

GOD'S REVIVALIST

January/February 2020

and Bible Advocate

*Race
and
Diversity*





about this issue

A GUN BY ANY OTHER NAME

Paula and I made a deliberate decision to rear our children in a peaceful environment, especially in early, formative years. For us, that meant no toy guns. We just felt more comfortable with this approach. Our two boys were well aware of this decision, which eventually led to a rather amusing incident.

Our Cincinnati home had a spacious, multipurpose area on the third floor for study, relaxation, and recreation. One day I was up there while our two young boys were playing with an extensive array of Legos. I noticed that they had created a long contraption of connected blocks and were wielding it in a manner quite gun-like. I was amused and calmly called over to them, "What are you boys doing?"

"We are playing with our 'buch.'" They went on to explain that a "buch" is "a thing you use to protect yourself against wild animals." To them, a gun by any other name was not a gun!

I can hear some of you now: "Without toy guns, how did your boys play 'Cowboys and Indians'?" They didn't. We did not allow it. We did not want to plant damaging stereotypes of people groups into their impressionable minds. Yes, as toddlers, the kids all had fun bouncing around on one of those rocking horses on springs, but for them it was just a riding toy that had no connection to Native Americans. They, thankfully, had no schema for ethnic caricatures.

(Take a deep breath. I know that many kids grow up with toy guns and have fun playing "Cowboys and Indians" with no resulting permanent psychological or emotional scarring. The intent of this little missive is not to criticize the parenting skills of others. Rather, it is simply a glimpse into one family's deliberate attempt to rear children carefully.)

Fast forward a few years. We moved to Kansas where I served as academic dean of another Bible college. Being further west, there were some noticeable differences from Cincinnati. Cowboy hats and boots were common, even with Sunday suits. Many of our friends were avid hunters and staunch second-amendment supporters. I also had more contact with Native Americans there. One semester, a Pima Indian named Armando enrolled. I was thankful that we had reared our children in a way that allowed them to see Armando for what he was—a friend. —KF ■

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COVER PHOTO: International students at God's Bible School, spring 2014 (photos and composite by Kevin Moser)

the president's page



THE ARMORY OF GRACE

by Rodney Loper, President

The American Civil War was a bloody war. In the early days it looked like the Confederacy had a good chance to win the conflict. The Southern fighters seemed to have more passion and felt like their cause was just. They won the battles that took place in 1861. Again in '62 they won the majority of the battles they fought that year. But in '63 the tables turned and the South began to lose. In fact, after Gettysburg, the South is only credited with winning one battle.

Why the change? The South had a terribly difficult time getting supplies. While they were passionate and felt their cause was just—they didn't have well supplied armories backing them. So, ammunition was in short supply, uniforms were scarce, rifles were mostly homemade, and food shortages were abundant. The lack of supply lines—the life-blood of any army—hindered them in reaching their objectives. The South lost because they lacked armories.

Fast forward to the Iraq war. In this battle to liberate Iraq, armor-plated vehicles were desperately needed, but they were slow to be delivered in the first months of America's engagement with the forces of Saddam Hussein. The first vehicles transported to Iraq were not adequately equipped to repel roadside bombs and other munitions.

In order to protect themselves (until armor-plated vehicles were available) American troops began reinforcing their Humvees, LMTVs, and other vehicles with whatever they could find—scrap metal, blankets of Kevlar, and even plywood. They called these devices "Hillbilly Armor" or "Farmer Armor." The technical description was "Improvised Vehicle Armor." By mid-2005, vehicles with appropriate armor were being manufactured and shipped to Iraq. Military experts argued that even a small opening in a vehicle could result in injury or death to those inside.

MISSING ARMOR IS AN INVITATION TO DIE

The Apostle Paul wrote about a spiritual armory. In Ephesians he describes the “armor” that is available to Christians when they are engaged in spiritual combat. Here is what the inspired apostle said was available: “...the belt of truth buckled around your waist, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit” (vv.10-17).

John Henry Jowett wrote the following about the armor of God: “The Word describes the armor, and it directs us to the armory. The description would oppress me if the directions were absent. If I have to forge the armor for myself, I should be in despair. But I can go to the armory of grace, where there is an ever-open door and abundant welcome for every person who fain would be a knight-errant of the Lord. The Lord will provide me with perfect equipment suitable for every kind of contest which may meet me along the road.”*

Fine. But what happens when we feel like we’ve lost some of our defensive equipment? And what do we do when the Enemy discovers a weakness in our armor? Maybe it is part of our helmet, or our shield, or breastplate. A broken or missing piece can be deadly. Here is what Jowett recommends: “We must never continue our journey imperfectly armed. The Evil One will ignore the pieces we have, and he will direct all his attack where there is no defense. Back to the armory! Back to the armory, that we may ‘put on the whole armor of God.’ The Lord is waiting; let us humbly and penitently ask for the missing piece.”*

- Are you missing some armor?
- Do you feel like you have been stripped of your spiritual strength?
- Have you discovered a compromise in your spiritual defense system?
- Have you failed?

If you find yourself in any of these situations, I challenge you to get back to the armory! What the Enemy calls an irreversible situation may actually be only a glancing blow. What may appear to be a mortal wound may only be a flesh wound. Get back to the armory! Gather grace! Get supplies! Stock up!

- How sharp is your sword?
- How strong is your shield?
- How solid is your helmet?
- How sturdy are your shoes?

Why did the South lose, according to some historians? They were passionate, they felt their cause was just—but they didn’t have well supplied armories. I hope that is not true in your life. If it is, then get back to the armory of God’s grace! ■

*Jowett, John Henry. *My Daily Meditation for the Circling Year*. Fleming H. Revell Company, 1914, p.324.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be emailed to revivalist@gbbs.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 appreciate the work you do on *God’s Revivalist*. I used an article this morning in my devotions and it, along with its coordinating Scripture passage, was very strengthening and inspiring. Your work is having a positive impact on others.

LAURA HINTON MOSER
Highland Heights, KY

President Loper’s article on meekness in the November edition was beneficial to me. I needed what he said. Thank you.

JOHN MULLINS
Nampa, ID

Thank you for the great work you and your office continue to do in making *God’s Revivalist* such a wonderful periodical. The articles are relevant, the pictures and news are always very interesting, and the format and layout very professional. Thanks for a work well done.

WALTER J. HEDSTROM
Salem, AL

Please accept my sincere thanks and appreciation for the wonderful homecoming and 50th class reunion. Everything was so well planned and so welcoming. It was a pleasure to be on the Hilltop! I enjoyed seeing classmates I hadn’t seen for 50 years, but most of all I enjoyed the atmosphere and spirit of GBS. It was nice to meet and speak with President Loper and several of the students. All in all, it was a most enjoyable visit. Thank you, and may God bless GBS always.

DONNA (KING) BROWN
Email

RACISM, GENESIS, *and the* BIBLE'S "ONE BLOOD" MESSAGE

by Ken Ham

In the past two centuries, Christian politicians and church leaders have been among the great leaders in America's fight against the scourge of racism. Following the example of the courageous English abolitionist and devout Christian William Wilberforce in the early 1800s, anti-slavery activists (many of them pastors) helped abolish slavery in America. During the civil rights era of the 1950s and 1960s, many of its key leaders were pastors.

Although racism sadly exists in many churches today, Christians are the ones best equipped to counter it. As they look back on the church's abolitionist heritage, Christians should continue to use their very powerful weapon—the Bible's account of the true history of mankind—to fight racism today.

Christian teachings formed much of the playbook for the civil rights leaders in England and Amer-

ica. They recognized that humans were made in the image of God and thus all share the same value in the eyes of their Creator. Adam and Eve were recognized as the first couple, and as their descendants, we today have inherited their tremendous created genetic diversity variation that has given us the different skin shades, eye shapes, etc., we observe across the globe. Furthermore, the

Bible's Book of Acts teaches that all people are of "one blood" (17:26). Indeed, in the Christian worldview, there are no different biological races—only one.

Contrast those beliefs to what society has largely been taught over the past 100 years. During the time of the Scopes trial (1925), a major biology textbook declared, based on Darwinian evolution: "There exist upon the earth five races...the highest type of all, the Caucasians, represented by the civilized white inhabitants of Europe and America."¹ Decades later, the late Stephen Jay Gould, the famous Harvard evolutionist, acknowledged: "Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859 [the date of Darwin's "Origin of Species"], but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory."²



In my homeland, the treatment of Australian aborigines has a horrible racist history. Most people aren't aware that over 100 years ago, Aborigines were actually slaughtered and collected as specimens for research and museum placement. Why? Well, it all had to do with evolution!

Charles Darwin believed that the Australian aborigines were the primitive "missing links" of evolution. As a result, hunters came to Australia to kill the aborigines and bring their bodies home as specimens for museums. In fact, in the early 1900s, the Aborigines were listed as animals in a booklet produced by an Australian museum!

There are many accounts of hunters tracking down Aboriginal men, women, and children. They were killed like animals (even skinned), their skulls were boiled down, and the best specimens were shipped to America, England, and Germany.

It's been estimated that perhaps 10,000 graves of Australian Aboriginal people were desecrated so that specimens could be obtained. It was yet another attempt by museums to confirm the widespread belief that Aborigines were the supposed missing link. Even many American evolutionists were involved in gathering specimens of what they considered to be "sub humans."

There's even more to the sad story regarding Darwin and his family's racist attitudes towards the Aborigines. The first English governor came to Australia in 1788. On a return trip to England, he took a couple of Aborigines with him. When these Aborigines arrived, an English newspaper reported the event this way: "They appear to be a race totally incapable of civilization.... they are from a lower order of the human race." One of these Aborigines died. His body was dug up from the grave and stolen by Charles Darwin's grandfather. It was stuffed and eventually exhibited at the Royal College of Surgeons. You

see, Darwin's grandfather was also an evolutionist—and he obviously influenced his grandson with evolutionary ideas, which Charles then popularized. No wonder Darwin had such racist attitudes towards the Aborigines.³

While Christians should not argue that evolution itself causes racism, we can point out that some white supremacists will use the "science" of evolution to justify their evil racist beliefs, as they declare that some groups have evolved to become more intelligent and advanced than others.

As the acceptance of Darwinian evolution has grown, much of society has adopted a belief that the different people groups and their physical characteristics (like skin shade and eye shape) came about through the processes of evolution. No wonder many people today have racist attitudes. But it should not be too surprising when you realize that

evolution is taught as fact throughout government education systems as evolutionists teach students about different "races" of people.

