

GOD'S REVIVALIST

April 2024

and Bible Advocate



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GBSC
CINCINNATI



thinking out loud

IT'S ALL ABOUT STUDENTS

In my November 2023 column, I wrote that your prayers are critical for the success of GBS. I suggested that you go beyond briefly mentioning GBS in prayer to praying for the various departments and their respective responsibilities. In this installment, I will focus on prayer suggestions for several departments that work to bring students to GBS and help them to be successful while here.

Enrollment Services is headed by Vice President Dr. Matt Hallam. He and his team of recruiters are very creative in finding and staying in touch with prospective students. The team is involved in many campus events, posting photos and updates on social media to give prospective students a glimpse into GBS activities. Pray that God will help this team make the right contacts and have the right programs and incentives to assist students in coming to GBS.

Public Relations, under the direction of Rev. Duane Quesenberry, schedules various student musical groups for churches, camp meetings, and conventions. Duane works alongside Enrollment Services and the Music Division to make sure that GBS is represented well. When our current students are out meeting the public, they are our best PR reps! Pray for all involved in this process.

Our academic programs are designed to prepare students for their callings. For many, this means full-time Christian ministry. Others want to become better grounded in biblical truth in order to be a good Christian witness no matter what vocational path lies ahead. Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Aaron Profitt, along with the divisional chairs and the Academic Committee, have a responsibility to make sure the degrees being offered adequately prepare students. Pray that God will keep GBS staffed by professors committed to this purpose. Pray that scholarships and grants will continue to be accessible to our students.

Each GBS student is unique. Some struggle being away from home. Some come with emotional baggage. We are thankful for the effectiveness of those working in Student Affairs, including Vice President Sonja Vernon, the social deans, and the resident advisors. All are committed to helping students be successful academically, spiritually, and emotionally. Pray that the staff will be sensitive to opportunities for coming alongside struggling students, praying with them, and helping them through difficulties. —KF ■

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God's Bible School and College seeks to glorify God and to serve His Church by providing higher education centered in Holy Scripture and shaped by Wesleyan conviction, thus preparing faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

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COVER and PAGE 2 PHOTO: Lori Yoder

the president's page



WHAT IS A BIBLE COLLEGE?

by Dr. Rodney S. Loper, President

Recently I found myself seated on a plane headed to my next engagement. As usual, I started casually chatting with the person next to me—you know, the normal stuff. Where are you from? Where are you going? What type of work do you do? Etc. I knew this opened the door for him to ask me these same questions. Sure enough, it wasn't long until he asked, "What do you do for a living?"

I am always in a quandary about how to answer that. I am a minister, and I'm not ashamed of that, but I am also a college president. So, I normally start with what I am currently doing. Before I am done, I am prepared for the next question. It is always the same: "Where?"

If you are not an alumnus of GBS, you might not understand the typical response to my answer. Being an alumnus, I expected the follow-up question, which did indeed come.

"Where? Did you say God's Bible School and College?"

I meekly responded, "Yes," hoping to move on. My hopes were dashed. "Isn't that a bit arrogant? ...I mean, **God's** Bible School?"

Most of us know the story, but, to the casual observer, it is a bit odd to have such a name. Hearing it for the first time leaves most a bit confused.

"So, is that some kind of monastery? A school for priests? What is a Bible college?"

I recently was invited to make a presentation at the annual ABHE conference in Orlando, Florida, (see "News from the Hilltop" p.12) and the session tried to address this very question, "What is a Bible College?" Let me share a few of my thoughts from that presentation.

Bible College Is a Spiritual Enterprise

If you google “Bible college,” you will get results that suggest the query is about a college that has biblical integration in its classes, has specific Bible classes that all students are required to take, and has a spiritual emphasis, not just in its academics, but also in all aspects of campus life. These things are true, but I believe they miss the core. Information dissemination is important, but what we really desire is the integration of this knowledge or experiences into our students’ lives. I often tell parents who are considering GBS for their children that our greatest motivation is being a spiritual incubator for young people. It is a safe place for students to begin the difficult process of making decisions on their own and applying what they have learned to their personal lives. Because of this emphasis and the campus environment, many of our alumni report that they grew at a greater rate while enrolled at GBS than at any other period of their life.

There are things we have intentionally designed to encourage this kind of growth: chapel services, revival services, prayer meetings, discipleship groups, evangelism efforts, mission trips, the Bible core of our curriculum, Christian service requirements, and social requirements. All of these combine to create a spiritual enterprise. Is it perfect? No, but it far exceeds what is available at a secular college. The GBS campus is located near several major universities, and it is abundantly evident that the things we value are not valued at those institutions.

Spiritual Growth Requires Spiritual Food

While all of this is good and necessary, the old adage is true: “You can take a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink.” While most of us as parents would love to make some of these decisions for our children, we simply cannot. So what can be done to create spiritual hunger in them? Let’s consider similarities between spiritual and physical hunger.

Experts suggest that you think about food. When you cultivate these thoughts, you create mental pathways that may generate your appetite. This isn’t a foreign idea to Christianity. We are encouraged often in Scripture to center our minds on Scripture, on Christ, and spiritual things. Everything we do at GBS is anchored in this. The classroom, the chapel, and connections with faculty, staff, and fellow students create a rich environment for thinking about spiritual hunger and growth.

While I have never struggled to have an appetite, I have read about those who do. Experts suggest that being in an environment where food is present may in-

crease one’s appetite. Simply thinking about food is not good enough. One needs to get into an environment where food is present. Spiritual food is abundant on the GBS campus.

Experts also suggest if/when your physical appetites wane, make mealtime a social event. We have often heard that churches should be more than social clubs, but I believe we are missing an essential component of the church if we abandon social activities. In fact, Acts 2:42 includes “fellowship” as one of the marks of the early Church. May I be so bold as to state that if your local assembly is missing “fellowship,” you should rethink how you do church. There are many social events at GBS. We enjoy life! We encourage our students to enjoy life! Social events need not be separate from spiritual events, but supportive of them. Rather than “either-or,” it is “both-and.”

Leaders Can Encourage Spiritual Appetite

There are things that leaders can do to encourage spiritual appetite. First, I would encourage you to BE AUTHENTIC. Own your mistakes! Don’t make excuses for yourself. Learn to say you are sorry and learn to use your reverse gear. The appetites of many have been ruined because their leaders refused to be authentic. While I think that many folks have used the phrase “if that is what Christianity is, I don’t want it” as an excuse for their own rebellion, I do believe failures by leaders can also cause others to become disillusioned along the way.

Next, PARTICIPATE IN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES alongside those you lead. Pray alongside them. Sing. Give testimony. Let them know that you are in this with them. You are not on some spiritual pedestal—you, too, are learning, living, and growing in your relationship with Christ.

As the leader of GBS, my job is far beyond making the day-to-day business decisions that are necessary for our viability. While a focus on buildings, budgets, organizational structure, and personnel are essential to a well-run organization, my number one focus isn’t being the CEO of GBS but rather a SHEPHERD. This is my greatest responsibility. If I fail here, I have truly failed. Each person, whether student, staff, faculty, administrator, stakeholder, or vendor of GBS is a person made in the image of God. If my first thought isn’t their spiritual well-being, I have missed my highest calling: “For me to live is Christ....”

So, the next time someone asks about a “Bible college,” take a breath and share with them the beauty of allowing Christ to be integrated into all areas of your life. Don’t be surprised when they say, “I wish my kids would have attended a college like that.” A feast awaits at GBS. ■



IT NEVER GETS OLD

by Andrea Sanborn

Winter's ice is softening around the edges of the lakes now, the white giving way to dappled gray as the first of the geese make their way home. Death is ceding ground to life in the lakes and woods. The sap is running in the maple trees, and birds are showing up at the feeders outside my window.

I remember another spring day; a day when hope first blossomed in my soul. The day when Jesus found me. My heart softened like the spring woods as new life struggled up inside me, longing and wonder reaching toward the light. That moment—that memory—never gets old.

I shrug on flannel and boots, step outside to breathe the cool air, feeling the sun warm my head, my face in these woods on the edge of awakening. “How can it be?” I ask myself. Fifty years down the narrow path, it hasn't lost its wonder. I barely remember the “before” that defined my “after,” the B.C./A.D. line that divided my life, and yet I remain captivated at the miracle of being sought and found.

