc. She did not say that she would accept only if her husband-to-be didn't have a problem with what was happening in her life or if her parents approved and understood. She said she would accept WHATEVER.

Mary didn't leave herself any room for changing her mind down the road when things might get tough. Her response left no "wiggle room" to allow busyness, doubts, comfort, convenience, or the opinions of others to keep her from serving the Lord as He had chosen. She gave her total agreement to whatever He wanted to do in her life and in whatever way He wanted to do it. She didn't try to tell Him how it should be done.

Read back through the story and you will not find any indication Mary asked for time to think and pray about all the angel had told her. Everything indicates the angel spoke, and Mary responded. She didn't ask for confirmation. She believed what the messenger of God told her.

Mary exhibits a model of faith for all of us (not just women) in her willingness to believe what God said would happen, that He was able to bring it to pass, and that she didn't have to understand it. She didn't try to establish limits or conditions. Her faith extended not just to the here and now, but also to the future as well.

Today do you find yourself in a seemingly impossible situation? Can you say with Mary that you are willing to accept whatever He wants? Are circumstances not to your liking and you want out? Ask the Lord to help you say as Mary said, "Be it unto me as You have said." ■

Lee Ann Davison is a writer whose articles and devotionals have been published in various publications. Lee Ann has been married to Fred Davison for 43 years. Together they own and operate Your Business Matters, LLC, a tax preparation service. They reside in Norwood, OH, and have three adult children.

This painting of the Annunciation is on display in the San Nicola Church, Tolentino, Italy. © iStock: clodio.



MIXED MESSAGES AT CHRISTMAS

by Michelle Ule

Christmas is a mixed-message time of year for me. My mother's death at Christmas punched most of the cheerful emotion out of the holiday for many years. Being a mother also can strip away the excitement as I work in the background to provide Christmas "magic." But it hasn't always been so. Every year, I reach back into my memory pocket.

I remember the fledgling Christmas I first understood the significance of Jesus' birth. Maybe it's the (relatively) frosty night from that long-ago southern California Christmas—when a touch of mist in the air mingled with Christmas hymns I'd never sung before—that's needed to conjure up the wonder. The dark sky sparkled with shiny stars that night. I could imagine shepherds startled out of sheep-watching by a glorious choir of angels announcing astonishing news—astonishing news, I, too, had only begun to grasp.

A Secular Childhood Full of Mixed Messages

I'd grown up in a mostly secular household. Christmas was stockings, gaily wrapped gifts, and a trip to our grandparents' house.

The Italian side of the family ate towering bowls of pasta and chocolate pie. We played a gift-swapping game and admired my cousins' presents. The adults played poker after the dishes were done and we kids ran around outside. Sometimes we even ate outside if it was warm enough. I don't remember ever attending church on Christmas day.

But that fifteenth Christmas, I'd met a group of Christians at Trinity Lutheran Church around the corner. They introduced me to the person of Jesus Christ—not only as a baby long-ago born, but also as the Savior of the world who still lived, seated on God's right hand. Like many Americans, I was familiar enough with Jesus. I'd attended

catechism for many years. But, somehow, I never connected the two. I'd never heard of Jesus as the connector between me and the God who created those stars and spun the planets across the universe. While I had tried to reach Him, to understand God, Jesus never held the front of my consciousness.

It Changed That Christmas

The mixed messages of my childhood disappeared into the truth of Jesus. I mirrored Mary's wonder: "Who IS this?" Some of it was the music: Handel's *Messiah* and the four-part harmony hymns, *Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel* and *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, or possibly the reading of Luke's Gospel. Much of it had to do with my own reading of the Bible during that time. The person of Jesus and His role on earth became clearer. I didn't remember ever hearing the story of Herod sending soldiers to kill all the babies in Bethlehem as a way of suppressing God's plan.

Jesus looked completely different that Christmas, and something came alive in my heart and soul. I've always loved the saying, "Jesus is the reason for the season." But that took on new meaning. There's no point to all of this without Him.

Yes, I still feel mixed messages at Christmas, mourning my mother each year. But the reason for the season, Jesus, is also the comfort for that loss. His birth in that manger saved the world—and me.

"Gloria in excelsis Deo"—Glory to God in the highest! Merry Christmas. ■

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.

CAMPUS IMPROVE

The constant march toward property improvement and expansion continued through the last twelve months.

NEW EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Fifth Third Bank and World Vision Donations.

A blessing has come our way in the form of a large gift of office products from Fifth Third Bank (1). As the bank renovates floors in the Fifth Third Tower, they repurpose much of the stock, and GBS has received high quality desks, chairs, file cabinets, bookcases, conference tables, beautiful interior doors, and a large commercial air conditioning unit, etc. What we could not use we either gave to other churches or schools or sold. In addition, World Vision Warehouse blessed GBS (2) with several truckloads of a variety of items that the college or our personnel have put to good use.

Personnel Lift. To work on the high buildings and trees around campus necessitated renting large personnel lifts each summer. We were able to purchase a 60-foot personnel lift (3) that will pay for itself quickly through the money saved from equipment rental. This also gives us the opportunity to work on projects in hard-to-reach areas (4) throughout the year. The lift allows us to complete many more jobs safely and quickly.