Actually, the various people groups are not very different at all. The truth is that the so-called "racial characteristics" are only minor variations among people groups and make up only 0.012 percent of human biological variation. Regardless of our skin "color," we are far more alike than we are different.

Furthermore, there is only one basic skin color. There is but one major pigment, called melanin, that produces various skin shades of brown, from light brown to very dark brown. That's why we depict Adam and Eve in our Creation Museum in Northern Kentucky as middle brown.

What should we be teaching inside our churches and beyond their four walls? For one, point out the common ground of both evolutionists



A HUMAN CAGED AS A ZOO PRIMATE (SEPTEMBER 1906)

Ota Benga, along with other pygmies captured in Africa, was put on display in the anthropology wing of the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, Missouri. He was called an "emblematic savage." Two years later Ota Benga was displayed in the primate house of the Bronx Zoo in New York.

The sign placed on the zoo cage read: "The African Pygmy, 'Ota Benga.' Age, 23 years. Height, 4 feet 11 inches. Weight, 103 pounds. Brought from the Kasai River, Congo Free State, South Central Africa by Dr Samuel P. Verner. Exhibited each afternoon during September."

After protests by Baptist ministers, Ota was later released.

and creationists: namely, the mapping of the human genome concluded that there is only one race, the human race. Science has finally confirmed the Book of Acts: we are all of “one blood.”

We can’t fight racism and inequality by dividing the human population into “us” vs. “them.” What we need is a biblical—not an evolutionary—understanding of history, the human race, and the gospel. Adam and Eve were the first two people (Gen. 3:20; 1 Cor. 15:45), and since we’re all descended from them, we can all trace our ancestry back, through Noah and his family, to Adam and Eve. So everyone is our relative, our family. And we should treat each other as family.

As descendants of Adam, every one of us, no matter what people group or culture we belong to, has the same ultimate problem—sin! We’re all sinners in rebellion against God, deserving of death and on our way to a Christ-less eternity in hell.

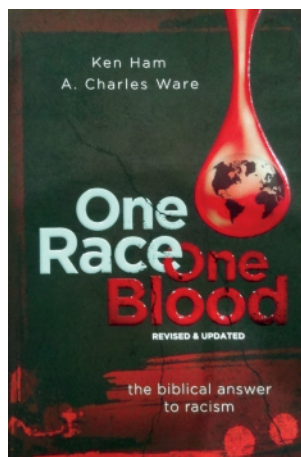
But that doesn’t have to be our fate! The God-man Jesus Christ, our relative, a descendant of Adam, stepped

into history and died on the cross. Through His death, He took the penalty of death that we deserve for us. If we repent and trust in Him, we can have forgiveness and new and eternal life. Our biggest and ultimate problem is then solved by the grace and mercy of our Lord!

It’s so important to tell people the truth about human origins—that we’re all ONE race descended from our father Adam, and so we’re all related. The answer to racism is the gospel. The gospel solves our biggest problem and brings us into the family of God. In a biblical worldview, there is absolutely no room for racism. Had generations been taught the correct account of the origins of the different people groups, racist beliefs that cause prejudice could have been greatly diminished. It’s not too late to take a bold stand on the clear teaching of Scripture that opposes the sin of racism. ■

1. Hunter, George William. *A Civic Biology*. American Book, 1914.
2. Gould, Stephen Jay. *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*. Belknap Press, 1985.
3. More about these sad accounts of racism can be found in *One Race, One Blood* by Ken Ham and Dr. Charles Ware (Master Books, 2019).

Ken Ham is the co-author of *One Race, One Blood* and the CEO of the apologetics ministry *Answers in Genesis* and its popular attractions the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter in northern Kentucky. More about these ministries can be found at AnswersInGenesis.org. Photos for this article are from the Creation Museum.



Several striking exhibits countering racism are on display at the popular Creation Museum founded by Ken Ham in Petersburg, KY.

Harmony

ON THE HILLTOP

by Larry D. Smith



Amanda Smith

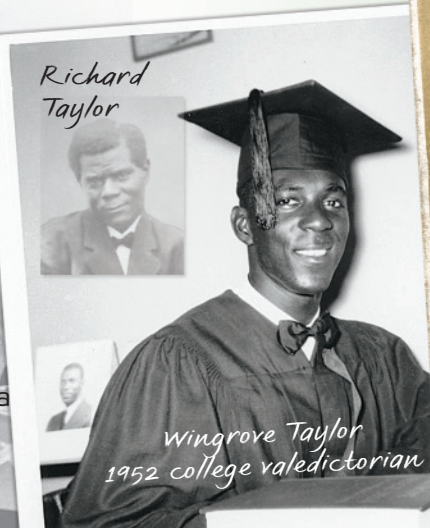
"In Christ there is no east or west, / In Him no south or north; / But one great fellowship of love / Throughout the whole wide earth."* How many times these soaring words to an old hymn have been sung by congregations at God's Bible School during this past century we shall never know. But we can be certain that its author's commitment to Jesus' holy Church as "one great fellowship of love," reaching out in hope to everyone irrespective of race, gender, economic opportunity, or even religious opinion, has been foundational to worship, work, and witness on the Mount of Blessings since Martin W. Knapp brought his little band to the corner of Young and Channing Streets in 1900.

Nor is this empty religious chatter, which like the politician's spiel is often "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," for though serious prob-

lems have sometimes plagued our corporate journey, and though intense disagreements have sometimes slowed its progress, Christian charity has characteristically soothed our differences in a spirit of loving brotherhood. After all, we believe that loving God and loving people—saints and sinners alike—is the substance of true religion; and for generations now, thousands of lonely, struggling boys and girls have found at GBS a true community of grace, which under



Alice "Mom" White



Richard Taylor

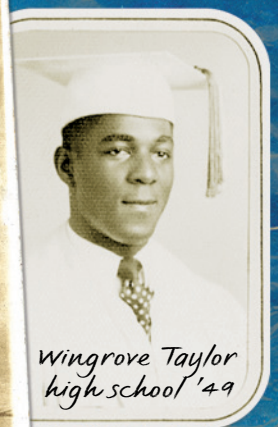
*Wingrove Taylor
1952 college valedictorian*



*Irene Blyden (Taylor) and
Minnie Ferle Knapp*



The Cowmans



*Wingrove Taylor
high school '49*

GOD'S REVIVALIST a



1908 band

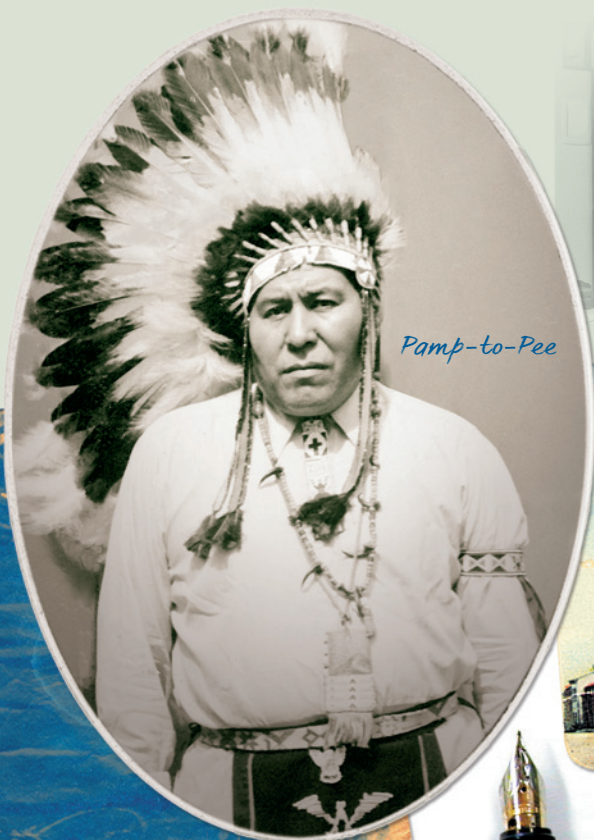
the Spirit's direction has healed their wounds, re-ordered their lives, and brought Jesus to their souls. Often their parents and grandparents have also found spiritual healing on the Mount of Blessings. All this bears witness to this central and unifying conviction that God's love binds together all who in spite of external differences welcome that love and submit to its direction. "Join hands, then, brothers of the faith, / What'er your race may be. / Who serves my Father as a son / Is surely kin to me."*

Consider, then, how this priceless spirit of Christian love has prevailed at this noble old institution under the Holy Spirit's guidance animating enlightened human leadership.

On the Mount of Blessings, for instance, racial diversity has flourished within the ennobling unity of Christian fraternity. Racial prejudice is a particularly vicious sin, offensive to God because it blasphemously insults the nobility of His creation and is offensive to that creation because it arrogantly denies the essential equality of all

humankind. Certainly it militates fiercely against Christ's great purpose to unite all men and women in common cause within the fellowship of His body, which is the Church. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Sadly, this Christian principle has been violated through the centuries by racism and all its ugly corollaries. Such was the condition of much of the culture, both secular and religious, in late-Victorian America when Knapp arrived in Cincinnati to storm the gates of hell. Holiness people hated sin, and to many of them—including the new residents of Mt. Auburn—racial snobbery was exactly that. "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

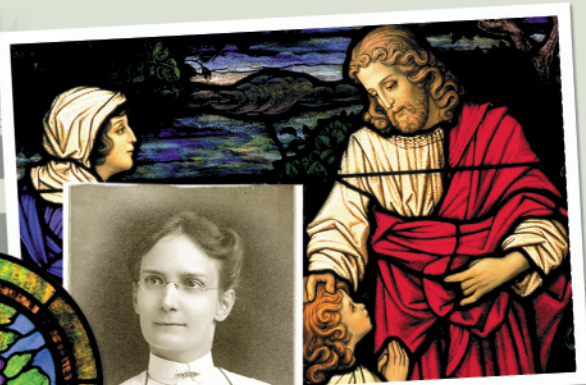
This was powerfully demonstrated seven years before GBS first opened its doors, indicating the thrust of all the Revivalist ministries, for Knapp and his colleagues welcomed Mrs. Amanda Smith, the famous Black woman evangelist, to the Pentecostal Revival Meeting and Convention sponsored by his Cincinnati Holiness League, March 7-14, 1893, at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Cincinnati. How those happy Christians must have thrilled to the joyous shouts and fiery exhortations of this extraordinary saint, beloved not only for her personal godliness and superb singing voice, but also for her forceful preaching at such interracial assemblies as many holiness camp meetings. From its beginning, GBS has also been interracial in the sense that its faculty and students have always welcomed those of every race and ethnicity, even at times when other institutions did not.