My conversion was a simple one, perched on a log there by Strawberry Creek. The transformation, not so much. The steps leading from there to here are as convoluted as any, I suppose. And yet here I am, five decades later, still in awe of it all. In awe of Him—the One who saw me. Who loved me. Who loves me still.

I tell my story again, and tears press hard in gratitude. I am fifty years into this great adventure, still run-

ning, eagerly stretching toward the goal, seeing the finish line inch ever closer as the gray hairs overtake the brown in my bathroom mirror. I open my Bible to a familiar passage, the page marked and underlined from dozens, perhaps hundreds, of past readings, and draw in a breath. There—why have I never noticed it before? A simple, yet transformative, truth catches my eye. This book, living and active—it never gets old.

Decay is the way of life on this planet. Spring marches on toward winter. Bodies slow. Flowers wilt and wither. But faith is a rebellious offering in a fading world, its heartbeat strengthening as the shadows lengthen, the miracle of it all growing only more precious.

The snow starts falling again. It has been a long, hard winter up here in the North woods. But this new layer of white will be short-lived, as the earth tilts ever more imperceptibly toward the sun, bringing warmth and life even now struggling to the surface under the ice. And I sense the day coming when faith will be sight and I will break free from winter's grip on my soul with laughter, into a spring of everlasting daffodils shining in the sun.

Into a place that never gets old. ■

Andrea Sanborn is an author and blogger who writes about the beauty of faith and the God who loves beyond reason. This post from andreasanborn.com is used with permission.

CHOICES AT LIFE'S CROSSROADS

My Journey of Faith

I grew up in a devout Christian home with my family attending church on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday night. In addition, there were a couple of ten-day revivals and two holiness camp meetings we attended each year. My father led us in devotions each day by first reading from a devotional book, then the associated biblical passage, and concluding by asking each family member to pray.

While I was in church a lot, I hesitated to surrender my life to Christ's Lordship. It was not so much that I rejected Christ, as it was that I associated being a Christ-follower with the rule-keeping of a conservative holiness church and not with discipleship.

When I was in the eighth grade, one Sunday evening following an altar call, I went forward and asked Jesus to come into my life and, for the first time, experienced Christ as a reality. I experienced the peace, joy, and happiness of having Christ living

GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE

JOE C. BROWN



within me. Sadly, a couple of weeks later, on the school bus, I used language that a Christian should not use and experienced an inner condemnation knowing I had grieved the Lord. However, instead of repenting of my sin, I continued down the path that alienated me from Christ throughout my high school years.

The transformation in my life came while I was a freshman studying engineering at a university. During the spring quarter, I became restless and began to sense a growing emptiness. A question kept troubling me: "What is my purpose in life?" I know now that it was the convicting work of the Holy Spirit that awakened me to what theologians often call the God-shaped vacuum in the human heart that only God can fill. The "Hound of Heaven" was chasing me.

I was living in a men's dormitory and had just begun the spring quarter. I was dating my future wife who was the preacher's daughter. Consequently, on the weekends, I attended the church where her father was pastor.

After a week of extreme restlessness and struggling with a growing emptiness inside of me, by Sunday afternoon I came to the awareness that I was missing God in my life. Throughout that afternoon I wrestled with which path to choose. Would I continue down the path of selfish living, hardening my heart to God, or turn to Him in repentance?

That Sunday night after the service I stood at the back vestibule of the church deliberating whether I should repent and ask Jesus into my life or continue resisting His call. As they began turning off the lights, I made the decision that I would seek peace with God and asked a couple of men standing near me if they would pray with me. We went to the altar, and I prayed a simple prayer asking Jesus to forgive me for my sin and rebellion

and invited Him to come into my life as my Lord and Savior. The result of that two-minute prayer was profound and transformative.

That evening I was filled with joy, freedom, wholeness, and a peace that I did not know was possible for a person to experience. My world seemed so calm and at peace. I was born anew!

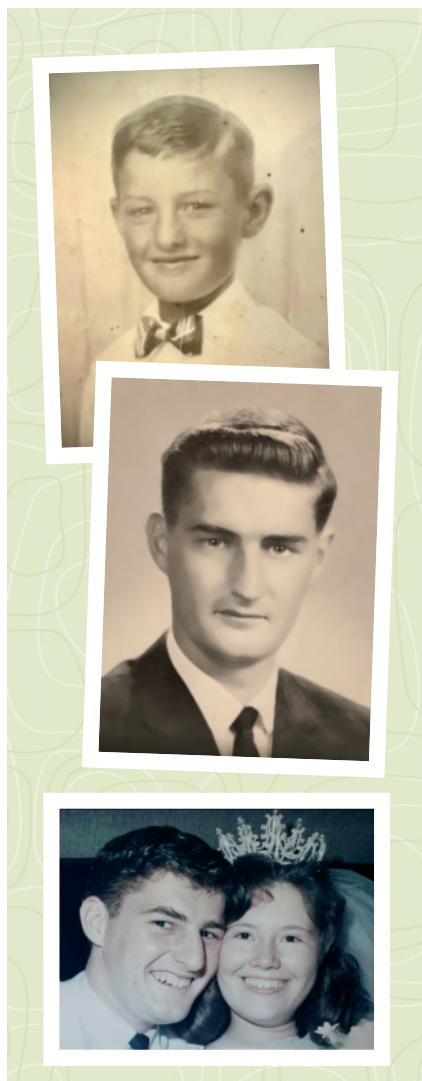
While those who prayed with me that Sunday evening likely didn't sense anything extraordinary and most likely didn't go home and tell anyone that Joe Brown got saved tonight, the transformation in my life was profound.

Within a few days, I began to experience a strong desire to talk with the Lord. The only way I could find an uninterrupted time for prayer was to slip away each evening during the dinner hour while my roommate and friends were socializing in the cafeteria. After quickly eating, I would go to my dorm room and talk with the Lord. My prayer time soon became the very best time of the day for me.

My roommate and friends at college began to remark about the change they saw in my life. People at church also noticed a change as I experienced the joy of my newfound walk with the Lord. I had answered the upward call and was experiencing abundant life in Christ as I walked in fellowship with Him.

Two years later, after I was married and finishing my junior year of engineering school around the same time of the year, I was in church for a Sunday evening service. A guest preacher spoke that evening and gave a simple invitation at the end of his message. I experienced a strong inner urge to go forward and pray.

I knelt in about the same place at the altar where I had knelt three years before when I gave my life to the Lord. That night at the altar the Lord spoke to me as clearly as



TOP TO BOTTOM: 1st grade; college; with Carol on their wedding day; the Brown Family during Joe's time as academic dean of GBS.



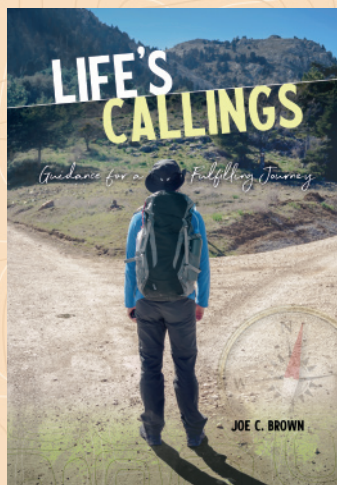
anyone has ever spoken to me. He first asked if I would be willing to forego my aspirations in engineering to follow His pathway for my life. My walk with the Lord was strong and vibrant and I didn't want anything to hamper my relationship with Him. So, it was not difficult for me to say yes to the Lord.

The Lord spoke to me a second time that night at the altar and asked me something that I didn't see coming. He simply asked me, "Will you preach for Me?" The Lord's question to me that night stunned me. I had not thought about being a preacher.

While I enjoyed mathematics and science and did well in those subjects, I was not a public speaker. I would do almost anything to avoid speaking in public—that was not in my wheelhouse of gifts. However, the Lord's call that night became the guiding light for my career.