Utility Vehicles. We sold three utility vehicles that were used by our maintenance technicians and replaced them with four very useful golf carts (5).



CONSTRUCTION

CONSTRUCTION

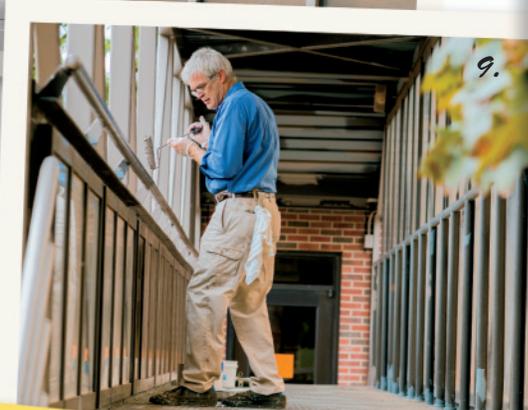


Coach. We purchased a newer coach (6,7) with very low mileage at a government auction. Even after spending money to make it "tour ready," this coach is still worth several times what it cost us.

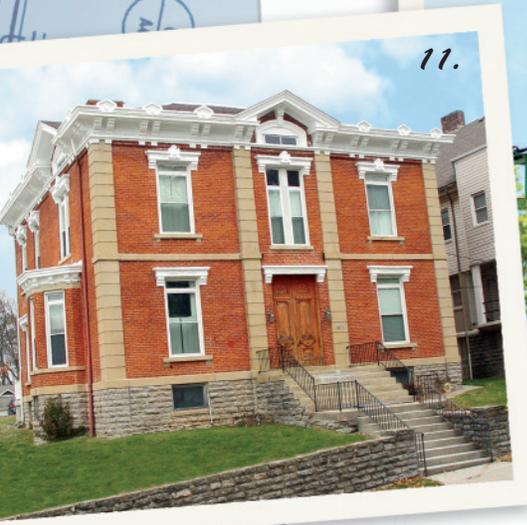
PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

Skywalk. One of the improvements we have needed to make for quite some time involved the repair of the skywalk (8,9). Our crew repainted it and purchased and installed new glass. The walk to the library is much nicer now.

Bathroom Renovations. We continued the bathroom renovations begun a few years ago by remodeling a second restroom and showers in the Women's Residence Hall (10). We also remodeled both restrooms on the lower classroom level of the Knapp Memorial Building under the chapel. These improvements included new ceramic tile, stainless steel partitions (donated by Fifth Third Bank), mirrors, and all new plumbing fixtures.



CONSTRUCTION! CONSTRUCTION!



Painting. In addition to brick repair, the residential building at 1803 Young Street has been freshened up with a coat of white paint on all of the soffits and box gutters (11). The work on this building was much easier and safer due to our newly acquired lift (12).

Housing Renovations. We renovated apartments #1 and #2 at 1815 Josephine (13), and apartment #3 and the exterior of 1841 Josephine, and are currently working on the house at 526 Channing Street, which will give us three or four rental units. The roof on the 525 Channing Street residence was replaced.

Drain and Concrete Repair. A serious maintenance problem developed when the drains under the concrete at the main entrance to the Miller-Deets Student Center failed and the sand base began washing away, causing the concrete to crack and sink. This, in turn, created water-leak damage inside the building. The first contractor failed to meet expectations and we hired another. Our maintenance team removed the concrete and prepared the site (14) for the contractor to pour the new concrete (15).

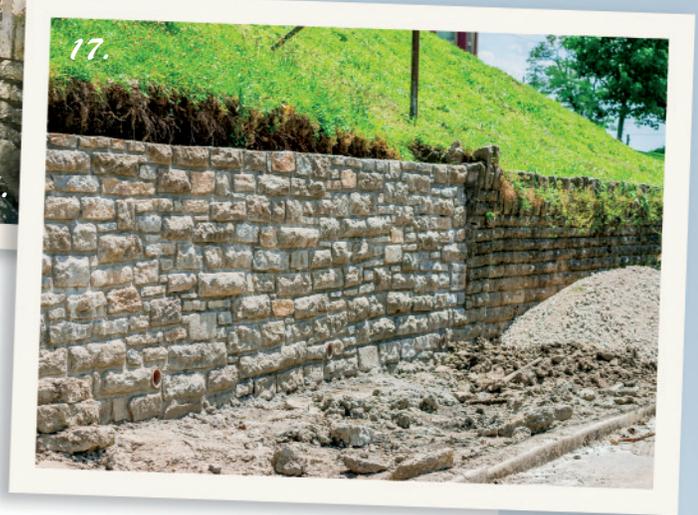


Rock Wall Repair. A 32-foot section of an eight-and-a-half foot tall rock retaining wall on Josephine Street failed (16), requiring us to hire a builder to replace that section of wall (17).



CONSTRUCTION!

ON! CO



PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS

Residential property. Because of your faithful donations, GBS was able to acquire four additional properties, one at 512 Carmalt Street (18) and three on Channing Street: 526, 537, and 548. While these latter three will need significant repairs, these new properties will give us several rental units that will generate new income streams, helping to fund the college.