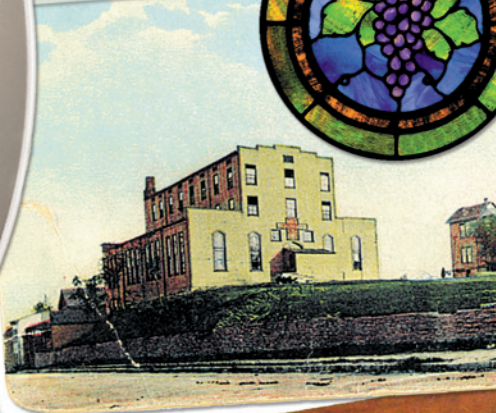
Pamp-to-Pee



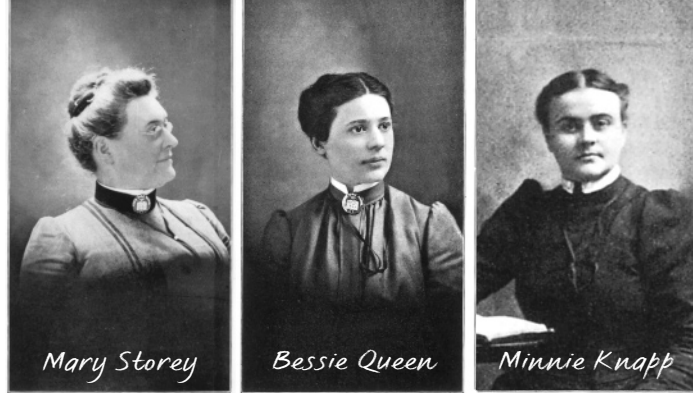
Florence Carlson



Nettie Peabody



Lucy Glenn Knapp



Our old photographs clearly demonstrate this principle of racial inclusion from the outset.

Our Christian respect and love for people of every color—though doubtless imperfect, as are all human endeavors—is powerfully evidenced by the deep affection and profound regard between the school with its constituency and a GBS alumnus, the Rev. Dr. A. Wingrove Taylor, a person of color born on the Caribbean Island of Nevis in 1923 to Richard and Irene Taylor, both formerly GBS students. In 1948, young Wingrove entered the school, graduating from its high school in 1949 and as valedictorian of his college class in 1952. For nearly a half-century he gave unsparing service as pastor, educator, and administrator to the Wesleyan Holiness Church of the Caribbean. He returned to the United States many times to hold revivals, conferences, and camp meetings, earning a reputation as an eloquent, biblical, and commanding preacher, greatly respected and admired. He loved GBS, preached from its pulpit often, served on its board of trustees for 44 years, and became widely known as the school's "favorite son." His ashes, together with those of his wife Doreen, now lie buried only a few feet from where he first arrived on campus so long ago. In remarks at the committal service, former GBS President Michael Avery quoted Dr. Taylor's claim that the school had exerted "the

greatest influence on my life, second only to family and church." The epitaph on the Taylors' gravestone notes that their "lives have impacted countless students."

GBS also exhibited profound respect for another Christian leader of a different racial heritage during a period now regarded as a highpoint in its history. This leader was Chief Charles R. Pamp-to-Pee "a full-blooded Potawatomi" Native American tribal spokesman, as well as an articulate Christian witness, who was a friend of GBS. He joined the school's highly-publicized GIs of the Cross evangelistic crusade on September 14, 1947, labeling his role in the venture as the "All-Indian Crusade." Often pictured in *God's Revivalist* in his full tribal regalia, as the school's history observes, he and his "All-Indian" associates in their jeeps and trailers "brought the gospel to Native Americans in Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Nebraska." Peace to his memory—a true hero on the Mount of Blessings.

Not only has Christian love embraced its sons and daughters of varying racial origins and ethnicity at GBS, but it has also disregarded most of the gender conflicts that at times have rent the fabric of both religious and secular institutions, giving leadership roles to women as well as men. Probably most of the early GBS constituents believed in the basic equality between the two genders, though some likely were "complementarians," insisting that God had made men and women equal before Him but had assigned them different but complementary roles in life. In any case, Knapp set a pattern of opening doors for female service and leadership. As the recently-published GBS history points out, he was deeply impressed by the ministry of Phoebe Palmer, recognized Lucy, his first wife, as his "spiritual mother," helped ordain Lettie Bird Cowman to the ministry, and upon his death left GBS



*Dedication service for the "All Indian" Crusade
Sunday afternoon, September 14, 1947*

under the control of three women, Minnie F. Knapp, Mary Storey, and Bessie Queen.

All this has set the prevailing pattern on the Mount of Blessings through the decades since. Following in the shadow of those three original women “administrative trustees” appointed by the founder, there has issued a long succession of noble Christian women who have taught in our classrooms, worked in our offices, and presided over our dormitories. Remember such saints whose names are written in heaven as Alice “Mom” White and her missionary band prayer meetings; Nettie Peabody and her triumphant faith walk; Florence Carlson and her ready editorial pen; Lavona Wood and her devout high school lessons; Jewel Brock Sparks and her absolute commitment to point her students to the lordship of Jesus Christ; Evelyn Ware and her pile of heavy ledgers. And so the succession continues—Martha Miller at her grand piano; Charlotte Frederick behind her classroom lectern, Debbie Byer beside her huge kitchen range; Sonja Vernon with struggling students; Marcia Davis over her complicated computer system; Viola Miller Durr on the Board of Trustees. To borrow a fitting term, this all represents “an endless line of splendor”—faithful women beside faithful men. All serving their faithful God.

Harmony on the Hilltop has also been beautifully illustrated by the cordial relationships between those holding differing ideas on certain subsidiary theological views, originally called *adiaphora* by the 16th-century Reformers. From its origin, GBS has committed itself to a traditional Wesleyan system of biblical interpretation firmly anchored in classical Christian orthodoxy. Within these parameters, however, there has been generous space for vigorous discussion of such matters as provision in Christ’s atonement for divine healing or the nature of His millennial reign at the end of the age. So long as “side issues” did not contradict or subvert the school’s solid doctrinal landmarks with its core emphasis on “holiness of heart and life,” they have been open to discussion. “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.”

“In Christ there is no east or west, / In Him no south or north; / But one great fellowship of love / Throughout the whole wide earth.”* How many times these soaring words have been sung at God’s Bible School we shall never know, but we are certain that their author’s commitment to the Church as “one great fellowship of love,” reaching out in hope to everyone irrespective of race, gender, economic circumstances, or even religious opinions, has been pivotal to worship, work, and witness on the Hilltop since its founding in 1900. “All Christly souls are one in Him / Throughout the whole wide earth.”* ■

* “In Christ There Is No East or West,” lyrics by John Oxenham (1852-1941), music by Alexander R. Reinagle (1799-1877).

Dr. Larry D. Smith served as a GBS instructor and editor of *God’s Revivalist* from 1995 until his retirement in 2016. He lives in Cincinnati, OH, with his wife, Carol (Wiseman) (’78 BA).

SMALL BOAT, BIG GOD!

“The first time I met her was on the wharf at St. Kitts,” reports C.O. Moulton, writing in *God’s Revivalist*, October 10, 1907. Bearing the cumbersome title “Superintendent of the Missionary Work in the West Indies and South America,” Moulton was describing Irene Blyden, “who had come over from the island of Saba, some forty miles distant in a little open boat. As she came to the wharf, she shook my hand with a hearty, ‘Praise the Lord!’ I said to her, ‘That is a small boat in which to come such a distance.’ ‘Yes,’ she replied, ‘a small boat, but a big God.’”

According to her son, Dr. Wingrove Taylor, well-known evangelist, church administrator, and long-time GBS board member, Irene was brought to Christ by “a GBS team” who “conducted the first gospel campaign known” on Saba. The “first night she heard the message of personal salvation, she responded and experienced the new birth. The team



saw great prospects in her, and thus arranged for her to enroll in God’s Bible School.” It was at GBS that she met another student from the Caribbean, Richard Taylor from St. Kitts, who was also preparing for the ministry.



“Although Saba and St. Kitts are only about thirty miles apart, there was little travel in those days. Besides, under the colonial system, Saba was a Dutch colony, while St. Kitts was under England. Mother and Father therefore met at God’s Bible School. Her work student service was in the kitchen. At one meal she was filling glasses with water. Father asked for a few drops. In the Caribbean, ‘three’ and a ‘few’ may be synonymous. Irene put exactly three drops of water in his glass.

“Father evidently did not forget the three drops of water, nor the person who dispensed them. After his graduation, which was later than Irene’s, he sought out the mischievous water server on Nevis, the sister island to St. Kitts. Leaders related to GBS had sent her there to conserve the converts of another fruitful, GBS-connected, evangelistic campaign. God was also greatly using her to expand these gains. After considerable effort on Richard’s part, Irene finally consented to marriage. The two gave all their years to the expansion and development of what became the Pilgrim Holiness Church in Nevis.”

In March 1916, Irene scheduled a series of meetings in the States to raise money and awareness for missionary endeavors. Mrs. Knapp accompanied her during the month of traveling (see photo on page eight), which began in Kentucky and ended in New York. Mrs. Knapp noted that in Kentucky “Irene was not permitted to occupy the same coach with me” due to racial segregation. —LDS ■



CHRISTMAS AT GBS

For the first time, the GBS Christmas program was presented in-full at two separate locations: the Adcock Chapel of God's Bible School and the Answers Center at The Ark Encounter in Williamstown, KY. Guests arriving for this year's campus productions, December 6 and 8, were welcomed by a live Nativity on Young Street that included a variety of animals. A tunnel of Christmas lights led visitors to outdoor fire pits and a large tent, where they enjoyed coffee and hot choco-

late. Guests attending the production at the Answers Center enjoyed both the beautiful "ChristmasTime at the Ark Encounter" and the GBS Christmas production free of charge. The auditorium was packed and special features included the LED video wall, which projected breathtaking visual images behind the choir and orchestra.

