

GOD'S

REVIVALIST

May 2024

and Bible Advocate





thinking out loud

RESTITUTION

It was about a 90-minute trip to our destination—West Virginia Institute of Technology, where I had attended for three semesters before dropping out to join the USAF. During my time there, I had illegally acquired some items. Five years had passed. A few days earlier, I had been saved, and now, it was restitution time. I had to make amends.

Those pilfered items were a 10-cent artist brush, several magazines, and one parking meter. My wheel man for this operation was my father, Elmer Farmer. We crossed the Kanawha River and entered the small college town.

Daddy stayed in the car to pray while I went into the Five and Dime and asked to speak to the manager. He was happy to forgive me for stealing the cheap, little brush. One down! The next one was a bit more difficult.

The drugstore next to our fraternity house received its magazine drops outside the store somewhere around 2:00 a.m. On a few occasions, we pulled a magazine or two out of the bound stack for our perusal. This manager followed the same pattern as the previous one—thanking me and forgiving me with no monetary reimbursement required.

The final restitution worried me the most. We fraternity brothers had noticed a parking meter badly damaged in an accident. For some reason, we decided to come back later and free it from the concrete attachment that remained at its base. In the wee hours of the morning, several of us broke it free and put it in our vehicle. Back at the house, we beat the front with a hammer and retrieved the moderate bounty of nickels which it contained. We disposed of the meter by pitching it into the Kanawha.

I had decided to present myself to the mayor and submit to his judgment. Nervously I climbed the narrow stairs to his second-floor office, introduced myself, and recounted the parking meter episode. I told him I was now a Christian and was trying to make things right. After a brief pause, the mayor rose from his chair and stepped around his desk. He wanted to “shake hands with such an honest man.” Again, nothing more than my confession of guilt was required.

As I walked down those stairs and exited the building, my step was lighter. My outlook was brighter. Making those three restitutions had given me “a clear conscience toward both God and man” (Acts 24:16 ESV). The trip back to Huntington was very pleasant. —KF

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the president's page



YOUR PURPOSE, YOUR CALLING

by Dr. Rodney S. Loper, President

Finding purpose and meaning in life begins early. Toddlers like their height to be measured to let us see how big they are getting. Teenagers look forward to getting out of the house to explore their newfound freedom. College students can't wait to graduate and make their mark on the world. Young parents begin a new cycle as they start a family, pay off debt, save for retirement, and work to be successful in life. All of us grapple with this idea of life's purpose, life's meaning. Deep within, the desire for something more pushes us to seek the next milestone, mountain, or management position. Pause a moment and ponder. The entirety of human history reminds us that surrounding our lives with more stuff and status doesn't satisfy. In his book *The Call*, Os Guinness frames it this way: "The trouble is that, as modern people, we have too much to live with and too little to live for. Some feel they have time but not enough money and others feel they have money but not enough time. But for most of us, in the midst of material plenty, we have spiritual poverty."

Purpose, apart from something bigger than ourselves, will be cynical. However, when we realize we should search for meaning and purpose from our Creator instead of temporal things, we understand the ultimate reason for our existence, our purpose in life—our calling.

This begs the question, what do we mean by "call"? In Scripture, there are three broad categories that will help us understand our calling. First, is the **universal calling of ALL HUMANITY to a right relationship with God**. We know and embrace the reality of Scripture: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11), and the very nature of God is that He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Answering the first call leads to the second, the **universal calling for ALL BELIEVERS to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called”** (Eph. 4:1b ESV). This call is prescriptive concerning our “walk”—how you conduct your life. What follows in Ephesians 4 through 6 is a list of specific attributes that all Christians should exhibit. All believers are to live in such a way as to bring glory to God and to be His shining example in all we do. Whether we are dipping ice cream, mowing lawns, writing a legal brief, or driving a truck, everything is to be done in a way that honors God. Our Christian witness should not take a back seat in any occupational arena. You are called. Hard work, honesty, Christian ethics, and care for others are universal attributes of all God’s children. Understand, however, that they may not be perfectly reflected at all times. These marks are lived out in “earthen vessels” marred by the frailty of humanity. However, anytime we fail to achieve this ideal, and we know it—either from faithful friends or the guiding, convicting, and reproving hand of the Holy Spirit—repentance and humility quickly follow.