NEW PROJECTS ON THE HORIZON

1. Acquire new strategic properties within the campus zone (\$145,000 for properties currently being offered to us)
2. Remodel/rehab recently purchased properties (\$50,000)
3. Install campus-wide security camera system (\$40,000)
4. Purchase a PR van (\$20,000)
5. Remodel restroom in Women’s Residence Hall (\$20,000)
6. Re-carpet residence hallways (\$15,000)
7. Re-carpet chapel (\$50,000)

Help us pray that we can reach these goals! 🙏

OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE

Without your loyal assistance, we couldn’t accomplish these projects. The “Revivalist Family” is made up of faithful GBS supporters who have stood beside us and made it possible for us to move forward for over a century. Our purpose hasn’t changed and our mission is clear—training students to do the work of ministry. So many of you have been faithful in giving to help us train students—and every gift directly or indirectly supports all students on this campus and impacts every future ministry to which God has called them.

A gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, or \$500 would mean a great deal to the school right now. Gifts of any amount would be so much appreciated and go a long way in meeting the needs that are facing us at this time.

Maybe you would like to give a significant year-end gift that not only helps GBS but also could benefit you at tax time.

To make a donation by check, send it to 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202. To donate by credit card or give online, visit www.gbs.edu/givenow; or you may call the school at 1-800-486-4637 and ask for the Advancement Office.

Thank you for standing with us!

President Rodney Loper

Dear Phil



GOD IS NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE

I was shocked to hear you say in class that God is neither male nor female. Would you have no problem with the Oxford University Press version of the Bible? We are treading on dangerous territory when we interpret Scripture to say things that it does not say and draw conclusions that find their roots in the secularization of Scripture. —Jonathan

Dear Jonathan,

Thank you for your question. When I said “God,” I had in mind God the Father. Jesus, of course, has a glorified human body that was and is male.

Several biblical reasons have led Christian thinkers throughout church history (e.g., Jerome, Gregory of Nazianzus, Aquinas) to conclude God the Father is neither male nor female:

1. God the Father is a spirit and does not have a body like man (John 4:24; Luke 24:39). What does “male”/“female” mean without a body? Being “male” is a function of one’s genetic makeup. As a spirit, God is not a sexual being. I can think of no biblical data that would lead me to believe that gender is an essential feature of spiritual beings.

2. Women are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). That would seem to imply that neither maleness nor femaleness are essential properties of God. (An essential property is necessary for something to be what it is.) If maleness is an es-

sential feature of God the Father, then femaleness in women is non-godly, i.e., not like God. Since God uses feminine imagery to describe Himself on occasion (Isa. 42:14; 49:15; Matt. 23:37), there must be aspects of God that are distinctively imaged by women.

3. I understand God’s “Father” role and Jesus’ “Son” role to have no sexual component of any kind. These terms are analogous (similar to) but not identical to our human use of these terms. They are similar in that there is a relationship of begetter to begotten. They are dissimilar in that they are non-sexual and eternal. There is no heavenly wife to God the Father or mother to God the Son. Thus, we should think of God the Father and God the Spirit as both transcending and comprehending the categories “male” and “female.”

4. Denying that God the Father is “male” does not deny that God is rightly identified as a Father and rightly referred to with masculine pronouns (which by itself says nothing about sexual gender). Grammati-

cal gender has no necessary bearing on actual gender. There are many words that are masculine in gender in Greek and Hebrew, but which have no actual gender, e.g., rock (lithos), wall (phragmos), law (nomos). The Holy Spirit is referenced with masculine pronouns, but that is no reason to think He is male. The use of masculine pronouns indicates (1) that the Spirit is a person, and (2) that God has chosen to present Himself primarily in masculine terms. It is arrogant to think that we know better than God how to refer to Him. Since He has chosen to talk about Himself with masculine terminology, we should use masculine terminology if our language permits.

The “Inclusive Version” of the Psalms and New Testament published by Oxford confuses the issue of sexual gender and personal roles. For example, they translate “God the Father” as “God the Father-Mother” and “Our Father-Mother, who is in heaven.” God’s fatherhood is not a function of sexual gender, therefore, the absence of sexual gender in God the Father (and God the Spirit for that matter) has no bearing on the appropriate use of “Father” as a title for God.

It is contrary to Scripture and theologically errant to refer to God as our Mother and to use feminine pronouns to refer to God. Claims that the Bible simply reflects Israel’s patriarchal culture should be rejected. Other ancient Near Eastern cultures, which were just as patriarchal as Israel, worshipped both masculine and feminine deities (cf. Judg. 3:7; Acts 19:34), and even referred to one and the same God as both “Father” and “Mother.” Scripture provides our rule of faith. We must follow its lead. ■

Blessings,
Philip Brown

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



student focus

“AMERICA’S CHURCHES ARE NOT DYING,” AUTHOR ARGUES

The new book, *The Myth of the Dying Church: How Christianity Is Actually Thriving in America and the World*, proposes that the demise of American Christianity has been greatly exaggerated. The author, Glenn Stanton, who works for Focus on the Family, argues that Christianity is flourishing and remains robust in the United States. While modernist or liberal churches are indeed in steep decline, theologically orthodox churches are doing well. Additionally, the statistics showing a rise of the number of those who report no religious affiliation (“Nones”), are mostly a result of people who formerly identified as nominal Christians now admitting their lack of real religious affiliation.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD EXITING TITLE X PROGRAM

Planned Parenthood announced that it is formally exiting the Title X federal family planning program over a rule enacted by the Trump administration preventing clinics that receive Title X funds from telling patients how or where to access abortion.