Special thanks to Ken Ham and his team of amazing people for so graciously hosting the event.

Promise, the musical drama written by Michael DeStefano and his sister Judith, traced God's promise of redemption and reconciliation from the first glimpse of hope amid the brokenness of Eden, through miraculous provision to patriarchs and prophets, to glorious fulfillment at the birth of the Messiah and His transforming work in the lives around Him. The cast totaled approximately 150 people and included members of the College Choir, Christmas Choir, High School

Choir, Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble, and drama cast. Assisting Producer Dr. Jana Pop were David Hartkopf and Tim Crater, music directors; Michael DeStefano, drama director; and support staff: Dr. Nicolae Pop, Martha Miller, Rachelle Wolf, Jessica Smith, and Dustin Muir. Each performance was well received by those who packed the 700-seat chapel on Friday and Sunday, those who joined via live-stream, and by more than 2,000 guests at the Ark Encounter.

The campus family invited many guests, including those in the community. The Handorfs were one such



REVIVALIST FAMILY

On these pages, we feature items about GBS alumni, significant events scheduled throughout the "Revivalist Family," and brief news notes from across the Holiness Movement.

WEDDING



Rachelle Wolf (HS '07, BA '11) to Michael DeStefano, December 30, 2019, in the GBS Adcock Chapel, Cincinnati, OH, with David Hartkopf officiating. Rachelle has taught in the music division at GBS since 2015. Although most of her responsibilities are in the academy (teaching general music classes and directing the three academy choirs), she also has duties in the college department. Similarly, Michael (since 2018) directs the academy's three bands and has additional du-

ties in the college department as well. The DeStefanos reside in Cincinnati, OH.

DEATHS



Mary Esther Holloway, 70, of Cincinnati, OH, passed away peacefully on Thursday, October 24, 2019. She was born on June 4, 1949, in Indiana, PA, to Miles and Ruth (Wilson) Gray. She received her degree as a Licensed Practical Nurse through the Practical Nurse Program of Canton City Schools. After working as an LPN for three years, she spent most of her life in the privileged careers of wife, mother, and grandmother. She was the wife of Wilson Holloway. After her husband passed following



family who were invited to attend during a chance supermarket encounter. They took the time to write the following: "We came to your program not knowing what to expect AT ALL! And boy, did the Lord truly bless us! It was great to worship the Lord with people who know how to present the true story of the birth of our wonderful Savior. Please tell all those who were involved how much we appreciate their service to the Lord. Their performance was a blessing—from the little girl with no lines

carrying a lantern, to all the actors/performers, the angelic voices of the choir, the beautiful music produced by the orchestra, and all the unsung heroes in the background with what they may have thought was a meaningless job. God was honored and the birth of His Son was recounted in a way that mainstream plays and megachurches won't do."

We thank all those who helped make our Christmas celebration so special. We hope that you make plans to attend next year!

ACA CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS

On Tuesday, December 17, the Aldersgate Christian Academy program was performed by academy bands and choirs. Mr. Michael DeStefano directed the bands (grades 5-12), including the record-setting Beginning Band with 22 students. Ms. Rachelle Wolf directed over 130 K-8 students in the well-loved Christmas musical, *Christmas Comes to Lone Star Gulch*, in which a hard-hearted western storekeeper learns that true change happens from the inside out, and the townsfolk celebrate what Christ brought when He came as a baby. 📖



ACA Christmas Production



his seven-year battle with cancer, Esther occupied herself by assisting others in ministry.

GBS was the recipient of two of those helpful stints. First, Esther worked as campus nurse and as an administrative assistant to the campus administrator from 2009 to 2012. As the campus nurse, Esther served in a variety of ways: helping students with health-related issues, ordering medication, making referrals to other healthcare professionals, and organizing the annual GBS health fair. In addition, her work as an administrative assistant included approving student work hours, making room reservations, filing data, keeping track of vehicle keys and fuel cards, and scheduling security, along with several other things. She returned to campus and served as the phone desk receptionist from 2016 to 2017. Clearly, she was a busy, hardworking person.

Esther enjoyed eating at her favorite restaurant, Bob Evans. She also loved to fellowship with others around a campfire, roasting hot dogs or making s'mores. Her hobbies included gardening, sewing, and reading. Her favorite GBS memories were the success of the health fairs here on campus and receiving a standing ovation from the student body for her hard work during a time of widespread sickness.

Esther is survived by her children, Beverly Warning, Christal Rogers, Lisa Slater, Todd Holloway, and Leslie Matthews; 11 grandchildren; four brothers, John, Paul, Sam, and Phillip; sister, Ruth Hosack; as well as several nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held at the Burlington Bible Church, Burlington, KY, Revs. Darrell Stetler and Andy Stroud, officiating. Interment followed at the Bay Pines National Cemetery, St. Petersburg, FL.



Dr. Howard L. Robbins, 74, of Clintonville, WV, passed away November 3, 2019. He was born on April 24, 1945, in Zanesville, OH, to Stanley and Frances (Hoadley) Robbins. In 1964, Howard married Mary Rebecca “Becky” Brock in Dayton, OH. This happy union of fifty years was blessed with a son, Howard Anthony, and a daughter, Michelle Louise.

Howard enrolled at God’s Bible School in 1963 and attended sporadically throughout the 70s and 80s. He also attended Jacksonville Theological Seminary, earning a doctorate in Christian Psychology. For 30 years he pastored various churches, mostly in Indiana and Kentucky, culminating in a seven-year pastorate at the Church of the Nazarene in Morristown, IN, after which he retired.

Howard was a loving husband, dad, grandpa, and great grandpa. He enjoyed playing softball and the guitar, and being with family. His wife Becky passed away in 2014 and Howard felt lost without her. The following year, He was united in marriage to Gloria Jean McKenzie.

Surviving Howard are his wife, Gloria; daughter, Michelle Turner-Cochran; son, Howard Robbins, Sr.; two brothers, Stanley and Douglas; sister, Yvonne Cox; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and other relatives. Funeral services were held at the Morgan & Nay Funeral Centre, Madison, IN, officiated by Dr. Howard Anthony “Tony” Robbins, Sr. Interment followed in the Grandview Memorial Gardens, Madison, IN.



Jimmy Ernest Wilcox, 83, passed away November 4, 2019. He was born April 9th, 1936, at his home in Talladega County, AL, to Jim and Lena Wilcox. He was their only son and fourth of five children. While still in high school, and in order to help support his family on their dairy farm, Jimmy began working by driving a school bus. After he graduated from Munford High School in 1954, he began working for the County of Talladega. It was also around this time that Jimmy began a four-year courtship with Sarah Maudine Crawford. They married in 1958 and enjoyed 65 years together. He moved on to work for Soderhamn, which later became Kockums Industries.

In 1983, Jimmy Wilcox and Leslie Crawford founded Woodland Parts and Service. The Lord granted them success as together they serviced the forest products industry. Jimmy retired about nine years ago.

Jimmy was a charter member of the Talladega Bible Methodist Church where he held many positions in both the church and the conference. He served on the Board of Trustees of God’s Bible School and College for 25 years. Jimmy was also a longtime member of the

Gideons International. His hobbies included gardening, tractors, cattle, and bush-hogging on the farm.

Jimmy is survived by his wife of 61 years; his son, Jimmy Mark; two grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and his sister, Jenny Ann Baird. Funeral services were held at the Talladega Bible Methodist Church, officiated by Revs. Bob Blankenship, William Snider, and Mike Avery. Interment followed at Pine Hill Memorial Park.



Jacinda LuRhe (Edwards) Stetler, 28, of Hobe Sound, FL, went to sleep and was awakened in Heaven on the morning of Friday, November 22, 2019, following injuries sustained in an automobile accident. She was born on November 24, 1990, in Winchester, IN, the daughter of Jonathan and LuRhe (Walden) Edwards.

Following her graduation with honors from Winchester High School in 2009, Jacinda attended Ball State University, graduating in 2013 with a BA in Elementary Education with an add-on license in Math and Science. True to Jacinda’s adventurous nature and perseverance, she chose as her first teaching assignment to “minister” in an inner-city school in Indianapolis (2013-15). Then she received a call to return as a teacher to the elementary school she had attended in Deerfield, IN (2015-18).

On September 1, 2018, Jacinda married Paul Stetler II (HS 1994-95). She was in the process of pursuing a graduate degree in education while working as the registrar at Hobe Sound Bible College, Hobe Sound, FL. She enjoyed traveling and singing with her husband, cooking, organizing, investing in friends, and helping others.

Those left to cherish Jacinda’s memory include her loving husband, Paul; parents, Jonathan and LuRhe Edwards; three brothers, Jesse, Jamin, and Joel; grandparents, Rachel Edwards Peters, and Don and Fayerene Walden; parents-in-law, Daniel and Joan Stetler; nieces and nephews, and a host of loving aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Funeral services were held at Hobe Sound Bible Church, Hobe Sound, FL, officiated by Pastor Matthew Ellison and Dr. Daniel Stetler. A service was also held at the Randolph Friends Church, Ridgeville, IN, officiated by Rev. Charles Stalker.



Dr. Isidro Risma, Sr. passed away on November 21, 2019. Although we were unable to get any additional information, we wanted to inform our alumni, as Dr. Risma was the GBS physician for nine years in the 1970s and ’80s. Safety and Access Coordinator Floyd Hyatt notes that Dr. Risma “took wonderful care of my wife, Virginia, during her first open-heart surgery.” In his later years, Dr. Risma returned to the Philippines. ■



Reasons to Celebrate Diversity

by Darnell Wilson

Diversity” has become a buzzword in today’s culture. Companies, organizations, and even churches know that they should be diverse. I think that’s great, but those of us in the Church tend to embrace diversity for different reasons than those outside the Church. Those outside the Church may embrace diversity because of political correctness or social pressure, but here are three reasons we in the Church embrace and celebrate diversity.

1. Because it is biblical.

That’s pretty simple! God asked us to embrace diversity long before political correctness or social pressure. In Leviticus 19:33-34, He instructs how to treat the “strangers” amongst us, saying, “But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you

as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” This would have been very controversial in the context that it was written. Tribalism, lineage, and ethnic groupings were extremely important to those in the ancient Middle East. People didn’t associate, marry, or have any sense of loyalty outside of their own ethnic enclave. For God to tell Moses to relay this message to the Israelites was countercultural on a level that most of us can’t really understand.