Why am I taking this time to talk about the rudiments of the Christian faith here? Because there is confusion surrounding the call of God, I am afraid that we have been conditioned to reserve the idea of a call to those who are in full-time Christian service. I believe this has ramifications that are dangerous for those on both sides of this faulty paradigm. Martin Luther brings great clarity to this issue:

We should accustom ourselves to think of our position and work as sacred and well-pleasing to God, not on account of the position and the work, but on account of the word and faith from which the obedience and the work flow.... It looks like a great thing when a monk renounces everything and goes into a cloister, carries on a life of asceticism, fasts, watches, prays.... On the other hand, it looks like a small thing when a maid cooks and cleans and does other housework. But because God’s command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service to God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns. For here there is no command of God. But there God’s command is fulfilled, that one should honor father and mother and help in the care of the home. (Martin Luther, *Works*, vol. 5, p. 102)

I believe that Luther is right—a mother at a sink doing dishes for the glory of God is just as important in God’s Kingdom as a missionary in a heathen land.

You see, there is grave danger in segregating life into two categories—secular and sacred. I know Scripture says, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and

teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17 ESV). As a result, we tend to place undue importance on this kind of activity, and thereby relegate everything and everyone else to a lesser spot.

Are we reaping the results of a faulty view in the church world today? Pastors who abuse; church leaders who mistreat; severe non-accountability.... Are these a result of elevating the person and position beyond what God intends? I remind us of Jesus’ words, “The last shall be first, and the first, last” (Matt. 20:16a). When a person demands special treatment, avoids real accountability, refuses humility, or treats subordinates with spite, disdain, or rudeness, he or she has become a “hireling.” When position justifies a person’s actions, there is no end to the exploitation that can and will take place.

Further, promoting that there is a clear line of separation between sacred and secular can have negative repercussions on either side. Those in “sacred work” may say that their job is only to preach and pray and the rest of the church is responsible for the “non-sacred” stuff. They use the passage in Acts 6:2 as a proof text—“It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables” (ESV). Jesus knocked this concept on its head when He washed the disciples’ feet—clearly communicating that humility and service are a part of the Christian life regardless of position or calling.

Some on the other side may think that because they are not “in ministry,” they can be less spiritual or less holy than those on the sacred side of the paradigm. I know I am painting with a broad brush, but have we conditioned our minds to give allowances, or dare I say, indulgences, because of this mindset? While I don’t believe that the primary job of pastors is to mow the lawn, fix the plumbing, and paint the parsonage, I do believe that this type of work isn’t beneath them either.

Guinness shatters this ideology by postulating, “Calling is the truth that God calls us to Himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to His summons and service.” We have discussed here the blending of those—God calls us to Himself and calls us to walk worthy of that calling.

The third category of calling is NOT universal. It is a **secondary calling to SOME CHRISTIANS for special service**. We normally think of a call as involving pastoral ministry, missionary service, Christian education, etc. These are generally a “life calling.” However, special callings can also be time-limited as a calling in the moment or a calling for a season. For all of the possibilities, God gives grace. He equips, He commissions, He enables.

All of us should be obedient to His call and His placement. Our heart cry should be, “Lord, use me however you want!” You may never receive a secondary call. That isn’t your concern. Just keep walking in the light! ■

“Her children rise up and call her blessed.” Proverbs 31:28a (NKJV)

A Mother Worthy of Blessing



by Kent Stetler and Maria (Stetler) Robledo

No doubt this is the desire of every mother—to be loved, appreciated, and cherished by her children; to have faults forgiven, past hurts or mistakes set aside, and beautiful memories elevated to normal remembrance. It’s a common statement that “motherhood is the hardest of jobs” and there’s little denying the truth of that sentiment, but what is it that makes an adult look back on his or her mother’s life and “bless her?”