Title X, enacted in 1970, grants up to \$286 million per year to health care clinics nationwide to provide things such as contraceptives, cancer screenings, STD testing, and other health care services to low-income patients.

CHICK-FIL-A SALES INCREASE

New figures indicate that Chick-fil-A’s annual sales have more than doubled since LGBT and liberal groups began calling for a boycott of the restaurant in 2012 over a comment made by CEO Dan Cathy: “We are very much supportive of the family—the biblical definition of the family unit. We are a family-owned business, a family-led business, and we are married to our first wives. We give God thanks for that.”

While the boycott may have driven away a few customers, it attracted many more, and nearly 700 new restaurants opened since the boycott began. In 2018, sales were \$10.46 billion, making it the third-largest restaurant in the United States behind McDonald’s and Starbucks.

ANTI-SEMITISM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

According to a new report by AMCHA Initiative, a campus organization that monitors anti-Semitism on more than 400 college campuses, harassment of students who expressed pro-Israel ideologies jumped 70% from 2017 to 2018. AMCHA has recorded some 2,500 anti-Semitic incidents across the U.S. since 2015, the highest levels ever seen. This indicates that the endorsement of anti-Israel causes by students and professors has created an unsafe environment for Jewish students. ■

ALYSON STITT came to GBS as a “very cold Christian,” expecting to stay only one year and just take some general studies. But “God intervened. Over my years here I have grown and matured in ways I could never believe. I have had some strong spiritual mentors and they have helped me overcome some major hurdles.”

She enjoys traveling, and has been to a number of countries including Israel with Dr. Dan Glick’s class in 2017. She loves painting and graphic design. God let her know He wanted her in the missions program to learn to work with missions’ organizations and help with design, fundraising, and marketing. She feels that many missionaries would benefit from more social media and Internet presence.

Alyson plans to graduate in May 2020 with a BA in integrative studies with a cognate in business. She would then like to work fulltime with a missions organization. ■

Seventy-five percent of our students receive some form of financial aid which enables them to attend GBS. If you would like to support students with financial needs, you may send a gift to:

Student Fund
God’s Bible School and College
1810 Young Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

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



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

ARE CHRISTIANS TO BE PERFECT?

by John Wesley

In what sense are Christians not perfect? They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behavior. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation; for 'the servant is not above his master.' But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

In what sense then are Christians perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly (1 John 2:1); and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what, if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence, that 'all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.'

But does not the Scripture say, "A just man sinneth seven times a day?" It does not. Indeed, it says, "A just man falleth seven times" (Prov. 24:16). But this is quite another thing; for, first, the words, a day, are not in the text. Secondly, here is no mention of falling into sin at all. What is here mentioned is falling into temporal affliction.

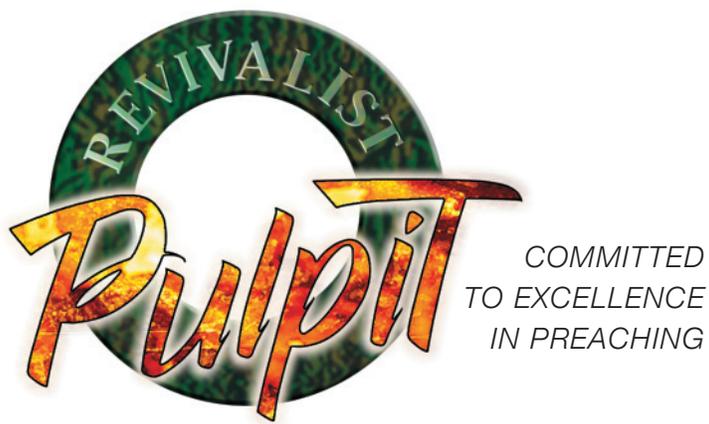
But elsewhere Solomon says, "There is no man that sinneth not" (2 Chron. 6:36). Doubtless thus it was in the days of Solomon; yea, and from Solomon to Christ there was then no man that sinned not. But whatever was the case of those under the law, we may safely affirm, with St. John, that, since the gospel was given, "he that is born of God sinneth not." The privileges of Christians are in nowise

to be measured by what the Old Testament records concerning those who were under the Jewish dispensation; seeing the fulness of time is now come....

But the apostles themselves committed sin; Peter by dissembling, Paul by his sharp contention with Barnabas. Suppose they did, will you argue thus: "If two of the apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians, in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live?" Nay, God forbid we should thus speak. No necessity of sin was laid upon them; the grace of God was surely sufficient for them. And it is sufficient for us at this day....