God was calling them—not to be nice, not to fake it, and not even just to love them. He goes a crucial step further and says treat them as though they were a native to your circle and love them with the same passion and enthusiasm that you love yourself. That’s a tough one!

In Matthew 22:36-40, the Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus into say-

ing something that would incriminate Himself theologically. They asked Him what was the greatest commandment. There are hundreds of laws in the Pentateuch, which these men would have memorized at a young age. Jesus replied, “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” But then He went on to say, “The second [commandment] is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” His implication was and is that you cannot keep the first great commandment—love God—without the second—love your neighbor as yourself.

There are no qualifiers! It just says “neighbors,” and that could be anybody. Digging deeper, I found that the word means “one who is near you.” Now that may make us uncomfortable, because there are all kinds of people near us: black people, white

people, men, women, the old, young, rich, and poor. You name them, they're near. They may not just be different from us, they may also be repulsive—difficult to love. But God is commanding us to love them. We cannot do this without God's grace. Trying to embrace diversity and love people in one's own strength inevitably ends in failure. We embrace diversity because we are called by the Word of God to love those around us, regardless. There are no modifiers or stipulations, just "love your neighbor." That's it.

Let's look at an example from the life of Jesus. In John 4, Jesus had left Judea in the south and was headed to Galilee in the north. Right in the middle of Judea and Galilee is Samaria. The Jews and Samaritans did not get along for a number of reasons. For one, the Samaritans were Israelites who had intermarried with Assyrians, and the Israelites and Assyrians hated each other and had been fighting for thousands of years. The animosity between the Jews and Samaritans ran so deep that the Jews would go around Samaria on their way to and from Judea or Galilee. They were willing to add hours or even days to the trip to avoid these people. Nonetheless, Jesus decided that He and His Jewish disciples would travel through Samaria. Tired, he stopped at Jacob's well and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink. There were at least three interesting things going on here.

The Samaritan woman was shocked that Jesus, a Jew, would be talking to her, and she said, "How are you, a Jew, talking to me, a Samaritan?" She couldn't believe it.

She was a woman, and in the ancient Middle East a rabbi or teacher would not acknowledge a woman in public, let alone approach one.

By all accounts that I've read, she was also promiscuous. Jesus said, "The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband."

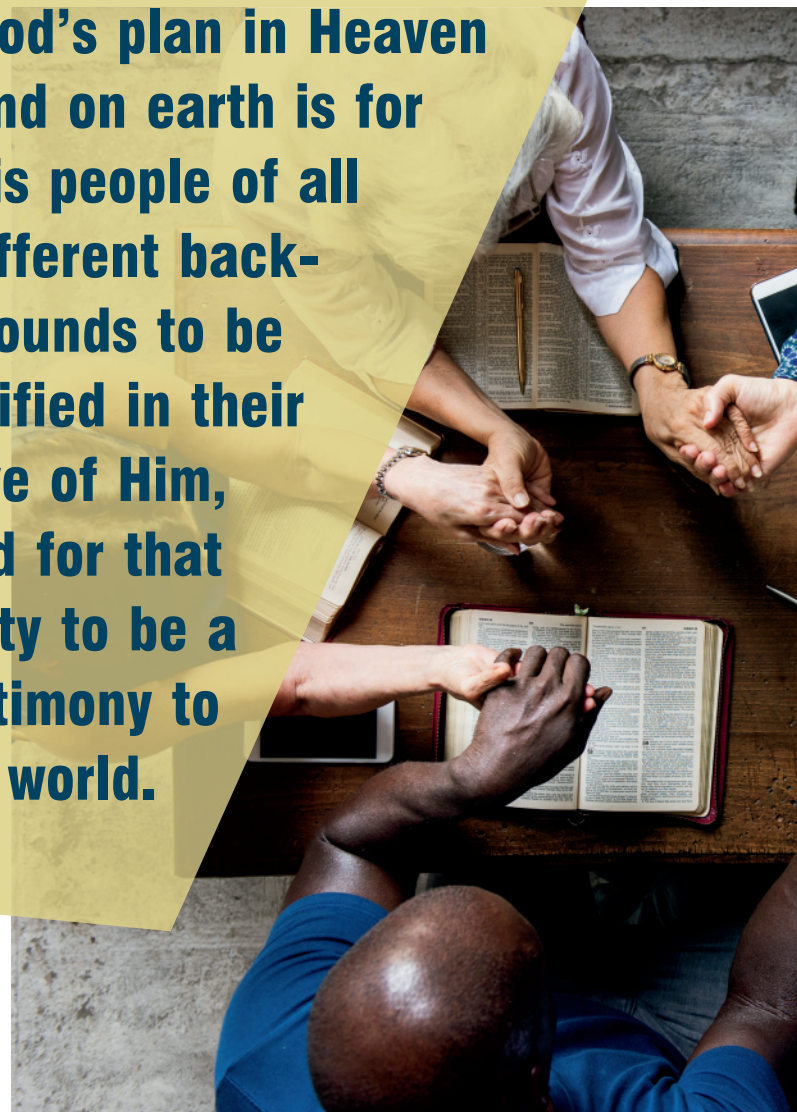
So immediately we have a racial/ethnic problem, a gender problem, and a class problem. Jesus broke serious cultural rules when He communicated with this Samaritan woman. The result was that Jesus not only converted this woman, but also many others from her town. Loving people will necessitate us crossing lines of race, gender, class, and religion. When we do, the payoff can be great. We embrace and celebrate diversity because it's biblical and it follows the example of Jesus.

2. Because failure to embrace diversity undermines the credibility of the gospel.

One of the truths of the gospel is that it is for everyone. No matter who you are or what you've done, the

gospel is for you! We undercut the credibility of the gospel if we say, "It's for everyone," but then treat people differently or with less love and respect because in some way they're different from us. We cannot have it both ways. When we say the gospel is for everyone but we don't love everyone, we are actually communicating, "While the God I serve

**God's plan in Heaven
and on earth is for
His people of all
different back-
grounds to be
unified in their
love of Him,
and for that
unity to be a
testimony to
the world.**



may love you, I do not." The bottom line? If we do not embrace diversity, we do not fully embrace the gospel.

1 John 2:2 says, "He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (NASB). We share an amazing kinship with everyone in the world—we are all born lost and in desperate need of a savior. There are no degrees of lostness based on race, gender, class, or anything else. We ALL need a savior, and that need binds us together regardless

of our differences. Yes, Jesus properly paid for the sins of the whole world! We embrace diversity because we embrace the gospel.

3. Because it makes our churches and organizations better.

Diversity makes people, and whatever organizations they are part of, more effective. When we observe the strengths and gifts of our brothers and sisters, we notice



that they are different from ours. There may be a tendency to rank them as “better” or “worse” rather than seeing all as valuable. God has strategically made us different for the purpose of glorifying Him and building up His Church. While we may be “different” than others, we can

all be on the same mission—making disciples. Whether it is being an effective team member in our church, school, or other organization, our “differentness” makes us more effective overall.

“The fact is that if you want to build teams or organizations capable of innovating, you need diversity. Diversity enhances creativity. It encourages the search for novel information and perspectives, leading to better decision making and problem solving.... Even simply being exposed to diversity can change the way you think.”*

Let me close by saying that differences, whatever they are, make us valuable and should be embraced with the knowledge that God is using our unique perspective to reach people in situations that others may never reach. Unity in diversity makes us better. While we may have those in our circles whom we admire much, we need to exercise caution. If we set them up as an object of emulation, saying, “I wish I had his gifts and abilities,” we have just robbed the Church. When we chase after another person’s gifts, we tend to neglect our own. When we neglect our own, we miss out, and so does our church, school, or organization.

Imagine brand-new visitors walking into your church. What if they saw a group of people from all different backgrounds, races, genders, and classes loving each other and living life together? That makes God look glorious, and that makes His Church look beautiful.

Diversity is a preview of Heaven. God’s plan in Heaven and on earth is for His people of all different backgrounds to be unified in their love of Him, and for that unity to be a testimony to the world.

John says in Revelation 7:9, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands.” We get this brief look into Heaven, which is absolute paradise, and we see unimaginable diversity. When we pray the line in the Lord’s Prayer, “Have Your will done on earth as it is in Heaven,” we are in fact praying for diversity, because that’s God’s will. ■

* Phillips, Katherine. “How Diversity Makes Us Smarter.” *Scientific American*, October 1, 2014, accessed online at <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>.

Darnell Wilson is the Community Outreach Director at Indian Creek Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN. After attending college at GBS he took a position at EastLake Community Church in Moneta, VA, where he did a yearlong internship in church planting. He then moved to Toronto, ON, where he served on a church plant team. Darnell and his wife Lindley live in Indianapolis, IN. Darnell is currently working toward an online degree in Bible and Theology through the GBS Aldersgate Distance Education Program.

Dear Phil

SYSTEMIC RACISM

I was wondering if you have any thoughts on the subject of systemic racism, and specifically its pertinence to the Church. —Dessi

Dear Dessi,

Before we get to “systemic racism,” let’s define racism. Racism is prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against persons because of their ethnicity. Imagine that I see a Hispanic male I’ve never met and know nothing about. If I assume he is a criminal or an illegal immigrant simply because he’s Hispanic, that is racism. Racism assumes that everyone from a certain ethnic background shares a set of negative traits. Let me be as clear as I know how: Racism is not just a social issue; it is a gospel issue. It is a sin issue. One cannot be racist and love others.

First, according to Scripture, all humans descended from Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:20; cf. Acts 17:26). Therefore, there are no different “races.” There is only one human race. Racism denies our shared identity.

Second, according to Scripture, every human person is made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27; 9:6; James 3:9). That means all humans are inherently valuable. Racism denies our shared equality.

Third, God loves all humans regardless of ethnicity (John 3:16) and provided His Son as an atonement for the sins of all humanity (1 John 2:2; 1 Tim. 4:10). That means all humans are redeemable, loved by God,

and potential members of Christ’s body. Racism denies our shared sinfulness, redemption, and sonship.

Fourth, we are called to love everyone (Lev. 19:18), even those who hate us (Rom. 12:19-20). Love assumes the best about others (1 Cor. 13:7). Racism fails to assume the best about others.