Once my pastor learned the Lord had called me to the ministry, he asked me to preach. I was scared. Eventually, he coaxed me into speaking at a Sunday evening service. I wanted to preach, but I was afraid. The closer we got to that Sunday evening service, the more I panicked. I can remember the days leading up to that service when I was desperately hoping the Rapture would take place and deliver me. At the same time, I wanted to see, if I just opened my mouth, whether or not the Lord would fill it with words.

That didn't happen, and my first sermon lasted about ten minutes! The pastor took over following my sermon, complimenting me and further developing a couple of points about my topic. The only thing I remember about his remarks was that he told the congregation, "They say a rooster is a rooster the first time he crows, and I guess you can call a preacher a preacher after the first time he preaches."



Life's Callings: Guidance for a Fulfilling Journey by Joe C. Brown
(2022 Westbow Press)

"The idea for the book was born while I was directing an extension for Nazarene Bible College. I began researching the call to ministry and interviewing students about their callings. This led me to a broader understanding of how our Creator calls us to our work. The second part of the book focuses on how the Lord communicates His calling to us."

Available in hardback, paperback, and E-book editions through www.westbowpress.com, Amazon.com, or joecraigbrown.com.

Because the call was so real and my experience that night at the altar so powerful, I knew that to have any level of success in ministry, I needed a lot of training. That summer I transferred from engineering school to Bible college. With the help of the Lord and a lot of effort on my part, I was determined that somehow I would make it in ministry.

Following my experience that night, I devoted my life to answering the call to ministry. There have been times of hardships and challenges. Several of those times I hope are never repeated. While I don't want to go through those experiences again, I would not take any amount of money for the invaluable lessons the Lord has taught me during those periods. I have learned that He is faithful and never leaves or forsakes us!

As I look back over my journey of faith following my experiences at the altar, my heart overflows with gratitude for God's marvelous grace. He called me away from the limited vision I had for my life to His greater purpose. Yes, there have been sacrifices that I've been called to make. But when God asks us to make a sacrifice for Him, He always gives back more. And, as Stanley Tamm has so aptly observed, God's shovel is always bigger than ours. ■

Dr. Joe C. Brown has been active as a Bible college professor, chief academic officer, and pastor for 54 years. He served at GBS as professor (1976-88) and academic dean (1980-88). He subsequently served as the chief academic officer at Vennard College, University Park, IL (1989-92) and Ohio Christian University, Circleville, OH (2000-13). In his "retirement," Dr. Brown has stayed active teaching and preaching, writing a book (*Life's Callings: Guidance for a Fulfilling Journey*) and starting another, and developing two online Bible reading programs which he continues to oversee. Joe and his wife Carol live in Circleville, OH.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

The John Newton story was great (three-part series, October, November, December GR 2023). We always enjoy the editor's stories and wish him well.

PHYLLIS FORD
Maryville, TN

Just want to let you all know how much I appreciated the January/February issue of *God's Revivalist*. President Loper's call for unity was spot-on and so, so needed. "Thoughts for the Quiet Hour" by your Vice President for Student Affairs also addressed a growing need for true disciples. Inculcation of the written Word is imperative if we are to thrive in a deceptive age.

GEORGE VERNON
email

In the November issue, the editor asked us to pray for various specific needs of GBS. May I suggest you come up with a bookmark with 30 briefly-stated different prayer needs—one for each day of the month—and make it available to *God's Revivalist* subscribers. We could place it in our Bibles or other books and pray for a need a day.

ASA SHERMAN
Homer City, PA

Editor's response: Thanks for your recommendation. We will give that and similar possibilities serious consideration. See the second set of suggestions for prayer on page 2 of this issue.

I thoroughly enjoyed the edition on conversion (March 2024). Thank you for bringing light into my life each month. May our LORD be with you.

JAY SHUCK
email

Thinking of God's Bible School and glad for the impact it has for God. We enjoy receiving *God's Revivalist* and find it encouraging and informative.

PAUL & DEBORAH LANGSTAFF
Oil Springs, ON, Canada

out of darkness into light

CONVERSION STORIES

MY ANSWER IS STILL YES

by Janet Albertson

The first time I remember praying to be saved was when I was in first grade. My siblings and I must have been very naughty that day, and our family devotions and prayer time were convicting. We all prayed to be saved. I remember going to sleep feeling so forgiven.

I thought I was a Christian from then on, but I did not always act like it. A revival at my church when I was thirteen was very impactful to me. Since we were the pastoral family, the evangelist stayed at our house. Several of us were riding with him to church in the evening, and he asked us if we thought anyone would get saved that night. "Oh, yes," we assured him. In that service, the Lord convicted me mightily, and I was one of the ones at the altar who got saved. I had a hard time with an over-sensitive conscience, and the devil gave me many battles about assurance. But I knew from then on, I intended to serve Jesus.

I am happy to say that Jesus has faithfully led my life. He led me to surrender completely to Him and believe Him to set me apart to Himself. There have been many times along the journey where I have said, "My answer is still Yes," and He keeps me by His power. I am so grateful for Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary that made provision for the two-fold nature of sin, and the grace He gives every day to walk with Him. I intend to walk with Him all the way to heaven. ■



Janet Albertson has worked for GBS Donor Records for more than four years. Because of metastatic cancer, she now works remotely as an assistant for the Revivalist Office. Janet and her husband Rowen live in Florence, KY, and have six children (four of whom are GBS graduates) and ten grandchildren.



MINISTERING IN PAKISTAN

Dr. Steve Oliver, GBS ministerial professor, and Dr. Randall McElwain, Director of Global Training for Shepherd's Global Classroom (SGC), traveled to Pakistan January 20-28, where they held several days of training for about 25 people, mostly pastors of churches in the Lahore/

Islamabad area. The training sessions were organized by Raja Samuel and co-hosted by two Pakistan-based ministries: Antakya Bible Institute, an educational ministry that uses SGC materials to train pastors and church leaders in Pakistan, and Lord's Home, which, among other things, starts and supports local training centers throughout Pakistan using SGC materials. Drs. Oliver and McElwain visited several of these in Lahore and Islamabad and also met with the leaders of a larger church organization in Pakistan who are interested in using SGC curriculum to train rural pastors, many of

whom have little or no other opportunity for theological training.

Dr. Oliver reported that SGC's *Exploring the Old Testament* was the basis for the training sessions. He taught a brief section on Leviticus, and Dr. McElwain taught Nehemiah. Then the attendees each taught a short section of the course, interspersed with time for



Dr. McElwain teaches a Bible course in Pakistan.

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



Kendra Peck (2022-23) to Daniel Brandon (BA '22), May 27, 2023, in Muncie, IN, the Revs. Daniel Edwards and Richard Miles officiating. Daniel is the associate pastor and minister of music at the Bible Methodist Church, Talladega, AL. The Brandons reside in Talladega.

BIRTHS



To **Rachel (Langstaff) (BA '17)** and **Nathan Gingrich**, a daughter, **Isolde Charlise**, born November 30, 2023, at their home in Newton, Ontario, Canada. Nathan works as a feed truck driver at the Jones Feed Mill and Rachel (currently on

maternity leave) works as an accounting assistant at the Wallenstein Feed Mill. Isolde's proud grandparents are Elmer and Alma (Metzger) Gingrich of Newton, Ontario, and Paul and Deborah (Martin) Langstaff of Oil Springs, Ontario.



To **Emily (Covert) (AA '22)** and **Caleb King (2020-22)**, a son, **Azariah Michael**, born December 6, 2023, at Anderson Community Hospital, Anderson, IN. Caleb works at AdPro Concrete Coatings, Yorktown, IN, and Emily is a stay-at-home mama. The Kings live in Yorktown.



To **Courtney (Fourman) (BA '17)** and **Travis Stroup (BA '18)**, a boy, **Tobias James**, January 21, 2024, at Henry Community Health, New Castle, IN. Travis is a teacher at Heartland Christian School, New Castle, and the youth pastor at Calvary Bible Methodist Church, Greenfield, IN. Courtney teaches eighth grade at Mt. Vernon Middle School, Fortville, IN. The Stroups live in New Castle.

feedback and discussion. The attendees of the training sessions in-

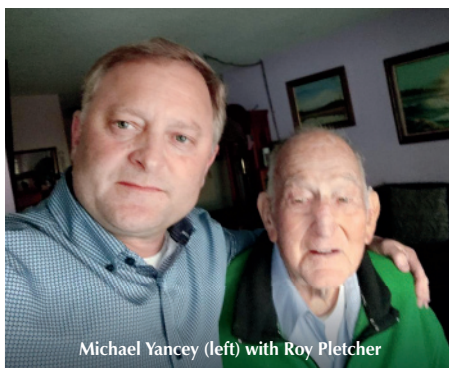


Several women attended the training sessions led by Dr. Oliver (right) and native Christian leaders.

cluded women who are actively involved in teaching the Bible to women and children.