But St. John himself says (1 John 1:8-10), "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," and, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." I answer, first, verse ten fixes the sense of verse eight: "If we say we have no sin," in the former, being explained by, "If we say we have not sinned," in the latter, verse. Second, the point under consideration is not whether we have or have not sinned heretofore; and neither of these verses asserts that we do sin or commit sin now. Third, the ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." As if He had said, "I have before affirmed, 'The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' And no man can say, 'I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed, from.'" If we say, we have no sin, that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves, and make God a liar: But, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just," not only "to forgive us our sins," but also "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," that we may "go and sin no more." In conformity, therefore, both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion: A Christian is so far perfect, as not to commit sin. ■

John Wesley (1703-1791) was an English cleric and theologian who founded Methodism. This excerpt is adapted from "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection" from The Works of John Wesley.



THE FREEDOM OF SELF-CONTROL

by David Hartkopf

Scripture: Galatians 5:22-23

INTRODUCTION

Picking up a box of cereal the other night at the grocery store for my children, I was overwhelmed by the number of choices available. Do I want the original, the one with blueberries, strawberries, marshmallows, or chocolate? Would I prefer the brand name, the store brand, or the organic option? At every turn there was another pop-up shelf with assortments of candy and cookies that I didn't know I needed but suddenly wanted. There were ice-cold drinks that begged me to purchase them as I walked through the checkout line. I mean, shouldn't I treat myself? It's been a long time since dinner, and it's still an hour until my bedtime snack!

We live in a convenient culture. Malls and shopping trips are obsolete, we have Amazon—and we're upset when our purchase can't be delivered in 24 hours with free "prime" shipping! We can point, click, and purchase almost anything we want. If you search for a pair of blue shoes online, suddenly all of the advertisements popping up in your browser are for great deals on new blue shoes.

Advertisements focus on "treating yourself," "giving yourself a break," and "self-gifting." Indulging is encouraged and even celebrated. As a society, we have become largely, as Paul said, "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." This year CNBC reported that 55% of Americans with credit cards carry debt, and that debt in the last quarter of 2018 totaled around 26 billion dollars!

And yet even with all the wealth, in a culture where boundless and instant gratification is normal, peace and satisfaction seem more illusive than ever. Anxiety and

depression rates are on the rise. We have so much and yet it seems like we are poor when it comes to anything of real, lasting value. The illusion of freedom in gratifying the flesh has actually produced a society that is enslaved to whatever feels fulfilling in the moment.

Today, as we finish our fruit of the Spirit series, we are looking at the last fruit, self-control. According to Paul in Galatians 5, self-control is simply the ability, given by the Spirit, to say no to sin and the flesh and yes to Christ and His ways. It's Spirit-controlled, God-centered discipline in what we think, say, and do. What an opportunity Christians have in our culture to demonstrate what freedom we have in self-control! We are able, because of the Spirit, to say no to sin and the flesh, and yes to Christ and His ways. And because His ways are good, right, and best, we experience the peace and satisfaction that come with the freedom only He gives. Look at the text with me as we make these important observations about self-control.

I. Self-Control Is a Result of Walking in the Spirit

Look back at verse 16: "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." It's important to distinguish between Spirit-led self-control and normal discipline. Many in our culture discipline themselves concerning eating habits, exercise, or maybe even in how they treat others. I know many non-Christians who are self-controlled in their speech. So how is that different from Spirit-led self-control? It's different because our motives are different. As Christ-followers, our motive for being self-controlled isn't self-ish, it's about pleasing Jesus. It's about loving God and loving others, it's not about us! Discipline without Spirit empowerment is at its core self-centered. Paul tells us in Romans 8:8 that "those who are in the flesh cannot please God." So while they may be disciplined in some area, a person who isn't born of the Spirit is not demonstrating Spirit-led self-control.

As the Church, we often have been guilty of trying to get dead trees to produce Spiritual fruit. Discipline is good, if it's the result of a new, risen life in Christ. But there are too many people who sit in church regularly, who experience conviction when we start talking about sinful habits and resolve to "try and do better this week," that have never been converted. The result is a downward, repeating spiral of defeat and failure. Spirit-led self-control can only come after conversion; it's the fruit of personal, Spiritual resurrection!

II. Self-Control Is Freedom, not Slavery

As a teacher, one of the lies from our culture I regularly challenge in class is the lie that Christianity is bondage, that following Christ is unbearable rule-keeping that kills any and all fun that could be had.

David Kinnaman says that one of the battlegrounds for the next generation centers around not just the question, “Is Christianity true?” but “Is it good?” The enemy is working hard to present being a Christian as unnecessary enslavement, a joy-killing strait-jacket. But according to Paul, being in Christ is freedom! “For freedom Christ has set us free!” (5:1 ESV). “For you were called to freedom, brothers!” (5:13 ESV). He says in Romans 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” We have been set free in Christ to obey the good laws of a loving God! Those who aren’t in Christ can’t help but sin, they are enslaved to it. They can’t function within the perfect parameters given to them by their Creator. But we’ve been set free! Not to indulge the flesh, but to walk in the Spirit!

A Spirit-enabled, self-controlled person enjoys freedom and contentment that a natural person cannot obtain or understand. They are free from greed because in Christ they are content with what they have. They are free from evil-speaking because they are able to control their tongue. Lust, immorality, fits of anger, and a host of other enslaving sins mentioned here in Galatians 5 and elsewhere—they are free from them! In the moment, when temptation comes, the Spirit enables them to say “no” to sin and “yes” to Christ and His ways! Spirit-led self-control is freedom, not slavery!

III. There Is Danger in Gratifying the Flesh

Galatians 5 also contains a pointed warning to those who are controlled by their flesh and not the Spirit. Look at the list of sins mentioned in verses 19-21 and consider how many of them tie directly to a lack of Spirit-led self-control. Adultery, fornication, uncontrolled anger, drunkenness, and others could be mentioned that aren’t listed in this passage, like gluttony or gossip.

Often Satan takes God-given desires and tempts us to fulfill those desires in ways that are against the Scriptures. It’s natural to want to eat, in fact if you don’t eat you will die! But Satan tempts us to live for and find meaning in food, to eat as much of whatever, whenever we want! 1 Samuel 2 records the account of Hophni and Phineas, who were priests and sons of Eli, who sinned against God by ordering their servants to take more meat than their share from the offerings of the people. Instead of pulling out what clung to the meat hook after it was cooked in the pot, their servants would get the meat from the people while it was raw, insuring they would get more. Their lack of self-control was also demonstrated by their rampant immorality (vv.22-24). Even after a rebuke from their father, the “worthless” sons of Eli wouldn’t listen, and so it says that God would put them to death (v.25).

Notice what Paul says in Galatians 5:15 about self-control of the tongue: “But if you bite and devour one

another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another” (ESV). James 3 reminds us that the mark of mature Christians is their ability to control the tongue. Look not outside but inside the church to see the damage uncontrolled tongues (and keyboards!) are doing to the body of Christ and our witness to the world. Gossip, evil-speaking, sowing dissension (especially today on social media) among the Church—all of those actions are sin and scripturally sub-Christian. Our Methodist forefathers talked often about controlling the tongue. On “The Character of a Methodist” John Wesley wrote, “He cannot speak evil of his neighbour no more than he can lie, either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of anyone; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak idle words. No corrupt communication ever comes out of his mouth, as is all that which is not good, to the use of edifying, not fit to minister grace to the hearers.” Not speaking the truth in love is a sin. Honestly, it’s easy to drop a “truth bomb” on someone who deserves it. But it’s not the way of Christ—that’s gratifying the flesh.

So whether it’s gossip, gluttony, immorality, or any other sin of the flesh, the danger isn’t just in the temporary enslavement it causes, but in the eternal separation from God that it brings. Paul warned the Galatians clearly in verse 22 “that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (ESV). Sin always brings death—never a gain, always a loss.

CONCLUSION

Christians experience freedom in Spirit-led self-control. When our thoughts, words, and actions are brought under the Lordship of Christ, we live as we were created to be. And the peace and rest given to us who have “tasted and seen that the Lord is good” is a witness to a world enslaved to sin and death. Whom the Son sets free, they are free indeed—free to love God and others through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

O perfect life of Christ, my Lord!
I want to be like Jesus.
My recompense and my reward:
That I may be like Jesus.
His Spirit fill my hung’ring soul,
His power all my life control;
My deepest pray’r, my highest goal:
That I may be like Jesus. (Thomas Chisholm) ■

David Hartkopf (BA ’07) is the GBS Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Director of the Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble, a professor in the Music Division, and pastor of a local church since 2017. He and his wife, Jessica (BA ’07), have three children.



HOMECOMING 2019

*"Those Were the Days:
Remembering the 1980s"*

On October 11-12, alumni gathered on the Hilltop for the annual homecoming celebration. From the opening meal on Friday through Saturday's Street Fest, the activities provided ample opportunity for alumni to fellowship and reconnect with old friends.

FRIDAY EVENING

Kickoff Concert. After an evening meal of chicken alfredo, participants moved to the Adcock Chapel where the Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble was assembled. The ensuing preservice music was simply beautiful! Selections by the SWSE, various PR groups, and the College Choir showcased the musical talents of GBS students and established a worshipful atmosphere.

Welcome Home. At 7:00 p.m., National Alumni President Keith Waggoner I (HS '74; 1974-75) wel-



Pat and Larry Jewett

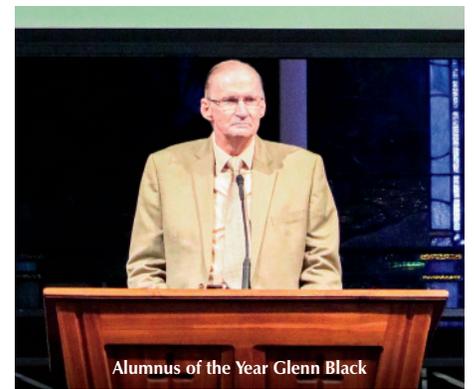
comed the attendees, but especially the honored 25/50-year classes of 1969 and 1994. Two representatives of these classes reflected on their years at GBS: Dr. Henry Smith (HS '69, BRE '73), representing the Class of 1969, and Rev. Duane Quesenberry (BRE '94), representing the Class of 1994. Interspersed were two musical selections by a quartet representing the 1980s: Marc Sankey (BRE '94), Steve Craig (BA '91), Anthony Webb (1991-94), and Donnie Bates, Jr. (1987-89). All performed admirably, but tenor Donnie Bates really soared on "He is Mine"!

President Rodney Loper (BA '01), noting the special focus on the 1980s, asked for all the students, staff, and faculty from that decade to stand and be recognized. The "Bass Quartet" from that era—Marlin Betts (ThB '86), Steve Mills (BRE '84), Rod Puckett (1980-84), Don Quales, Jr. (BA '85), accompanied by Robin Bass Durr (BSM '82)—sang "When It's Time."

Short video greetings by various administrators were shown: Vice President for Spiritual Life Richard Miles (BRE '74), Vice President for Enrollment Services Matt Hallam (BA '06), Vice President for Student Affairs Sonja Vernon, and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Aaron Proffitt.



President's Remarks. President Loper informed the gathered alumni about plans and goals and reminded them that GBS operates on a strategic basis. The school owns 27 acres, 33 homes, and 7 major buildings and takes in about \$3.5 million a year in tuition, room, board, and fees, leaving \$2.4 million to be raised annually. He noted that GBS always looks for ways to keep costs as low as possible to enable students to receive training without incurring crippling debt as they go into ministries that often pay low wages.



Alumnus of the Year Glenn Black



Employee of the Year Charlotte Frederick

The president also noted that GBS is debt-free and that its endowment is 100% funded. He told of receiving a letter containing a gift of one quarter wrapped in a piece of paper. Shortly thereafter, another piece of mail yielded a check for \$80,000. The Lord spoke to him saying, "Whether it is through these large gifts, or whether it is through 25-cent increments, I am going to take care of My school."

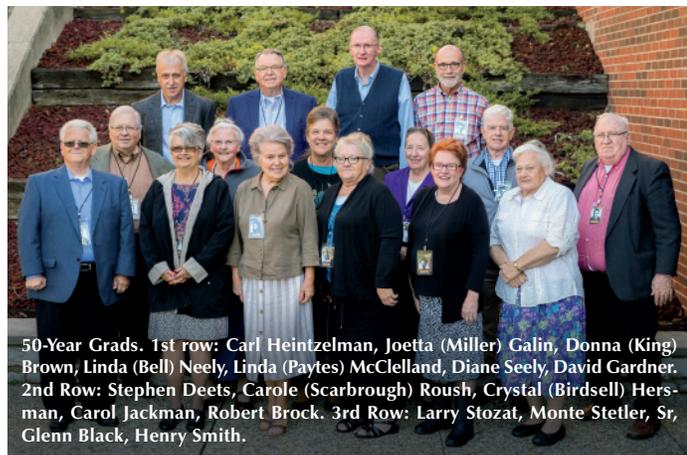
Because many faithful, long-term supporters of GBS are passing off the scene, the president urged the next generation to step up and take their place. As an offering was collected, Martha Miller played "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" on the piano accompanied by a dramatic, orchestral track.

Alumnus of the Year. Glenn D. Black (HS '69, BRE '74) was named Alumnus of the Year. A tribute was read (see full text, *God's Revivalist*, November 2019, p.21) highlighting Glenn's accomplishments both at GBS as editor of *God's Revivalist* (1976-1985) and as minister and church administrator in The Wesleyan Church culminating in his service as district superintendent of the Kentucky District (1990-2012).

Employee of the Year. Charlotte Frederick was named "Employee of the Year." In 1995, Charlotte moved to Cincinnati when her husband David accepted a GBS position in the business office. As their four children got older, Charlotte began working part-time in the GBS



25-Year Grads: Michael Dickinson, Tim Sedlacek, Duane Quesenberry, Valorie (Bender) Quesenberry, Karen (Gibson) Tyler, Ronna (Hughes) Craig, Lyndi (Weingard) Booth.



50-Year Grads. 1st row: Carl Heintzelman, Joetta (Miller) Galin, Donna (King) Brown, Linda (Bell) Neely, Linda (Paytes) McClelland, Diane Seely, David Gardner. 2nd Row: Stephen Deets, Carole (Scarborough) Roush, Crystal (Birdsell) Hersman, Carol Jackman, Robert Brock. 3rd Row: Larry Stozat, Monte Stetler, Sr, Glenn Black, Henry Smith.

Alumni Council Election Results

The following three positions on the Alumni Council were filled.

1st Vice President: John Burroughs. John graduated from the GBS high school in 1973 and from the college with a BA in Education in 1977. He has pastored for 27 years and has 18 years of teaching experience, 3 of which have been at Aldersgate Christian Academy. John is currently the lead pastor of Heritage Bible Church and administrator of Heritage Christian School, Marion, OH.

Secretary: Susan LeBaron. Susan graduated from GBS high school in 1981 and completed college courses while on staff as General Office Manager from 2000-01. Susan has spent over 30 years working in both Christian education and publishing. For the past 18 years she has worked at The Wesleyan Church Headquarters, currently as the Project Communications Manager.

Treasurer: Tim Stamper. Tim graduated from the GBS high school in 1986 and worked as a bricklayer for nearly 20 years. Following a job injury that ended that career, Tim earned an RN degree in 2010 and currently works for UC Health in the Utilization Review Department, Cincinnati, OH.

bookstore where she also functioned as "campus mom." Since her college years at GBS (BA '86), Charlotte has had a special calling to work with children through vacation Bible schools and children's church. In 2005, when contemplating retirement, Sheila Wolf recommended Charlotte as her replacement in what was then the General Studies Division, teaching Church and Family Ministries. Charlotte also began graduate study and received an MA from Cincinnati Christian University in 2012. Charlotte quickly became a beloved classroom teacher, an effective advisor, a surrogate mom for homesick students, and a much-sought-out counselor.

Closing Anthem. The College Choir, joined by choir alumni, sang a closing anthem, "Statue of Liberty." The benedictory prayer was offered by Dan Stetler, GBS alumnus (HS '69, BRE '74, ThB '75) and current president of Hobe Sound Bible College.



Ice Cream Social and Afterglow. Following the service, attendees were treated to Graeter's ice cream in the dining hall before returning to the Adcock Chapel at 9:30 p.m. to pay tribute to the 1980s. It was well-planned by Larry and Pat Jewett, GBS staff members during the 1980s, with Larry serving as the master of ceremonies. It both began and ended with alumni Duane (BA '81) and Gwen (Ferguson) (BSM '81) Newton singing a hilarious version of "Those Were the Days." The program followed a typical day in a student's life at GBS in the 1980s and included an interesting collection of videos, audio recordings, and live skits. One particularly enjoyable segment had current students performing skits depicting period faculty and staff. The congregation then had to guess who they were portraying. The featured alumni group, the Bass Quartet, sang, and Matt (BA '00) and Joy (Bender) (BA '00) Barnett led the congregation in songs that were popular on Christian radio in the '80s.

SATURDAY

Breakfast Buffet. Saturday's activities featured a breakfast buffet for all guests and a special breakfast reunion for the classes of 1969 and 1994. After the breakfast, the reunion class members had time to fellowship. Several recounted memories of their time at GBS and each left with a small gift as a memento from their reunion weekend.

'80s Connection. At 9:30 a.m., the cafeteria was the place for the '80s Connection time. Larry and Pat Jewett again put together a wonderful program and had a diverse slate of individuals sharing their remembrances—many were funny, some serious, but all interesting.

Street Fest. At 10:30 a.m., the 1800 block of Young Street and the main campus area featured various food and activity booths hosted by college and high school organizations. A campus tour, hosted by Eli Albring (2014-19), allowed guests to visit areas of campus which they may not have seen otherwise, while a Cincinnati bus tour, hosted by Zachary Crater (AA '16), provided an opportunity to see many of the changes that have taken place around the city. As the afternoon wound down, crowds were treated to live music from bluegrass gospel groups.

Collingsworth Family Concert. On Saturday evening at 6:00 p.m., the Adcock Chapel became the host concert hall for the renowned, multi-award-winning gospel musicians, the Phil (HS '81; BSM '86) and Kim Collingsworth Family. This ticketed event was a delightful and uplifting finale to the homecoming celebration. For more than two-and-a-half hours, Phil and Kim and their four adult children filled the auditorium with beautiful vocal harmonies and instrumental numbers as they performed gospel favorites and a preview of their new Christmas recording. ■



by Sonja Vernon

SELF-CONTROL = SPIRIT-CONTROL

"But the fruit of the Spirit is... self-control..." —from Galatians 5:22-23 NASB

Of all of the fruit of the Spirit, self-control is the one that trips me up the most. Some translations use the word "temperance"—the idea of moderation. In a society steeped in excess, where ads daily pound into us that we "deserve" whatever it is they're selling, self-control and moderation seem completely foreign concepts. But Paul reminds us that an evidence of the Spirit's work within us is the ability to say "no" to our flesh—even to legitimate desires. It's easy to opine piously against impatience, unkindness, unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness. It gets harder when we have to address issues of moderation and self-control. Why? Because even good things, necessary things, legitimate things, can become out of balance. Eating is necessary for life; gluttony damages that life. God commanded procreation (and in His wisdom made sex enjoyable); outside God's parameters, sex is catastrophically destructive. God commends honest work; workaholicism leaves devastation in its wake. I could go on, but I'm sure you're getting the point. Self-control is difficult because it means living in such a way that nothing (not even a good thing) masters us (I Cor. 6:12), and necessary things are neither taken to excess nor neglected. As we walk in the Spirit, dwell in His presence, bathe in His word, it is His job as the Master Vinedresser, to prune and tend us as we abide in Him. True self-control is Spirit-control. Abide in Him today! ■

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

Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year
From the GBS Family