When racism is embedded into systems that unjustly discriminate against particular ethnicities, it is called systemic racism. Systemic racism may be obvious—a school district requiring all board members to be Caucasian. Or, it may be less obvious—a denomination requiring all members to tithe more than \$2,000 per year. If the only people who can’t do that come from a particular ethnicity, then the denomination has a system that discriminates against them.

The phrase “systemic racism” is often misused to explain any disparity between ethnicities. For example, raceforward.org has a one-minute video that lists a series of facts about financial disparities between whites, Hispanics, and African Americans. They (wrongly, I believe) claim that these disparities prove systemic racism. We should freely admit that systemic racism has caused ethnic disparities. We

should not, however, assume that all ethnic disparities are caused by systemic racism.

I’ve heard it said that 10:00 a.m. on Sunday is the most racist time in America. The implication is that churches that are primarily one ethnicity are essentially and necessarily racist. I’ve also heard it said that a failure to actively pursue racial integration within every church is essentially racist. I don’t believe Scripture justifies either of those claims. The human inclination to associate with those of similar interests, preferences, and beliefs need not be a function of fallen self-centeredness. Refusal to associate with those who are ethnically different, on the other hand, is sinful.

We should ask ourselves questions like: What do Scripture’s directions to love resident aliens (Deut. 10:19) imply for our views of, attitudes toward, and responsibilities to immigrants and minority ethnic populations? How could our church be more accessible and welcoming to ethnic minorities? If we find ourselves balking over having “those people” around, our hearts aren’t reflecting the Holy One who said, “You shall treat the alien who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am Yahweh your God” (Lev. 19:34).

My friends from other ethnicities have encouraged me to recognize these truths: (1) past and present racist treatment creates wounds, (2) wounded people require special care, and (3) humility learns to avoid hurtful words and ways. Caring about justice for all, especially the oppressed, and speaking the truth in love is being like Jesus! I want to be like Jesus! ■

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

ACTIVELY RELIGIOUS PEOPLE MORE LIKELY TO BE "VERY HAPPY"

According to a poll by the Pew Research Center, actively religious people in the U.S. are much more likely than those who are less religious to describe themselves as "very happy"—36% of the actively religious describe themselves as "very happy," as compared to 25% of both those who self-identify as either "inactively religious" or "unaffiliated (nones)." This 2019 Pew study linking religious practice and happiness corroborated results from earlier studies reporting similar results. Additionally, the religiously active are also more engaged socially and civically, and more likely to vote in elections and to join charitable organizations.

CHURCH IN IRAN IS GROWING

According to "Sheep Among Wolves Volume II," a new documentary by the Frontier Alliance International Studios, large numbers of Iranian Muslims are walking away from Islam and toward Christianity. It is said to be the fastest-growing church in the world and is blossoming underground with a goal of growing discipleship, not planting churches.

An anonymous church leader said that after 40 years under Islamic law, instead of a promised utopia, "they've had the worst devastation in the 5,000-year history of Iran."

MOST READ BIBLE VERSE OF 2019

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6, ESV). The popular and free Bible app YouVersion reported that this verse was bookmarked, highlighted, and shared the most among its roughly 400 million app users, leading YouVersion to call it the "2019 Verse of the Year."

Launched in 2008, YouVersion initially offered 15 versions of the Bible in two languages. At present, the app has around 2,000 Bible versions in over 1,350 languages and offers several reading plans.

ABORTION WAS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH WORLDWIDE IN 2019

There have been 42.4 million abortions in 2019 as of December 31st, according to Worldometers, an organization recognized as one of the best free reference websites by the American Library Association. It keeps a running tally of major world statistics, including abortion numbers based on the latest statistics published by the World Health Organization. The 42.4 million deaths from abortion in 2019 was more than twice the number of all worldwide deaths caused by cancer, smoking, alcohol, traffic accidents, malaria, and HIV/AIDS combined. ■

JIMMY GARCIA was born in Guatemala and brought to the U.S. when he was about 2 years old. He grew up in Dalton, GA. While at a youth camp in Pell City, AL, Jimmy "gave everything to God" and was "entirely sanctified." He also changed his plans to attend community college, asking God to work it out for him to attend GBS.

One of the reasons he was interested in GBS was because of its consortium program that allows students to take specialized non-ministry courses at other educational institutions in Cincinnati without additional expenses. He is currently working on degrees at both GBS and Cincinnati State Technical and Community College.

There are many things Jimmy wants to do after graduation, but the main goal, he says, is to do "what God wants me to do." Because of his experience, he would like to reach out to "backslidden Christians" as well as to those who are "ignorant" about what God really wants for them. ■

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

Overcoming Barriers to Intercultural Communication

by Richard G. Hutchison



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Several years ago, I was on the phone with a tech support representative trying to get a recovery disk for my laptop whose hard drive had crashed. When he told me the expected arrival date, I said, “I need it sooner than that, because I’ll be flying out to Manila in less than a week.”

“Manila?” he replied, “That’s where I am now.”

IT’S A SMALL-BIG WORLD

In many ways, our world is becoming increasingly smaller. But it is also a more fragmented world than ever before. Global migration is happening at unprecedented levels. Refugee crises are only one dimension of this. An even more significant factor today is the surge in numbers of people working outside of their home country. While these trends are bringing people closer together geographically and technologically, a wide gap remains in terms of mutual understanding.

Beneath the surface, we are often worlds apart from the very people with whom we share the same schools, businesses, hospitals, shopping malls, and social media networks. Intercultural communication can no longer be relegated to the sphere of anthropologists, missionaries, and diplomats. As ambassadors of Christ in this world,

we each have a responsibility to learn to represent Him with as much grace and truth as possible—even when this requires stretching our minds and hearts.

THE GOAL OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

In order to overcome barriers to communication between cultures, we must first clarify our goal. What is intercultural communication? Let me begin by clarifying what is the preferred way to nuance these kinds of discussions. I need to insert a caveat here. I am painting with some broad brush strokes in some of the assertions and categories below. Please read it with that in mind. We’ll leave the finer nuancing and alternative angles for another day. Now, with that out of the way, here we go....

1. Intercultural is preferable to cross-cultural.

While you will still see the term “cross-cultural” frequently in books and articles that are already in circulation, the term “intercultural” is now preferable, and for good reason. Cross-cultural implies, “I have something important to tell you, and I want to make sure that you get it.” But intercultural communication is a two-way street. We seek not only to be understood, but also to understand what others are trying to share with us.

2. Intercultural is preferable to transcultural.

Some people so desire to identify with the culture with which they are interacting that they go to the extreme of distancing themselves from their own culture while trying to become like “one of the locals.” The problem with this approach is that it is unrealistic and rarely effective. In fact, one may end up coming across as rather silly and superficial in the eyes of local people.

Intercultural communication, from a Christian perspective, is learning to become a human bridge between the culture from which you have come and the culture which you are encountering. In theological terms, we call this incarnation. And this is precisely what Jesus Christ did for us. He never ceased to be fully God—and yet He voluntarily entered our world, lived among us, and experienced life through our human senses. He became one of us.

Intercultural communication involves the whole person—not just words or superficial cultural gestures. It is the sharing of our lives with others.

BARRIERS TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Intercultural communication is not easy. For some people, it is a skill which they must work very intentionally to acquire. Even for those to whom it may come naturally, there are many barriers which still must be overcome.

1. There are the barriers within us.

One of these is the barrier of **PRIDE**. Pride manifests itself in many ways—feelings of superiority, an overly-independent spirit which refuses help from others, the desire to “save face” by avoiding vulnerable situations in which our weaknesses might be exposed—the list could go on and on.

Another barrier is **FEAR**. When we choose to enter someone else’s world, we make ourselves vulnerable at many different levels—emotionally, physically, and even spiritually. Sometimes we will look foolish to others, and even to ourselves. Many of our attempts will be awkward and unnatural.

A third internal barrier is **FATIGUE**. Intercultural communication can be mentally and physically exhausting. The human mind, amazing though it is, has a limited capacity for processing new data input from our surroundings. Those who live in a country foreign to their own, or who are otherwise heavily immersed in a different culture, are particularly susceptible to finding themselves frequently overwhelmed with sensory overload. This mental fatigue can also result in physical fatigue. I recently heard a veteran missionary refer to 8:00 p.m. as “missionary midnight.” Laugh if you like, but it’s real. However, not all barriers are internal.

2. There are also the barriers around us.

The most obvious of these is what we may refer to as **ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS**. Intercultural relationships sometimes involve sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and entire systems which are very different from what we are used to. One may encounter these things in another country, in a different section of town, or by simply visiting the home of an immigrant in your community.

There are also **CULTURAL BARRIERS**. These are less obvious and yet more challenging to overcome. Many people mistakenly think that culture is all about exotic foods, unique scenery, and hearing words spoken in a different language. But these things are only surface level manifestations of something much deeper. Cultural barriers stem from different ways of seeing the same thing. These differences find their roots in generations of shared experiences which have shaped the way in which a group of people interpret life and perceive reality.

Even less visible, and yet most significant of all, are the **SPIRITUAL BARRIERS**. Culture doesn’t exist apart from the spiritual realm. Whenever ambassadors of Christ seek to connect with other cultures in His name, we can expect that there will be spiritual resistance (Eph. 6:12).

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

Although these challenges can be overwhelming, they are not insurmountable. Effective intercultural communication is less about skills or techniques and depends much more on our attitude and relational posture. So here are a few tips that I have found to be helpful.

1. Learn to listen.

Listening is more than just a social grace which we must learn for polite company—though that would be a good starting point. Intercultural communication requires listening with all your physical senses. Learn to think and observe like a researcher. This often requires reserving judgment and interpretation, and choosing rather to look simply for “what is” in the cultural environment around you.

2. Build relationships.

As in most every area of life, intercultural communication can only be effective when it takes place within the context of relationships based upon love and trust. Without this kind of atmosphere, even the most skillful communication will be just empty words. But where mutual trust begins to take root, mutual learning and growth will also take place—and remember, that is our goal.

3. Avoid making assumptions.

This is especially important when you find yourself interacting with people from another culture. Things are not

always as they appear. Nothing will destroy relationships and freeze good communication like a look of suspicion, a judgmental attitude, or a hastily-drawn conclusion about something which we do not understand. This is not being weak. To the contrary, it is being strong enough to wait, listen, and learn before we respond to situations.