DONOR HIGHLIGHT: ROY PLETCHER

Roy Pletcher (1946-47) has memories of student life on the GBS campus in the 1940s. He served in the GBS post-World War II ministry



Michael Yancey (left) with Roy Pletcher

"GI's of the Cross," traveling to Texas, Pennsylvania, and many other states in between. He settled in California, and every year we get the privilege of having a meal together while he does a little reminiscing. Year after year he has been generous and faithful in his support for the kingdom, and we humbly thank him for that.

Through *God's Revivalist*, Roy keeps up to date on the school. ➡



Members of the GI's of the Cross prepare to leave campus for a cross-country crusade in 1947.

Tobias' proud grandparents are Deron (HS '85, BA '90) and Kimberly (Jewett) Fourman (BA '89); and James (BA '81) and Darla (Joslin) Stroup (BA '82).

DEATHS



Paul Richard Jukes, 78, passed away November 16, 2023, at Wesbury United Methodist Retirement Community, Meadville, PA. He was born January 27, 1945, in Lakewood, OH, to Richard "Dick" and Arlene (Adams) Jukes, of Clymer, NY. The family moved to Wrightsville, PA, in 1958, and Paul graduated from Youngsville High School in 1963. He was an accomplished musician, playing the sousaphone in various bands as well as the bass viol for the Tru-tones, a 12-piece group that was featured at various functions.

In 1968, Paul married Evangeline Fink of Centerville, PA. He worked in many of the area machine shops in Warren County and other places until forced into early retirement due to cardiac complications in May of 2000. He was the outdoors editor for Valley

Publishing Company, Sheffield, PA, for 31 years. His byline also appeared in numerous state, regional, and national publications, and an audio version of his weekly column was featured on WWCB radio, Corry, PA, for a decade. He was a wedding and wildlife photographer and won numerous awards for his wildlife photographs. Paul was a GBS donor and a *God's Revivalist* subscriber.

Paul moved to Lottsville, PA, in July of 1974 and lived there for 44 years until relocating to Wesbury, a retirement complex in Meadville, PA, in November 2018. Paul was a former member of Piedmont Bible Church, Thomasville, NC, and attended Allida Smith Wesleyan Methodist Church, Meadville, PA.

In addition to his loving wife, Evangeline, of 56 years, survivors include two sisters, Delores (Kelvin) Roberts and Heather (Timothy) Hummer; and several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews. A memorial service was held at Allida Smith Wesleyan Methodist Church, with the Rev. William Cope officiating. Interment followed at Lottsville Cemetery, Freehold Township, Warren County, PA. ➡

➡ He is thrilled that we continue to provide a godly atmosphere and education for the next generation of servants.

Roy, you are a blessing, and your example and witness are greatly appreciated. God bless you!

—*Director of Donor Development,*
Michael Yancey, Jr.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT DAY

Each February, the Student Affairs department sponsors a Student Development Day, during which classes are canceled and seminars are provided on various culturally relevant topics. This year Student Development Day became part of Mental Health Week (Feb. 5-7) and was conducted by the GBS Counseling Center. Dr. Charity Frazier and Mr.

Rob Loper presented sessions titled Coping with Negative Emotions, Developing a Healthy Narrative, and Cultivating Healthy Relationships. The presentations culminated with a panel (L-R: Richard Miles, Rob Loper, Michelle Witt, and Charity Frazier) answering questions from the student body. This was a wonderfully informative and helpful time. Students and staff alike benefited from the excellent presentations and timely content.



Panelists answer questions from the student body during Mental Health Week.

GBS AT ABHE

GBS was well represented at the Association for Biblical Higher Education's (ABHE) 2024 annual meeting, February 13-16 at Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando, FL. ABHE is the accrediting agency for Bible colleges that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, as well as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

GBS Board Chair Robbie England and President Rodney Loper were



GBS was honored at the ABHE meeting for "Excellence in Board Governance."

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued



Rev. Robert Merrill Brock (BA '69), 82, of New Castle, passed away December 3, 2023. Bob served for many years as a missionary, 21 years of which were in Papua New Guinea. *For more information see "Alumni News" on page 22.*



Wanda Ivonne (Cranor) Sones, 85, of Circleville, OH, went to be with Jesus on December 21, 2023. Wanda was born September 14, 1938, in Wilson County, KS, to Earl and Wilma (Davidson) Cranor. Wanda attended GBS (1955-61) where she met Calvin Sones (ThB '61). They married in 1961 and began 34 years of ministry in Pennsylvania, Alabama, Georgia, and Kansas. At each pastorate, Wanda spent time as a teacher in Christian Schools. In 1995 Wanda completed a nursing degree from Cloud County Community College and worked in nursing homes as a registered nurse for approximately 14 years.

Wanda was preceded in death by her husband Calvin in 2019. She is survived by her children, Rodney (Rachel) Sones and Janice (Darrin) Russell; four grandchildren; one great-grandson; and sister, Janice Prior. Funeral services were held in the Cocklin Funeral Home, Dillsburg, PA, Rev. William Reese officiating. Burial followed in the Dillsburg Cemetery, Dillsburg, PA.

Both of Wanda's children attended GBS: Rodney (BA '89) who also served as a teacher (1991-2003) and registrar (2000-2003), and Janice (BA '95).



Eunice Lenora Green, 80, passed away January 15, 2024, in Jupiter, FL. She was a loving wife, loyal aunt, and passionately dedicated servant of the Lord. She was born on January 6, 1943, in North Vernon, IN, to Eunice Virginia (List) and Dale Bryant Rose. After graduating from high school, she attended God's Bible School (1963-64) before transferring to Hobe Sound Bible College, where she received a

joined by trustee Daniel Edwards and staff Rebecca Pohl, Beth Stetler, Sonja Vernon, and Aaron Profitt.

At this annual meeting, ABHE's 77th, President Loper presented a workshop on "Leading a Bible College as a Spiritual Enterprise," and Aaron Profitt was a panelist in an accreditation evaluator roundtable. Pohl, Vernon, and Profitt participated in the Commission on Accreditation Delegate Assembly, which approved newly revised accreditation standards. Profitt was elected to a 4-year term on the Commission on Accreditation.

ABHE's mission to support and strengthen Bible colleges continues to bless GBS, providing both quality assurance and training/development opportunities. The GBS trustees have recently completed ABHE's Board Governance Development Program.

CHOIR TOUR

On Wednesday, February 21, the GBS bus and trailer headed for its first destination on the 2024 Late Winter Tour. This year's trip involved eight stops in six states—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, and Indiana. This included the normal Sunday services in Florida at the Light and Life Free



Commissioning Weekend
at God's Bible School & College
May 16-20



guest speaker:
Darrell Stetler II
Oklahoma City, OK

Methodist Church and the Florida Holiness Camp, both in Lakeland, FL, and the Monday evening service at the Avon Park Holiness Camp in Avon Park, FL.

Public Relations Director Duane Quesenberry noted that "the attendance at each service along the tour was an increase over last year's," adding that, "Although the choir had not been to the Haven of Rest Bible Church in Galax, VA, for several years, we ➡



BA in 1966. Eunice became one of Hope International Missions' earliest missionaries, serving 1966-1984 in Grand Bahama. In 1984 she returned to the States, moving to Ohio, where she taught Sunday school, attended to the elderly, and served her church. During the latter part of her life, Eunice lived in Sea Breeze Community, FL, as the caregiver for Mrs. Ella Zuch.

Her first husband, Merton W. Hartle, preceded her in death, November 1, 1986. Eunice married Billy Harold Green on June 11, 1989. He preceeded her in death, October 2011. Eunice is survived by three nephews; 17 grand-nieces and nephews; and nine great-

grand-nieces and nephews with three on the way. A funeral service officiated by Rev. John Manley was held at Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum, Dayton, OH. A celebration of life reception immediately followed at Wesleyan Evangelistic Church, Dayton. A second Celebration of Life Memorial Service was held later at Hobe Sound Bible Church, Hobe Sound, FL.



Lloyd Elmer Brueckner, 86, of Independence, KY, went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, January 24, 2024. He was a retired assistant treasurer and manager for Western Southern

Life Insurance Company, a member of the Simon Kenton High School Sports Hall of Fame, and a member of Highland Avenue Wesleyan Church, Covington, KY.

Lloyd had a servant's heart and participated in many mission activities over the years. He enjoyed spending time working on his farm, raising cattle, and growing a garden. However, his real enjoyment came from being active in the lives of his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Lloyd was a GBS donor and a *God's Revivalist* subscriber.

Lloyd was preceded in death by his second wife, Mae Brueckner. He is survived by his three children, Kimberly (Barry) Johnson, Jill ➡

➡ were well received and the congregation was a blessing to the choir.”

Of special interest was the Tuesday service, hosted by the Bible Methodist Church, Talladega, AL, in the historic Ritz Theatre, right across the street from the old Courthouse. The church promoted this as the first of many more to come “Singin’ on the Square”—a community event that featured two musical groups from the local church before the GBS Choir sang to the crowd that gathered that night. It was a success!

The final service of the tour was at the Mackey Church of the Nazarene, Oakland, IN, on Wednesday, February 28. There were many churches from southwest Indiana represented, but most important was the overwhelming sense of God’s presence in that final service. Pastor Jared Henry later wrote: “I am still getting reports from the people of how God worked through the choir. One lady, invited by someone in our church, had never before attended a Protestant church. She told her friend that she had never

experienced anything like the service in her life and was amazed as she watched everyone worship. Thank you for the Kingdom work you are doing and know that it has impact beyond the singular service in which the choir is present.”

We praise God for His protection in the 3,000 plus miles that were traveled and for His wonderful presence at each service on the 2024 College Choir tour.

—Public Relations Director

Duane Quesenberry 📌



Ministering at the Bible Methodist Church, Easley, SC



Duane Quesenberry introduces the choir at the Florida Holiness Camp, Lakeland, FL.

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ (Keb) Bright, and Joe (Michelle) Brueckner; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; sisters, Rosemary Whaley and Janice Hilbrecht; and first wife, June Brueckner. His funeral was held at Highland Avenue Wesleyan Church, Covington, KY. Interment followed at Forest Lawn Cemetery, Erlanger, KY.



Harry James “Jim” Colburn, 76, of Bedford, IN, died February 2, 2024. He was born March 25, 1947, in Bedford, IN, to George Carr and Mary Elizabeth “Betty” (Roberts) Colburn. Jim married his childhood sweetheart, Judy Arnold, shortly after high school graduation in 1966. He joined the U.S. Navy, serving on the USS Saratoga until he was honorably discharged in 1970. In 1973, he began a 45-year

career as an insurance agent, first with Farm Bureau Insurance for 18 years, then as an independent agent.

Jim loved playing and coaching basketball, and for several years he coached the boys’ team at Stone City Christian Academy. He loved Faith Mission Church, which he began attending as a baby and was a faithful member until his death. He was willing to help out in any way he could, playing the trombone in the orchestra for many years, operating the sound board, singing duets with his wife, and serving in many other ways. He was a GBS donor and a *God’s Revivalist* subscriber.

Surviving Jim are his wife Judy; two sons, Jonathan and James; a sister, Joanne Adams; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and one great-great-niece. Funeral services were held at the Faith



Mission Church with Pastor Bryan Line and Rev. Leonard Sankey officiating.



Carol Jean Schmerr, 72, of West Chester, OH, passed away on Saturday, February 3, 2024. She was born on July 26, 1951, to James and Katherine Sampson in Covington, KY. Carol earned a BA in Biblical Studies from the American Christian College and Seminary, Oklahoma City, OK. Her love and knowledge of Scripture was evident to anyone she met. She was the financial aid director at GBS 1987-1998 and was awarded a service award by then president Dr. Michael Avery (October 2000).

Carol is survived by her son, Kenneth (Desy) Schmerr (HS '91), and granddaughter Angelia. A private

viewing was held at Anderson Funeral Home, Franklin, OH, with Rev. James Sampson officiating. Burial followed at Rest Haven Memorial Park, Blue Ash, OH.



Marilyn Rose (Roberson)

Waggoner, 89, passed away February 15, 2024, surrounded by her family at the Gibson Family Center for Hospice Care in Terre Haute, IN. Marilyn was born May 2, 1934, in Pike County, IN.

Her father, Stephen Dale Roberson, died when she was three years old. Her mother was Addie Eloize (Ficklin) Roberson. Marilyn was the youngest and sole survivor of the five Roberson siblings. She graduated from Frankfort Pilgrim High School, where she met a college student, Robert Norman Waggoner. They married June 7, 1952 in the Pilgrim Holiness church parsonage in Rushville, IN.

Most of her married life was spent in Frankfort, where for many years she ran the finance and customer service components of the family's rental/construction business. She attended the Frankfort Church of the Bible Covenant and later was one of the charter members of Bethel Bible Holiness Church. She served her church as pianist, and for more than 50 years was a church treasurer.

Marilyn was preceded in death by her husband, Robert (Bob) Norman Waggoner in 2021. She is survived by her daughter Gloria (Rev. Wendell) Kirkman; son N. Keith (Sharon) Waggoner I; 6 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; and 16 great-great-grandchildren. A funeral service was held at the Goodwin Funeral Home, Frankfort. Burial followed in Bunnell Cemetery.

Marilyn's son, N. Keith Waggoner I (HS '74; 1974-75), is a long-term GBS trustee (1998-present) and her grandson, N. Keith Waggoner II (BA '99) has previously served GBS as Director of Student Recruitment.



Larry Thomas ("Tommy") Horton Sr.,

79, of Leeds, AL, passed away February 21, 2024. He was preceded in death by his parents, Alfred E. and Ethelene Horton. Tommy is survived by his wife of 60 years, Edith "Honey" Horton; daughter, Lisa (Jeff) Messner; sons, Larry Thomas (Regina) Horton, Jr. and Lynn (Stacy) Horton; seven grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; and two sisters, Faye Atkins and Ann Resha.

Funeral services were held at Kilgroe Funeral Home, Leeds, AL, with burial following at Pleasant Mount Cemetery, Pleasant Mount Baptist Church, Remlap, AL.

Three of Tommy's grandsons attended GBS: Jorden Messner (BA '19), Taylor Messner (BA '22), and Jacob Messner (BA '23). Tommy was a GBS donor and *God's Revivalist* subscriber. 📖

New Life at a Tree Stump



by Lee Ann Davison

It was Father's Day 1977. My husband and I attended the Muncie Pilgrim Holiness Camp Meeting. We were still newlyweds, and this was indeed a new experience for me. I had grown up in the Presbyterian Church and had no clue what a camp meeting was or what the services would involve. Prior to this, I had been to a few services at the Midwest Pilgrim Holiness Church in which my husband had grown up, and they were certainly nothing like the Presbyterian services to which I was accustomed.

Scheduled to preach that Sunday was Archie Atwell, Sr.—*except, he never did preach during that service*. He sat in a chair at the back of the platform and occasionally would say something to the effect that he was quite comfortable. But things were happening. People were running to the front of the church and kneeling at what I had learned was called an altar. One lady was running up and down through the aisles. She had a baby on her hip and was shouting "Praise the Lord" and "Hallelujah" while the baby cried. Men were running in the aisles, others stood shouting praises to the Lord. I had never seen such commotion in a so-called church service, and it seemed like a three-ring circus to me. I remember thinking that these people needed to learn how to act in church!

Eventually an older man came up and talked quietly to my husband. Then he and my husband walked to the front and knelt at the altar. I didn't understand what was

going on, so my response was to leave the service. As I walked out, I noticed a lady from the little church my husband and I were attending in Fort Wayne, Indiana. As I wandered bewilderedly around the campground, I uttered a prayer and asked the Lord to please send that lady out to help me. At that moment, I had some realization that my life was about to change. I also remember thinking that my marriage was hanging in the balance. I didn't know what was happening or what to do.

I noticed a woman walking across the campground straight toward me. I realized it was the lady I had seen in the service and had asked the Lord to send out to me.

She asked if I were okay, and I replied, "The Lord sent you. I saw you in the service and asked Him to send you out."

She seemed a bit surprised, then proceeded to question me. I shared with her how I had always wanted to be a Christian, but I didn't know how. I also mentioned reading Charles Sheldon's book *In His Steps* [What Would Jesus Do] and how it had impacted me. I wanted to be a Christian, but the church I grew up in taught that you couldn't know for sure, and that just didn't make sense to me. After some more talking, she suggested we pray. When I told her that I couldn't go back inside, she assured me we could pray outside. We looked around for a place to pray. Eventually I noticed an old tree stump near the ladies' restroom.



I said, “Maybe there,” and that is where we knelt.

She let me talk to God in a way that was comfortable to me. I knew she was also praying. I told the Lord how my life and my marriage were a mess and I wanted to be a Christian, but I didn’t know how. I asked the Lord to make me a Christian. He heard my prayer and I knew—yes, I *knew*—my prayer had been heard! My lady friend also knew.

As we arose from the tree stump, I told her, “Everything is going to be OK now.” I just knew that my life had been drastically changed in those few moments and that everything would be different.

We drove back to our apartment in Fort Wayne, Indiana, that evening and were preparing for bed when a knock came at the door. My husband went to see who had come to visit so late at night. He was surprised to find the pastor and his wife from the little holiness church we had been attending, and he invited them in. They had received a call that afternoon telling them my husband had prayed at the altar and I had been seen kneeling at a tree stump. After we recounted the happenings of the evening, they had prayer with us and left.

Once again, we headed to the bedroom. While preparing for bed, my husband found a copy of the church discipline of the Midwest Pilgrim Church and handed it to me. He said I could read the discipline and it would tell me everything I needed to know. I remember tossing the manual back to him saying I would get what I needed by reading the Bible and asking God to teach me. That surprised my husband.

I asked the Lord to show me what He wanted me to know as I read the Bible. It was quite a challenge for me. Not only had the church I grew up in taught that we couldn’t know for certain we would go to Heaven, we were also led to believe that God didn’t care about things like how we dressed, what we did with our lives, etc. I really was experiencing culture shock! The church we were now attending talked about being “saved.” I later understood that that was what had happened to me on Father’s Day at the tree stump.

As I continued my walk with the Lord, I spent a lot of time asking Him to clear the confusion and help me to know the way He wanted me to live. By this time, my parents had concluded I was involved in a cult. They began arrangements to have me “rescued” and taken to a location where I could be “reprogrammed.” Thankfully, God intervened, and my parents stopped the “rescue operation” they had in process.

God began teaching me about Himself—who He was and how to apply His Word to my life. The Lord was patient with me when others were not. It seemed I

was expected to look like an “old-fashioned, holiness woman” overnight. That was frustrating. Understanding the holiness “standards” of dress and modesty were issues about which I frequently sought the Lord for direction and wisdom.

One evening I took a walk through the Fort Wayne mall trying to think and sort through the confusion I was feeling. My reflection in every plate glass I passed condemned me. God spoke to me and asked who I was trying to please. Did I want to look like the world or please Him? If I claimed to be His daughter, how should I look and act? My wardrobe soon changed, makeup was thrown away, jewelry was set aside, and I let my short, wavy hair grow out.

The little church we were attending frequently talked about sanctification. I had never heard that term before. I didn’t know what it meant, why I needed it, or how to receive it. One evening it seemed like a war was going on inside me. I had never felt so much inner turmoil. I didn’t know where it came from or how to deal with it. My husband asked me to come join him for prayer and I told him just to pray and go on to bed. I would come later when I felt calmer.

I told the Lord all about the war going on inside of me. I told Him I just didn’t think anyone could be a Christian and have such feelings of anger and turmoil. I needed help. I told the Lord I couldn’t deal with all that mess inside me alone. I told Him that if He didn’t help me that night, I would go to the Wednesday night prayer meeting and have the church pray for me. I told Him that I would just keep seeking until I had peace.

Suddenly the load rolled off my shoulders and it seemed the floor shook beneath me. I had peace and joy like I had never sensed before. I went to bed and told my husband the “grouchy bear” was gone. The very next night, we went to Wednesday prayer meeting. When I told them about my experience the night before, the pastor’s wife explained to me that, without knowing what to call it or how to ask for it, I had received the blessing of entire sanctification!

This year marks 47 years as a child of the King of Kings. He has indeed taught me every step of the way. I am so glad I asked the Lord to “make me a Christian” that day in 1977! ■

Lee Ann Davison has written articles and devotionals for various publications. She has been married to Fred Davison for 47 years. Together they own and operate Your Business Matters, LLC, a tax preparation service. Fred (BA ’82, ThB ’84) managed the General Office at GBS from 1977 to 1988. The Davisons reside in Norwood, OH, and have three adult children.

the WORLD to WIN

[A FOCUS ON MISSIONS]

Why Missionaries Ask

by Stephen Gibson

What if missionaries didn't have to ask for money? What if missionaries did not have to solicit funds for months before getting to the field? What if we could operate Bible colleges, raise orphans, staff schools, and distribute Bibles without being limited by the lack of funds?

Many people see fundraising as an unfortunate necessity. Some don't want to be missionaries because they dread asking for support. The whole endeavor of trying to prepare presentations, report ministry results, and share needs to get donations seems to be an unspiritual, faithless reliance on human methods. Why can't missionaries just pray for God to provide? Since God has all resources, why do people who are called by God have to depend on human supporters?

Sometimes it's intriguing to reflect on what God could do but doesn't. He could supply the needs of ministry so that we wouldn't have to ask people to give, but He doesn't.

Imagine a ministry that is funded and never has to ask. It is independent of any supporters. There are no donors to be pleased or dis-

pleased; nobody's approval must be sought. The vision is shared only by those closely involved in the decisions; the opinions of observers, employees, or beneficiaries of the ministry may be ignored. The ministry leaders do not have to ensure that there is a network of people that endorses their goals and methods in a way that guides the long-term direction of the ministry.

What if we didn't have to ask? *It would be disastrous.*

What Happens in the Current Fundraising Scenario?

Missionaries feel a call to serve in a distant place. They explain what they want to do. They consider the



priorities of the people that can support them. What do potential givers care about? The missionary looks for people who care about spiritual and eternal values. The ministry on the field will not be a duplication of a home church, but it must establish something consistent with the values of the supporters. Projects, major purchases, facilities, and new programs must be made understandable to givers and designed to accomplish something that matters to them.

People share the missionaries' vision of what can be done on the field. They feel a responsibility to partner with this work. They feel not only duty but passion. They give what they can and pray about whatever challenges they understand. They want to hear about how things are going. They share in the victories, frustrations, comedies, and tragedies of the missionaries' lives. They pray for the missionaries' safety and success. They look for ways to help, financially and otherwise. The money given is a spiritual and eternal investment.

The missionary is not just the supporters' hero; he is their agent. Supporters feel a sense of accomplishment from what the missionary achieves.

So while much could be improved in our system of supporting missionaries, it's still good that missionaries ask.

Why Regular Giving?

Why give regularly? Commitment is expressed not only in spontaneous actions but in scheduled ones. A husband who forgets his wife's birthday knows that he has failed to express love as expected. A mother who

serves no meals cannot make up for it with hugs. Spontaneous acts of love do not make up for neglect of the routine ones.