4. Develop new patterns of communication.

You don't have to be a communications expert to do this. For some of us, this requires venturing into the frightening-yet-exhilarating world of learning a new language. But we will also encounter many people whose languages we could never learn in one lifetime. Often, however, we can still speak with them using international English as a medium of communication. This means that we must adapt how we speak with others whose first language is not English.

It begins with listening to the way we say things—through the ears and eyes of someone from another culture. Do you speak too rapidly? Slow down. How do you construct your sentences during ordinary conversations?



Richard Hutchison prays at the dedication of a church in Ifugao, Philippines.

Keep them as clear and concise as possible. Don't mumble and jumble your pronunciation. Listen for key words with which your conversation partner seems to be familiar, and try to use those words rather than less common ones. Don't talk down to the other person. Just put the same amount of thought into your speech patterns as you would want them to do for you if the situation were reversed.

5. Cultivate self- and others-awareness.

This is good advice in any situation, but most especially when we are involved in intercultural settings. A related term for this is cultural sensitivity. Now, most of us probably realize that every culture has certain things which are considered taboo. I'm assuming that anyone with a little common sense will try to learn these things and avoid them. But what many people are less aware of are the subtler nuances of culture—things like body language, tone of voice, and the best ways of approaching a topic with someone. In order to learn these things, we must become more aware of how we are affecting

those around us. Do people suddenly become quiet when you speak a certain way? Do you sense a slight change in someone's countenance? Pay careful attention to these kinds of cues, and you will learn over time.

6. Never underestimate the role of the Holy Spirit.

Acts chapter two offers us a poignant reminder of how the Holy Spirit is capable of interjecting Himself into a cultural cacophony, bringing understanding, conviction, and salvation despite the overwhelming communication chasms. This is why intercultural ministry must be saturated in prayer. One time I was sharing with a Philippine church leader about my own struggles with preaching in the Ilocano language. His answer both surprised and enlightened me. While acknowledging my limitations when preaching in a second language, he said to me, "But I've noticed that when the Holy Spirit comes upon you with His anointing, you are able to communicate better." Upon reflection, I had to admit this was true. Ultimately, it is only the Spirit who can give utterance and unction to the messenger, re-




Richard Hutchison teaches at a pastors' seminar in Banaue, Philippines.

gardless of language or culture. He does so by anointing the messenger and illuminating hearts and minds with the message. Furthermore, the Spirit brings powerful assurance and conviction to those who hear it.

CONCLUSION

Intercultural communication brings many challenges. There are no simple solutions. No easy steps. No locked-in formulas that will guarantee success. But now, more than ever before, ambassadors of Christ must cultivate and acquire the skills and flexibility to communicate the good news of His kingdom in an increasingly complex cultural and social environment. ■

Richard G. Hutchison (BA '98) has been working with Bible Methodist Missions since 2010 as a missionary-educator in the Philippines, where he serves as the academic dean at the Bible Methodist Shepherd's College. Previously, he served twelve years as a pastor in Ohio and Tennessee. He is married to Sarah (Thomas) (BA '97). This article is from his blog "Culture, Sanctity, Mission."



Teaching Our Children to embrace “The Other”

by Andrew Graham

We are created in the image of Triune God (Gen. 1:27), and we reflect our Creator when we operate within the context of community. In fact, we hunger for a sense of belonging (Gen. 2:18). God made us that way!

This longing for connection is hard-wired into us as humans. Early childhood relationships shape the attachment bonds that wire our brains. As babies, interactions with others stimulate exponential growth in our brain cells. The 100 billion nerve cells (called neurons) in the brain interact with each other by firing chemical and electrical signals back and forth. The more often that two neurons “fire together” the more likely that they are to “wire together.” This process develops strong connections.

Mirror neurons are those brain cells that activate when we are observing someone else doing something (which helps to explain why you feel an urge to yawn when you see someone yawn). During the first six months of life, babies begin to learn by observing their primary caregivers. Long before children can talk, they are developing a template for future connections.

We seek out familiarity, particularly in times of distress. This provides an important function: if one of my

children were to fall and scrape his knee, I’m relieved that his immediate response is to seek out a parent, grandparent, or sibling because we are familiar—and safe. I’m glad that my children feel connected to those that they see regularly—at home, at church, in our ministry community.

Perhaps one awkward function of this brain-based bias toward the familiar is that children are simultaneously developing a bias against the unfamiliar. This phenomenon also serves a function; I prefer my young child to not accept a ride from a stranger. It’s my role as a parent to help my children to navigate the fact that those who are unfamiliar need to demonstrate trustworthiness—and yet, until they have the opportunity to do so, my children still need to see them as image-bearers, more alike than different, more kin than “other.” The lack of familiarity does not necessarily mean that they are dangerous and that even those who may be perceived as dangerous are image-bearers of God.

This concept of labeling those different from us as “other” has been around for a long time and takes different forms. We are created with a yearning for connection, but

when someone is different from us, we are slow to connect and quick to identify and focus on those differences.

We may see someone as “other” if they are from a different nationality, a different social class, a different political ideology, or a different religion. Categorizing those different from us causes us to see their differences as their primary identity. We no longer see our neighbors as image-bearers with whom to connect but as “the other” to avoid. This depersonalizing language makes it easy to endorse inequality and marginality.

This is true not only of interactions with individuals, it also applies particularly in the larger context of race. Children who only interact with people of one race are more likely to respond positively to strangers from that same race more than strangers of another race. Children who interact with people of multiple races are likely to respond equally positively to various races. And our lives are enriched when we interact with others—including those individuals and groups with which we are initially unfamiliar.

Experiences with diverse racial groups prepares children for living in an increasingly multicultural world. The more safety children feel, the more confidence they have in themselves and their surroundings. Empathy is promoted and prejudice is reduced as children relate more to those that they’ve interacted with; it’s hard to see a friend as inherently “other.” Creativity is fostered as children learn from collaborating with others with a different approach based upon their perspectives.

Providing our children with experiences that lead to those outcomes takes effort—we’ve been conditioned to stick with the familiar ourselves! Here are some practical steps that parents can take to help their children to overcome this idea that those who are different should be viewed as “the other” rather than as an ally.

- Seek out multicultural experiences as a family. As your children are introduced to diverse groups in the safety of your company, they will feel free to explore new relationships with those who are different from them.

- Focus on the things that you have in common with those of different races rather than focusing on the differences.
- Be respectful in your language, avoiding labels that unnecessarily categorize and jokes that ridicule.
- Be respectful in your actions, careful not to seem standoffish when engaging with those of a different race.
- Redirect your child if they respond to someone from another race in a way that demonstrates that they’ve taken an “other” posture toward them based on their racial differences.
- Advocate for those who are seen as “the other” in your own community and context, speaking out against policies that maintain group-based advantages and marginalize those who are not members of the dominant group.

We are social beings, made for reciprocating relationships. While we connect most readily with those who share our group identity, our experiences are richer when we push past the draw toward familiarity and embrace “the other” as fellow image-bearers worthy of connection. Throughout his letter to the church in Galatia, Paul admonishes his readers to move beyond ethnic labels that divide, perhaps best encapsulating this point in Galatians 5:14: “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” ■

Dr. Andrew Graham is a licensed mental health counselor, nationally certified counselor, and board-certified professional Christian counselor providing professional counseling and consulting from a Christian perspective. He serves as the Chair of Counseling at Hobe Sound Bible College and as a faculty member in the God’s Bible School and College Graduate Program. Dr. Graham and his wife Lisa live in Hobe Sound, FL, with their 8 children.





50 YEARS LATER: A FORMER GBS STAFF MEMBER REFLECTS ON THE 1970 ASBURY REVIVAL

by Robert (Bob) Bickert

I enrolled at Asbury College right after high school in 1956 and took two years in pre-med. While waiting on additional direction, I worked for three years—a year with my grandfather, a bi-vocational pastor who had a furnace and home decorating business in Mason, MI. I learned how to paint and hang wallpaper, skills that would prove helpful throughout my ministry. Then I worked for two years as the order department manager of the largest Christian bookstore on the Suncoast—Florida Christian Supply Company in St. Petersburg, FL. There I learned the importance of Christian literature, book sales, and radio ministry, as the store had a weekly radio broadcast.

Then God sent me to Owosso College in Owosso, MI, for my jun-

ior year. This was 30 miles from home, allowing me to return home on weekends to work with my mother and grandfather. My mother rented a stall space at the Lansing City Farmer's Market, just ten miles from home, selling our farm-fresh eggs. My grandfather decided to also rent a stall beside her. He sold 78 varieties of German sausages, breads, and cheese, attracting many German residents. Speaking some German also helped him to establish a strong customer base. However, due to his age, he wanted to sell. I purchased his business that provided a good income for Saturday sales and helped pay for my college expenses.

In the fall of 1961, during my first week at Owosso College, I met Carolyn (Kay) Reese as we both attended the same midweek mission prayer band. I had been praying for a missionary companion since my high school days, so she immediately caught my attention. It helped that she was also the campus missionary society president. We shared a class in abnormal psychology that first semester.

Since Kay was also needing financial assistance, I hired her to work with me at the Market on Saturdays. That provided a valuable means for us to get well acquainted. Watching Kay work with customers was a great way to check out how well she related to others, an indicator of her mission-readiness. She passed the test!

Our first date was the campus Valentine's banquet. It was nearly our last. There were containers at the table filled with candies that had sayings printed on them. I selected ones saying, "Marry me," "Kiss me," "Hug me," and "I love you," and moved them over to Kay. She was shocked that I would be that forward. She immediately decided that there would be no more dates. I didn't know this and kept asking her for another. She refused several times. But she later told me that when she knelt to talk to Jesus, my face always came before her. Thus, she slowly came to realize that God wanted her to accept another date. So, on March 22, I invited her to go with me to Spring Arbor, MI, to hear Bob Pierce speaking at Spring Arbor College, about a 90-minute drive south. She consented. On the way there, I went by our farm so she could meet my mother, and also stopped in Mason to meet grandfather Wiegman. I introduced her to him by saying, "Grandfather, I want you to meet the girl I am going to marry." Kay said she knew that evening that we were to be together. She felt very comfortable with me. What a wonderful evening!

Our dating experiences involved hard work and lots of fun on those working weekends. We married September 1, 1962, and moved back to Wilmore, KY, to finish college at Asbury.

Kay was a senior that fall, but I worked that year as we did not have



Kay and Bob, GBS 2004-05



Bob assists GBS student Eric Stanbery in the library



A more recent photo of Bob and Kay

funds for both of us to attend. That summer we were expecting our first child, and our car picked an inopportune time to just “give up.” The good news was that Wilmore was a walkable little community, and we lived only two blocks from campus.

Along with a friend, I began a painting business and ended up working mostly for a builder who was constructing high-end homes in new subdivisions on the south end of Lexington—about a 20-minute drive from Wilmore.

The second year, I reenrolled at Asbury, beginning my senior year. I worked afternoons and Saturdays at Wilmore Record and Supply in downtown Wilmore, a lead that I had received while working at the Florida Christian Supply Company. Not only did I work in the store, but I also was its sales representative for church supplies when visiting churches in the Lexington area.

I usually rode my bike to school and work. However, sometimes I walked, since we lived so close to campus and only a short distance from my work downtown. Kay had decided to postpone her student teaching, as the baby was due in

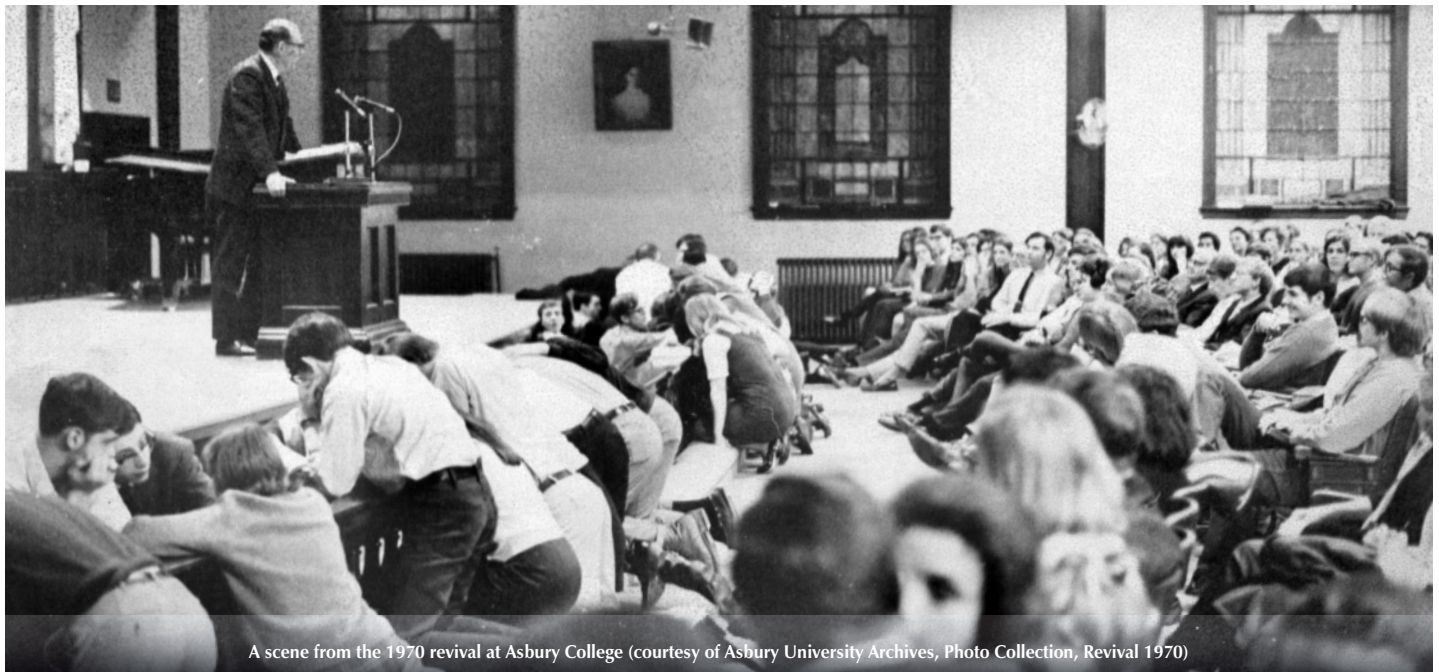
November. It was during the second semester, spring 1964, that she began her supervised teaching experience at Wilmore Elementary, also within a 20-minute walk. Lots of lessons on faith were learned in those first two years of marriage.

We both graduated in 1964, Kay with a BA in Elementary Education and I with a BA in History and Sociology. After graduation, Kay began teaching. Thankfully, now funds were not as tight. We were able to get another car. I moved from Asbury College to Asbury Theological Seminary and continued my education by working on an MDiv. I also began pastoring Trinity Community Church, which was located about ten miles from Wilmore in the same community where Kay had taken a position teaching 3rd and 4th grade. In fact, we picked up some of those students for Sunday school. This continued for two years—until I had completed two graduate degrees at ATS: Master of Divinity in 1968 and a Master of Theology in 1969. By that time, we had accepted a missionary assignment to the Philippines and needed some place to wait until our visas were approved. So we re-

turned to Williamston, MI, and lived with my mother until our departure.

It was while we were in this holding pattern at Williamston that we received word that on February 3, 1970, a revival started in the Hughes Auditorium at Asbury College and was continuing non-stop, day and night. The college dean had been scheduled to speak in that chapel service but felt led to invite people to give personal testimony instead. Many on campus had been praying for spiritual renewal and were now in an expectant mood. Soon there was a large group waiting in line to speak. A spirit of powerful revival came upon the congregation. The chapel was filled with rejoicing people. Classes were canceled for a week during the 144 hours of unbroken revival, but even after classes resumed on February 10, Hughes Auditorium was left open for prayer and testimony.

Warren Bolthouse, the founder of Family Life Radio at WUNN in Mason, MI, had announced earlier in the week that someone had called the station to report that a revival had broken out at Asbury, and he asked anyone who had



A scene from the 1970 revival at Asbury College (courtesy of Asbury University Archives, Photo Collection, Revival 1970)

more information to call the station. Well, I had had several phone calls from friends who shared the news of the revival, especially a college classmate of mine who still lived there and was attending the services. So I knew some of the story. Mr. Bolthouse contacted me and arranged for me to tell the story over the phone from our home. The call was carried live over the radio. Shortly after that, I received an invitation to go to Michigan State University and share what I knew with a campus group—InterVarsity, as I recall.

When we received our visas, we left Michigan and began the long trip westward to California to board a Filipino freighter. On the way, however, Kay and I stopped in Wilmore and were able to attend a night service in Hughes Auditorium. Although the meeting had gone on 24-7 for eight days, meetings were still in progress weeks later. I have a recorded tape with students sharing their testimonies.

When Kay and I finally arrived in the Philippines, we did so with a confidence that God could and would revive spiritually dead or dying people and restore broken relationships. We shared the account of the revival with others, including students at the Bible college in Kabacan, Mindanao Island. Later, when I was elected to serve as president of this institution, I stressed the importance of prayer with the campus family. What ensued was a spirit of prayer that brought a marvelous atmosphere of continuous revival on campus, with students leaving a class prayer meeting to go to another class to ask another student for forgiveness, which in turn sparked a spirit of confession and prayer in that classroom. We saw God at work in wonderful ways, but this came as no surprise. It was what was expected to happen in obedience and prayer, based on the Asbury Revival experience.

Yes, the 1970 Asbury Revival began in a 50-minute chapel service that turned into 144 hours of revival services without a break. No classes. Intermittently, it continued for weeks. Some 2,000 witness teams went out from Wilmore to churches and at least 130 college campuses around the nation. Ultimately, it spread across the United States and into foreign countries. Some say it is being felt even today. I am one of those.

Dr. Robert and Kay Bickert were career missionaries in the Philippines with Global Partners (The Wesleyan Church) for 22 years. Even after their retirement in 2004, they have continued ministry as adjunct teachers in other countries (e.g., Cambodia, Philippines, Jamaica) and in undisclosed locations for “underground” Bible colleges. They were both on staff at GBS: Bob as college faculty member teaching missions, Bible, and evangelism (1987-90, 2004-05); Kay as Dean of Women (1987-89). ■



by Sonja Vernon

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”

—Luke 10:27 NASB

Read on in Luke 10 and you will hear a young lawyer ask Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” I’m pretty sure I know what was going through his head. “Loving others as I love myself is a huge requirement. Surely this must only include a small group of people like me.” But then Jesus blindsides him with a parable that breaks all the stereotypes, a narrative that challenges his worldview and rocks his preconceived ideas. In this story, Jesus shows him that race, lineage, status, religious affiliation, education, etc., have nothing to do with the classification of “neighbor.” We are called to show mercy and compassion to all who need it...no matter who they are. In the creation story, God clearly tells us that all humankind is made in His image. Human life is sacred and intrinsically valuable simply because of the image stamped upon it. This leaves no room for any “ism” that places one group above another. Look around at God’s creation. God delights in diversity! We are not all the same, and God said that is good! Part of loving our neighbor is enjoying and celebrating both our differences and our similarities. It is listening to stories of those unlike us. It is learning from their experiences and allowing the things that could divide to draw us instead into something much greater than ourselves. Who is my neighbor? Anyone who bears the same image I bear, the likeness of his or her Creator. ■

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

COLLEGE CHOIR LATE-WINTER TOUR

Thursday, February 20 | 7:00 PM
Talladega Bible Methodist Church
120 Brecon Access Road
Talladega, AL 35160
(256) 589-3188

Friday, February 21 | 7:00 PM
Faith Bible Church
14461 US Highway 11 North
Coaling, AL 35453
Nathan Brown
(205) 497-1944

Saturday, February 22 | 7:00 PM
Avon Park Holiness Camp
1001 West Lake Isis Avenue
Avon Park, FL 33825
(1200 block of US Hwy 27 North)
Office: (863) 453-6831

Sunday, February 23 | 10:00 AM
Light and Life Free Methodist Church
5730 Deeson Road
Lakeland, FL 33810
Rev. Chuck Frankenfeld
Office: (863) 858-6361

Sunday, February 23 | 2:30 PM
Florida Holiness Camp
3335 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803
Dr. Ted Lee, President
(863) 646-5152

Monday, February 24 | 7:30 PM
Easley Bible Methodist Church
855 Gentry Memorial Highway
Easley, SC 29640
Pastor Jonathan Slagenweit
(864) 395-7247

College Choir

GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE