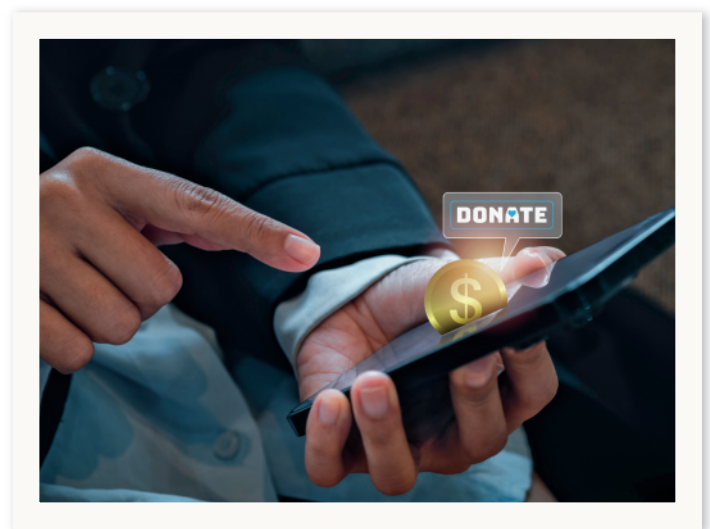
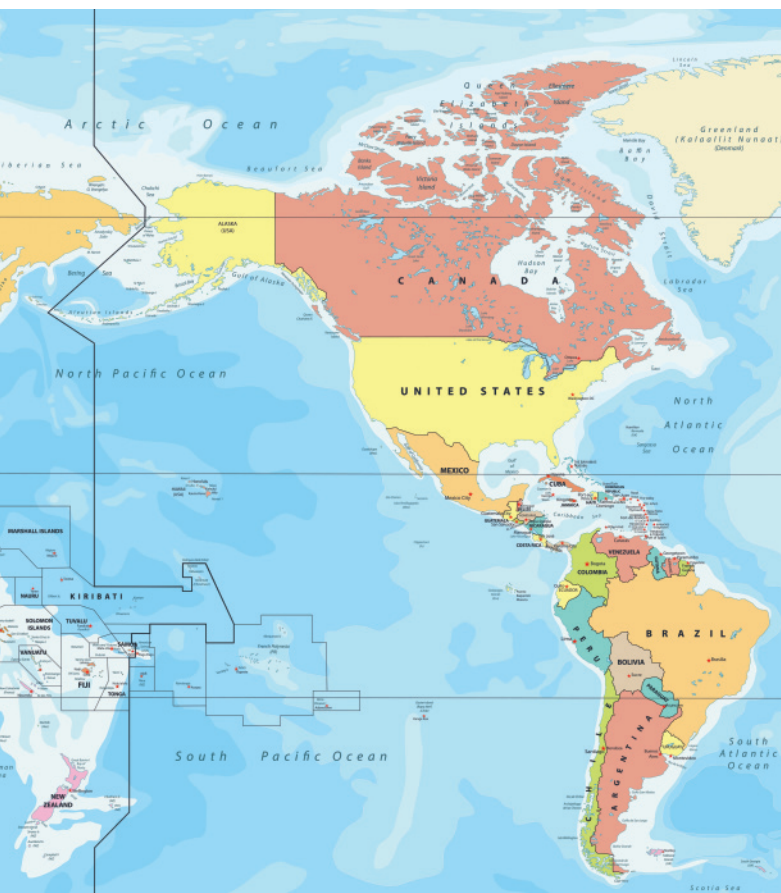
Some people give to missions only when they "feel led," or feel especially touched by a need. Try maintaining the relationships of marriage, parenting, employment, or taxes like that. Surely your wife will understand if you pay the utility bills and take the children to school only when you feel led to or feel an emotional urge to do it, right? Maybe your employer will not mind if you come to work on any given day only after considering it prayerfully! (Don't actually try this.)

The fact is that you schedule and budget your true priorities. You decided that those things matter, and you demonstrate your commitment every day. Does the work of extending the gospel deserve any less?

Is Fundraising Biblical?

There is a biblical precedent for missionary fundraising. In Corinth, Paul used support from other churches in order to work without support from the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:8-9). He told the Roman believers that he would visit them for ministry and hoped they would support his mission trip to Spain (Rom. 15:24). Paul said he could "boast" that he never asked for anything from the people he served (2 Corinthians 11:10). Paul's example gives a precedent for missionaries who raise support in order to serve people elsewhere. ■

Dr. Stephen Gibson is president of Evangelistic Faith Missions and Holiness Pilgrim Mission. He has taught at several Bible colleges, served on mission fields, pastored a diverse inner-city church, and written courses for Shepherds Global Classroom. He and his wife Stephanie live in Williams, IN, and are the parents of six children.



Dear Phil

RECONCILING GOD'S PATIENCE AND WRATH

How does someone align or converge the God of the Old Testament, a harsh personal upbringing, and a view of God as kind and loving? For example: Exodus 32. Moses had been gone for quite a while, and the people were asking why he was gone for so long, and Aaron makes the golden calf. This could be called intentional disobedience, but I feel like sometimes it's just being human. I use the term spiritual amnesia for myself when I turn to relying on myself first instead of relying on God for situations in my life. I also know better. I'm not excusing their behavior, but it seems "being human" is punished. The result of this is that the Levites gathered together, went from one end of the camp to the other as Moses commanded them, and killed everyone, even their brothers, friends, and neighbors.

I may be reading into their intentions, but I can put myself in these situations and see times I wanted to be utilized more, or grumbled, or didn't particularly care for someone's leadership above me, or started relying on self instead of God. As a person who wholeheartedly wants to follow God, when I see the consequence for sin, choices, and "being human," it seems to create a fear of God, but not a healthy reverence for God. —Tara

Dear Tara,

Here's how I approach questions like this. First, since God tells us he is longsuffering and slow to anger, I ask, "How was God slow to anger and patient in this situation?" This sends me looking for something God says is there.

Second, knowing the timeline of events in Exodus 32 helps. [Comeafterme.com](https://bit.ly/3PhZvAY)'s chronology of the whole Bible (<https://bit.ly/3PhZvAY>) shows that the ten plagues, the Red Sea crossing, the miracles of bitter water to sweet, manna, the quail, water from the rock, and the audible voice of God giving the Ten

Commandments all took place within about a six-month span.

Just before Moses went up Mt. Sinai, he held a covenant affirmation ceremony, in which all Israel solemnly promised to take Yahweh alone as their God and worship Him as He requires—no images, no other gods, etc. (Exod. 24:1-8). Then Aaron and the 70 elders went with Moses into the mountain and saw God and ate with Him (Exod. 24:9-11). In addition to these miraculous events, during the entire 40 days Moses was in the mountain with God, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night remained visible (Exod. 14:19, 24; Num. 14:14), manna ap-

peared every day except the Sabbath (Exod. 16:35), and water flowed from the rock (Deut. 8:15; Psa. 78:14-16).

In view of the beyond-a-shadow-of-a-doubt proof of Yahweh's existence, love for them, daily presence, and provision for them, the Golden Calf incident can be seen as nothing other than bald-faced rebellion and treachery. The people and their leaders ate Yahweh's manna and drank His water the same morning they approached Aaron to demand that he provide them gods they could see.

Third, the out-of-control "play" that accompanied the Golden Calf worship should not be seen as an accidental "oops! How-did-we-get-here" moment (Exod. 32:6). It was arguably a key reason driving the desire for an idol. Having the idol sanctioned the orgiastic activity they had practiced in Egypt and to which they lusted to return (cf. Ezekiel 23).

Even after Moses reappeared, ground the idol into powder, and forced the Israelites to drink it, they had no intention of leaving their idolatrous celebration (Exod. 32:20-25). Moses stood in the gate of the camp and proclaimed, "Who is on Yahweh's side?" Only the Levites showed up (Exod. 32:26). If the other Israelites' allegiance was clear before, now they took sides openly: 1 tribe for Yahweh, 11 tribes against.

Three thousand people died before the nation stopped their idolatry (Exod. 32:27-30)! God's anger was not a sudden flare of unpredictability. It is the righteous wrath of a loving husband who a few days into his honeymoon finds his wife in bed with a former boyfriend. On this view, God's longsuffering and patience was astounding!

Blessings,
Philip ■

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

pbrown@gbs.edu



NORTH KOREA TOPS CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION LIST AGAIN

The 2024 Open Doors World Watch List has been released and it again has North Korea listed as number one of the top 50 countries where Christians suffer the most persecution, usually by either execution or imprisonment in labor camps. According to a press release, this year more than 360 million Christians are being severely persecuted and discriminated against for their faith, and 4,998 Christians around the world were killed for their faith. Other forms of persecution were also on the rise. For example, attacks on churches, Christian schools, and hospitals rose to 14,766, up 700% from the previous year; the number of Christians beaten or threatened was 42,849, up 146%; attacks on homes were 21,431, up 471%; and the total number of believers forced out of their homes or into hiding was 278,716, up 224%.

66% OF AMERICANS WANT PRO-LIFE LAWS LIMITING ABORTION

The results of the 2024 Knights of Columbus-Marist Poll indicate that 66% of Americans support placing legal limits on abortion, while nearly 6 in 10 support limiting abortions during the first three months of pregnancy. It also found that 83% of Americans support pregnancy resource centers, which offer support to mothers both dur-

ing and after their pregnancy, and 86% believe that laws can protect both the mother and her unborn child. Some see in this finding a possible growing awareness of the rights of the unborn child among the American people and a willingness to balance the mother's rights with those of her unborn child. Additionally, the poll found that two-thirds of Americans believe health-care professionals with religious objections to abortions should not be legally required to perform them.

COULD RISE OF THE "NONES" BE OVER?

Over the past several years, this column has reported news related to the rise of the "nones"—the number of Americans who say they aren't affiliated with a religion. In 1972, when the General Social Survey began to use the terminology of "religiously unaffiliated," that category was selected by 5% of the U.S. respondents. It went through a slow rise before a steeper jump beginning in 1992 and plateauing in 1997 around 13-15%. A second rise began in 2007, steadily increasing, with a rate in 2022 of 29%. However, there is now some indication of another plateauing of the rise in "nones," with some even finding a drop in their latest polling (for example, GSS and Pew Research). Hopefully this downward trend will continue. One positive finding is that 72% of American "nones" believe in God or a higher power. ■



student focus

LUCAS WELCH grew up in a Christian home in Marion, OH. After graduating from Heritage Christian School, he decided to attend GBS, partly because he had visited multiple times and his sister and cousin both went there, but, more importantly, "because it was where I felt God was leading me." He reports that being at GBS has changed him in a positive way. He has grown closer to God and experienced growth in many other areas of his life. For him, "One of the best things about GBS is the people. They want to help you grow to be a better person and more Christlike. They don't just care about grades, they also care about your spiritual health."

Lucas is working on an AA in Bible and Theology and plans to graduate in 2025. "GBS is preparing me for whatever God has planned for me. I am learning valuable things here that I can use in whatever place God puts me. Eventually, I would love to have a leadership role in a Christian non-profit 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
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Alumni

news

GBS alumni are encouraged to submit updates on their lives and current ministries.

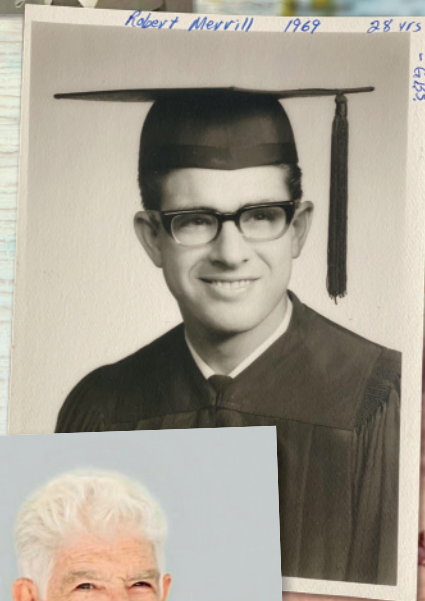
ALUMNUS/MISSIONARY STATESMAN MAKES THE CROSSING

Robert Merrill Brock, 82, of New Castle, IN, went home to be with his Lord and Savior, December 3, 2023.

Robert was born on August 13, 1941, in Columbus, OH, to Robert Champ and Vivian Louise (Weigand) Brock. Their home church, Hilltop Community Church in Columbus, was a strong supporter of The Oriental Missionary Society (OMS—now One Mission Society), and from an early age Bob felt called to serve in foreign missions.

He graduated from high school in 1959 and entered the U.S. Air Force in 1961, serving Intercept Radio Communications with top-secret clearance in Turkey and the Philippines. Following his honorable discharge, Bob enrolled at GBS, where he met Barbara Lee Hopkins (BA '67); they were married on August 19, 1967.

Bob graduated from GBS in 1969 with a BA in Bible. Dr. R.G. Flexon, the greatest hero in Bob's life, was the camp meeting evangelist that year. It was in Dr. Flexon's car, just before an evening service, that Bob was entirely sanctified! At Dr. Flexon's suggestion, Bob agreed to oversee GBS City Missions Outreach for the following year.



Tambul Bible School



the Brock Family

GOD'S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOC

Beginning in 1970, Bob and Barb served as missionaries in Papua New Guinea for 21 years. In addition to preaching, their ministry focused on literacy, teaching the people to read and write in their national language of Melanesian Pidgin English. Their four children grew up in Papua New Guinea.

In 1972, Bob established Tambul Baibel Skul (Bible School) to train national pastors to minister to their own people. Today, over 2,000 graduates are preaching in almost every province of Papua New Guinea. He served as the president of the Bible school and taught there full-time for 17 years. For the past six years he has taught online Bible classes for Tambul Bible School and Pacific Bible College. In addition to serving in PNG, Bob ministered in South Dakota (Sioux Indians), Grenada, Mexico, Haiti, Belize, Turkey, and the Philippines.

In 1992, Bob and his family returned to GBS where he supervised the Student Work Program. In 1996, they moved to New Castle, IN. Bob worked for Sproles Church Building Corporation, where he played a role in constructing more than 50 new church building projects in his 22 years of service for the company. He was a member of the New Castle Pilgrim Holiness Church, where he taught the adult Sunday school class and served as a trustee.

Bob loved fixing things. He was detail-oriented, an organizer, an artist, a gardener, a model train enthusiast, and a coin collector. Most importantly, he was an intentional grandpa who spent much time with his grandchildren.

Bob spent endless hours reading and studying his Bible and praying for his family. He will always be known for fervently praying for his country, for "lost souls," and for his missionary endeavors in PNG. The message of heart holiness and godly living were distinct trademarks of his life and ministry. Bob was a missionary statesman, a gifted Bible teacher and preacher, a prayer warrior, a spiritual hero to many, and a light to all who knew him.

Those left to cherish Bob's memory include his loving wife of 56 years, Barb; four children, Julie (John Mark) Sproles, Janie (Carl) Eisenhart, Rob (Tricia) Brock, and Rick (Lisa) Brock; 13 grandchildren; a sister, Karen Scalzi; an aunt, Faith Bell; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at Sproles Family Funeral Home with Pastor Don Raines officiating. A great number of Christians across Papua New Guinea watched the live-streamed funeral of their missionary hero. Burial followed at South Mound Cemetery, West Lawn Addition, New Castle, with military honors by the U.S. Air Force, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. ■



by Sonja Vernon

STEP OUT

"And God said to Noah... 'Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.... This is how you are to make it....'"
—Genesis 6:13a, 14-15a ESV

Do you enjoy being out of your comfort zone? Some people thrive on the new and different. Not me. I want to know all the ins and outs before I begin. Proficiency at a task is important to me. The steeper the learning curve, the greater my discomfort. I wonder how Noah felt when he was asked to build an ark. The size was nearly incomprehensible, and he was tasked to bring both his family and representatives of every land animal and bird into the ark with him. He had to doubt his senses for a moment. Was God really asking this?

In reading this story recently, I was struck with a simple clause in the text: "This is how you are to make it." When God called Noah to build the ark, He didn't leave him alone to figure it out. He gave him specific directions and empowered him to complete the task. The Bible gives us other similar examples. Note God's instructions to Moses for the tabernacle (even down to specific craftsmen) and His intricate plans for Solomon's temple. God doesn't give His people a task and then abandon them. God's guidance is clear and His enablement is perfect. Scripture is full of ordinary people leaving the familiar and watching God do mighty works through them.

Are you sensing God nudging you toward something too big for you? If it's His voice, His instructions and grace will follow as you obey. Maybe it won't be an ark, but it will certainly be something that brings Him glory. Go ahead, step out in faith. You're not alone! ■

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



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