Our mother, Beth (Sankey) Stetler, exemplifies many good qualities and characteristics. She also has some flaws—but not many! From our perspective, it is EASY to look back and bless her for the work she did in raising us to be (somewhat) dignified adults. As we reflect, these are some of the characteristics we admire:

Dedicated: Mom was—and is—dedicated to her Savior, her family, and her work (both motherhood and employment). If there was work to be done, she took care of it and did a thorough job—no sense waiting around. She completed each task with tenacity, while also training

us from an early age to roll up our own sleeves and be a part of the work God had given to our family.

Fun: You won’t meet a funnier person than our mom. She wasn’t the kind to play lots of games or build forts, but she knew how to make laughter a part of everyday moments. Her kids were not nuisances—even though we definitely were at times—but rather, we brought her joy. She returned the favor by bringing joy and laughter to our home.

Generous: Mom has been frugal since the moment of her birth, and she instilled in us the importance of saving. Whether that was saving money for future purchases or being quick to save the leftover napkins from a fast-food restaurant. “Waste not, want not” is an appropriate adage for her mentality. Though operating on a shoestring budget, she always managed to keep our finances in check which enabled her to be generous in giving. While we may poke fun at the extent of her frugality, we could all save a few more “napkins” today so that we might have more to share with others tomorrow.

Hard-working: A little hard work never scared Mom. She tirelessly plugged away at cleaning the church, preparing materials for conventions, and plucking weeds on the school playground, all while ensuring that we survived at home, as well. She didn't have to be the best at everything—but she gave her best for everything!

Self-Sacrificing: Raising kids is hard work. Mom missed out on many conversations, meals, and fun times with her peers because she made us her first priority. Her self-sacrifice in those early years paid dividends years later when we were adolescents and young adults. We knew all too well what we could and couldn't do!

Consistent: Perhaps the greatest defining characteristic Mom has had is her consistency in life, parenting, and faith. When she settles on a decision or accepts direction from God in a particular area, she does not waver. As a parent, when she gave instructions, you knew she meant what she said. In recent years, this quality has been further solidified with the passing of our father in September 2021



after a short bout with Covid. Our world was turned upside down with his untimely passing. What looked like a wonderful future and retirement years ahead for Mom and Dad shifted to a critical decision point for Mom, "Will I trust God with this new journey of grief and unknowns?" Unwaveringly, she has kept her hand in her Savior's and walked the painful road set before her. It hasn't been easy, but she has kept her joy, her faith, and her commitment to God. She is consistent in every season of life.

But let's stop here and assure you, dear reader, that our mother was most definitely not perfect! Oh, absolutely not! Mom would be the first to tell you this. That stereotypical picture of a soft, tender, doting mother—that wasn't Beth Stetler.

You see, Mom was the master of, "You're going to be fine. No need to cry!"

When Kent hit a rock while rollerblading and broke his arm, she was the first at the scene. She brushed off

the arm and said, "It's okay, there's no blood. You're going to be fine."

Dad took one look and quickly said, "That's broken." Point—Dad!

There was also the time a wasp landed on Maria's leg. Mom, being the sharpshooter that she was, hurled a nearby boot at the insect. The wasp lived and Maria's leg was never the same. Point—boot!

Then there was the time when we were all outdoors and Mom spotted a snake. Rather than fighting the beast herself, or grabbing her children in her arms, Mom decided the best course of action was to run away as fast as she could while looking over her shoulder and shouting "RUN kids!" Was this conventional? Probably not. Effective? Most definitely! We ran, and we all survived. Point—Mom!

Please don't think we are belittling our mother with these stories. They are what make us love her even more. Remember what we said earlier about her being fun? One of our Mom's best qualities is that she's able to step back and laugh at herself or the situations in which she finds herself. We have howled with laughter at the many times in which the "stereotypical" picture of motherhood was not followed. But it's what has made the relationship between us so strong! As both of us are now parents, we see clearly how difficult it is to be nurturing, but firm; tough, but tender; patient, but consistent; fun, but serious. We aren't perfect; but neither was Mom; nevertheless we are all doing our best to reflect a good God to our kids!

During this Mother's Day season, we are reminded how the surrender of one's life to the direction of the Holy Spirit makes all the difference. Our mother didn't need to be perfect. In fact, her "flaws" were as much of a help to us as her strengths. She modeled a dependency on the God Whose "strength is made perfect in our weakness." As we moved into adulthood, we dove into Scripture like Mom, embedding its guidance deep into our own lives. In the same way Mom must have felt "in over her head" many days, we do too with our own kids; but we are learning to rely on the daily, sufficient grace that God has given us for our battles.

Hopefully, we won't throw boots to kill wasps, or brush off a broken arm—although, we will definitely run from snakes! Our prayer is that we would have a double portion of the spirit, grit, and consistency of Beth Stetler. And that the lives we live will, like Mom's, point our children toward Heaven. We, her children, rise up and call her **blessed!** ■

Kent Stetler (BA '15) worked as a student recruiter and Admissions Coordinator (2013-17) at God's Bible School and has been the college registrar since 2017. He and his wife Jananne have two children, Kaden (4) and Crew (2). The Stetlers live on campus.

Maria (Stetler) Robledo (AA & BA '12) worked as GBS Director of Institutional Advancement (2012-17) as well as Director of Human Resources (2013-20). Maria and Bryan have one child, Sophia (1). They live in Federal Way, WA, where Bryan pastors a church.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

I enjoy reading your paper—lots of good articles. Thank you!

CAROL SPEICHER
Belleville, PA

I wonder if I may be the last of the high school class of 1950? My sister Myrtle Wiseman graduated from both the high school as well as the Christian Workers Course before me. So, you can see that we have been a Revivalist Family for a long time. I am now 92 years old. Great improvements have been made in every way at GBS and all good news. Thanks for continuing to send *God's Revivalist* to me.

MRS. JESSIE (WISEMAN) COWLES
Charleston, WV

I love reading *God's Revivalist*! The March issue was so heartwarming! It brought back sweet memories of my own conversion story. May God continue to bless God's Bible School and all it does. Thank you for a wonderful magazine!

CATHY BOZEMAN
Andalusia, AL

Thank you so much for the beautiful tribute to my dad in *God's Revivalist* [April 2024, p.22]. It was so thoughtful and was so touching to see his life presented so beautifully. Thank you for honoring him so well! Much appreciated!

JANIE BROCK EISENHART
Facebook message

Thank you for selecting my story for the April issue of the *God's Revivalist* [p.6]. Several people have contacted me expressing their appreciation for sharing my experiences. Stay strong in the Lord.

DR. JOE C. BROWN
GBS faculty (1976-88); academic dean (1982-88)
phone text

out of darkness into light

CONVERSION STORIES

LOVE LIFTED ME

by Elaine Fetteroff

The words to "Love Lifted Me" are my testimony: "I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore...." BUT "love lifted me." Conviction is not pleasant, but when it was necessary in my life, I thank the Lord that He loved me and was faithful to my needy heart. When I surrendered to Jesus, He forgave. I am thankful for His great love and His redeeming grace. I am thankful for the blood of Jesus. He suffered terribly and gave His life to redeem my soul! 📖



Elaine Fetteroff (CWC '70, BA '73) was the GBS General Office assistant supervisor (1973-80). She worked as a clerk for more than 30 years in Bellafonte, PA, before retiring in 2013.

SIMPLE ACT OF KINDNESS

by Stan Ellingson

To whoever it was: You unexpectedly dropped by our house—brought a loaf of bread and tomatoes—gave them to my mother—said you had extra. You didn't know our dad had left us just months before. You didn't know Mother was nearly out of food. You didn't know she had used her grocery money to help get my brother and me to summer church camp that week. You didn't know I accepted Jesus into my heart at that camp. You didn't know that Mother absolutely loved tomato sandwiches. You didn't know how much God used you in that simple act of kindness to change the life of an 8-year-old boy in the summer of 1967. Thanks for bringing the bread and tomatoes. It played a big part in my conversion! 📖



Stan Ellingson (HS '76) has hosted a radio show on Faith and Family Radio since 2014. He also serves as assistant principal at East Dayton Christian School, Dayton, OH.



collected and 96 potential lives saved! Thanks also to the Student Government officers who liaised with Hoxworth and worked to make the day a huge success.

—*Sonja Vernon, Vice President for Student Affairs*



Student Ethan Huff cheerfully donates blood.

BLOOD DRIVE

On March 7, GBS held its annual Blood Drive. The Student Government officers coordinated with Hoxworth Blood Center to help make this day possible. Our collection goal was 35 units. We had 36 volunteer donors come forward, including 17 first-time donors. This resulted in 32 units being

SWSE TOUR

The Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble held five services in Ohio and Pennsylvania, March 20-24. This year's orchestra had 30 students and 7 staff/faculty for a combined 37-piece ensemble. Each service featured 11 musical selections, several including a vocal ensemble, all under the direction of Michael DeStefano.

This tour included two new churches for SWSE.



SWSE Vocal Ensemble sings at the Salem, OH, Bible Methodist Church.

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



Melissa Brielle Crosley to Chandler Jonathan Witter, September 1, 2023, at Bible Holiness Church, Shelbyville, IN. Rev. David Crosley, Mr. Jonathan Witter, and Rev. Steven Hight officiated. Chandler and Melissa live on the campus of GBS, where Chandler is the Graduate Program administrative assistant, and Melissa is Assistant Dean of Women. Melissa graduated from GBS with a BA in Integrative Studies in 2018; Chandler with a BA in Bible and Theology in 2022. He is currently enrolled in the MA in Ministry program. Both of Melissa's parents, David (BA '87) and Tamarah (Huber) (BA '87), are GBS alumni and former staff members. David was principal of Aldersgate Christian

Academy (1991-2004) and Tamara was an ACA teacher (1991-97) and ACA administrative assistant (1997-2004). Both David and Jonathan Witter (Chandler's father) are members of the GBS Board of Trustees.

DEATHS



Virginia Allan (Harper) Link, 89, passed away February 9, 2024, at Residences at Park Place, Seneca, SC, surrounded by her loving family. She was born October 23, 1934, in Springfield, MO, and raised in Newport, TN. Virginia was the daughter of Walter Allen Harper and Josephine Angeline Lile Harper. She attended GBS, earning a Christian Worker's Course diploma in 1956. At GBS she met fellow student Orvan Link (ThB '59, BA '60) and they were married in 1958. Together they served over 25 years as career missionaries in Guatemala and Colombia.

Tour Director Rev. Duane Quesenberry expressed praise to God for good attendance, generous offerings, and God's blessings in each



SWSE at the Bunkertown, PA, Brethren Church

service, adding that those in attendance were effusive in their expressions of appreciation.

Looking ahead, the 2025 Spring Tour is scheduled to return to the Midwest next March.

EASTER EGG HUNT

On March 28, the Children's Ministry Interest Group staged the annual GBS Easter Egg Hunt for the campus children. Thirty-six chil-

dren, ages 12 and under, registered to participate. When they gathered at the front steps of the Standley Administration Building, even more showed up. Over 1,000 eggs filled with candy, money, and prizes were hidden around the campus. Monica Gera shared an interactive resurrection story with the children before the hunt began. Of course, the children had a great time, but so did the parents taking pictures of their little ones! ➡



Hudson Owens finds an egg.



Upon returning to the United States, the Links served their alma mater from 1975 to 1978, Virginia as Assistant Housekeeping Supervisor and Listroom Supervisor, and Orvan as Christian Service Director and a member of the faculty. This time at GBS, Virginia completed a BRE degree (1978). She also fulfilled a lifelong dream by becoming a registered nurse at age 55. She cared for her patients at Oconee Memorial Hospital in Seneca and was a member of ALIVE Wesleyan Church in Central, SC.

Virginia is survived by her husband Orvan and three sons: Glen David Link (HS '78), Orvan Dale (Sheryl) Link, and Steven Philip (Sheree) Link; four grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. A Celebration of Life service was held at Welcome Wesleyan Church.



Rev. James Robert Hulett, 85, of Elizabeth City, NC, passed away on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at Sentara Albemarle Medical Center in Elizabeth City. He was born August 22, 1938, to Rev. Sewell Stephen Hulett and Mildred Marie

Marr Hulett Turner of Prestonburg, KY. James graduated from GBS High School in 1958 and attended the college 1958-59. He married Charlotte Esther Rogers, and together they pastored Pilgrim Holiness and Wesleyan churches in Kentucky, Ohio, and North Carolina for over 60 years. After retirement, he attended the First Church of the Nazarene and Fountain of Life Church in Elizabeth City. He also played an active role in the Kairos of North Carolina Prison Ministry in Elizabeth City, and he was a *God's Revivalist* subscriber.

In 2023 James was preceded in death by his loving wife of nearly 65 years. He is survived by his two sons, Gregory Keith (Susan) and Timothy Joseph; daughter, Barbara Jane (Forrest) Turner; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held at the First Church of the Nazarene, Elizabeth City, conducted by Rev. Kenneth Greenway.

Dewey Stanton King, 80, of Lexington, NC, and formerly of Rutland, OH, passed away March 22, 2024, at Atrium Health in Pineville, NC. Dewey was born on ➡

ALUMNI CHOIR REUNION

On Saturday, April 6, 2024, a group of former College Choir members gathered with Garen L. Wolf I (Music Division Chair 1976-2010) and his wife, Sheila (GBS faculty 1976-2012), to share a much-anticipated day of reunion. The event was hosted at New Life Community Church in Cincinnati. As alumni gathered to sing in the church sanctuary and enjoy a meal in the fellowship center, choir members got to relive great memories and get a taste of choir tour once again.

The event was organized by the Alumni Choir Planning Team: Matt (1988-2000) and Joy (Bender) (BA '00) Barnett, Paul (BA '81) and Robyn

(Myers) (BA '82) Clemens, Rob (BA '99) and Stephanie (Thompson) (BA '99) Ryan, and Lisa (Burton) Robison (BA '02). Alumni volunteers and friends helped staff the reunion. Participants arrived from several states, including Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, North Carolina, Michigan, and Virginia. Organizers welcomed many first-time attendees from every decade of Garen Wolf's tenure, but the 80s decade was especially represented.

The reunion began at 9:30 a.m. with Craig (BRE '79) and JoEllen (Walker) (BA '77) Dahler overseeing registration. A light breakfast snack was provided in the atrium, while Nick Pop

(BA '00) ran a slide show of old pictures on the church's media screens. Lisa Robison oversaw the children's registration, while Julie Going (BA '16) provided childcare for the day.

Joel Wegener (1985-86) was an outstanding sponsor of the 2024 Alumni Choir Kids' program. To the



Under the direction of Music Division Chair Emeritus Garen Wolf, the Reunion Choir sings through classic College Choir repertoire.

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ August 31, 1943, in Summersville, WV, son of the late Dorsey P. and Sarah Martha (Bailes) King. Dewey was a wonderful father, a carpenter, and the retired pastor of Rose of Sharon Holiness Church. He also enjoyed gardening. He was married to Patricia Ann Smith on December 19, 1964, and she preceded him in death on December 3, 2022.



Dewey is survived by two daughters, Kathy (Roy) Tackett and Melody (Brent) Myers; one son, Michael (Dawn) King; twelve grandchildren; thirty-three great-grandchildren; and one sister, Janet Nipp. His funeral was held at Willis Funeral Home, Gallipolis, OH, with Rev. Derald Hunt officiating. Burial followed in Gravel Hill Cemetery, Cheshire, OH.

Bonnie Cleaver, 93, of Hobe Sound, FL, passed away April 4, 2024. She was born in 1931 to Ralph and Verba Cleaver. Her teen years were spent clerking in her father's grocery store in Milesburg, PA. She and her sister attended a "union revival" of three churches, where both were saved. Later, their parents were saved, and Bonnie began placing gospel tracts



in grocery bags and rounding up neighborhood children for Sunday school, etc. When R.G. Flexon spoke at a local missions convention, God let her know that He wanted her to be a missionary to Africa.

In 1960, after both Bible college and nurse's training, she set sail for Africa, where she began ministering. Then, in 1971, Bonnie teamed up with God's Missionary Church to begin a new field of labor in Haiti. There she, along with other missionaries, labored in churches, elementary schools, a clinic, and a Bible school. The year 2000 brought great heartbreak to Bonnie. The doctor who had examined her worn physical frame, now plagued with asthma and emphysema, told her that she could not return to Haiti. She moved to the campus of Hobe Sound Bible College and Sea Breeze Camp in Florida where God continued to use her in the ministry of prayer. Bonnie discovered Haitians in Florida whom she has mentored and helped lead to Jesus. When she spoke in missionary services at churches, camp meetings, or schools, she influenced many young people to leave all to follow Jesus. She was also a subscriber to *God's Revivalist*. A private burial was held at Advent Cemetery in Boggs Township, PA. ■

delight of all the attendees, Joel brought his ice cream truck, Special Neat Treats, and provided a free ice cream treat for all the children, as well as to some of the “bigger kids!” Special Neat Treats was widely featured on national news when Joel bought the truck to provide employment for his children with special needs. His contribution to the day was a blessing!

The morning rehearsal began with Don Bates, Jr. (BA '91), and Matt and Joy Barnett singing some familiar songs as choir members took their places and joined in. Then Garen Wolf conducted songs that had been part of the choir repertoire throughout his tenure, including some numbers that have become Alumni Choir favorites. Beloved choir accompanist, Martha (Madden) Miller (BSM '82) provided piano accompaniment. Mr. Wolf shared encouragement and admonition in his unique way, as voices from various decades harmonized together in praise.

A highlight of the day was the reunion of the college choir quartet from the 80s featuring Mark Dubbeld (BA '91), Scott Butler (HS '88, college 1988-89), and Kevin



Donna (Downing) Buck crowns Sheila Wolf the “queen of our choir and queen of our hearts.”



The Reunion Quartet L-R: Mark Dubbeld, Scott Butler, Kevin Moser, and Mike Mater (filling in for Jonathan Cresse)

Commissioning Weekend

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



guest speaker:
Darrell Stetler II
Oklahoma City, OK

Moser (HS '82, BA '90). Michael Mater, (AAS, BA '07) stepped in beautifully to fill the bass part when Jonathan Cresse (BA '90) was unable to attend. The group sang three of the songs they had recorded on the original GBS *Redeemed* project, as well as “Little Is Much When God Is in it,” a favorite of President Bence Miller. Hearts soared as these extraordinarily gifted alumni blended their voices together once again.

Other soloists for the day included Mark Dubbeld, Michelle (Miller) Mater (HS '01, BA '07), Rhoda Bell Miles (BA '05), and Joy Barnett.

The group was honored to have GBS Chancellor and former President Dr. Michael Avery (BRE '79), along with his wife, Ruth (Vernon) (BA '80) drop in for a brief visit. He brought a personal greeting and told a story about trying out for choir his first year at GBS. Dr. Jana (Burrows) Pop (BA '03) also gave a greeting as head of the Music Division, and expressed appreciation for the legacy of excellence left behind by Mr. Wolf. It was a pleasure to welcome former music faculty member Dr. Paul Peak (faculty 1978-92) and his wife, Esther, to be part of the day. He shared some memories and thanked God for His direction through Mr. Wolf's call to work at GBS, which changed the trajectory of his life and ministry.

An instrumental ensemble accompanied many of the songs, adding a special touch to the day. Instrumentalists included Samantha (Ryan) Castle (current student/staff), Sarah (Wolf) Fry (HS '95, BA '00), Michelle Mater, Michelle Probst (AAS '15, BA '15, BA '17), Jonna McCaman (BA '01), Danella Joslin (BA '97), Donna (Downing) Buck (BA '00), Samuel Cramer (HS '17, BA '21), and Chris Castle (current student/staff).

Throughout the morning, there were moments for stories and laughter, along with a few tears. The music portion of the day ended with the group gathered on

the platform risers in a triumphant rendition of Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus, while Jessica Smith (BA '07) added the organ to Mrs. Miller's piano accompaniment.

The group then gathered in the fellowship hall for a meal provided by event planners and alumni, with Bev Replogle and Esther Replogle hosting. Mary (Black) Burton (1990-93), a long-time volunteer for Alumni Choir Reunion, handled donations and directed logistics for the meal. A special thanks to David Medellin (2012-18) for catering a delicious, authentic Mexican menu for the day.



During lunch, "Traveling Light" provided an opportunity for choir members to share funny stories about their experiences traveling for GBS. Nick Turner (BA '08) shared a very funny story about a group of boys almost getting arrested and jailed during choir tour as they breached security protocol by wandering into a public high school. Sherilyn (Wentworth) Bozone (BA '93) shared a story about a hilarious overnight stay involving a woman who took her collection of dolls very seriously. Dwayne Potteiger (BRE '85) shared a story about a pair of Florsheim shoes he bought for traveling in 1982. He called them his "wilderness wandering shoes," since they haven't worn out in 40 years! He also shared a bit about his health journey with us, as he testified powerfully about how God uses us in spite of our weaknesses.

Duane Quesenberry (BA '94), current director of Public Relations, brought greetings and gave an update from the school. A skit reminded members of the dreaded choir "quartets," the means by which choir members were graded on their memorization of songs and parts. (Students had to sing four at a time, one on each part, in front of the choir while teachers graded them). At one point, the former choir members joined as Wes Hurler (HS '92, BA '18) led in singing a traditional song the choir used to sing on the bus, "I Can't Even Walk Without You Holding My Hand."

Then Donna Buck hosted a special tribute to the Wolfs in which she discussed all the "hats" they wore as they filled various roles. In an especially touching moment, she crowned Sis. Wolf as the "queen of our choir and queen of our hearts," giving her a beautiful floral bouquet. Using a hat tree filled with all kinds of different hats, Donna passed out a hat to every table. Representatives from each table brought their hats to the front and shared a story about Bro. or Sis. Wolf, and how they wore that hat. The group then sang, "Thank You for Giving to the Lord" as an expression of gratitude to the Wolfs for all they have invested in the lives of the choir members.

An auction occurred throughout the lunch hour with donated items from alumni and local businesses to help raise money for the day's expenses. A very special surprise donation was a beautiful handmade quilt made by former GBS librarian Mrs. Judy Burton (1994-00), mother of Lisa Robison. Generous donations from the GBS Alumni Choir members helped support the day and made planning for the future possible.

Once again, in Alumni Choir tradition, the group ended the day singing "Loving God, Loving Each Other." It was an unforgettable day of connection for Alumni Choir members of all ages as they laughed and cried, sang and worshipped together.

Feedback from alumni included: "I'm not a music major so I usually feel so 'unlearned,' but this year was super meaningful to me. I felt deeply connected to the history and Christian community we've been so blessed with." "It was a cool feeling of belonging today—I haven't felt that in quite a while." "I just wanted to share how amazing this year's choir reunion was to me! It just keeps getting better, and this year was a grand slam! I really enjoyed the quartet. I saw people I had not seen since high school days! I believe God is working in this reunion in ways you all don't even realize. Bringing us all back together has a healing effect that you may not understand." "I'm still just so blessed from yesterday." "I loved being there! It is such a shot in the arm! People who come have lived life and so need to feel the love that we all feel there.... the unity was amazing."

Rob Scott (student 1983-85, Revivalist Press staff 1984-94) served as volunteer photographer for the event, along with various other alumni. Further information can be found by joining the Facebook group "GBS Alumni Choir." Anyone who has ever been a part of college choir at GBS is invited next year! There's a spot for YOU on the risers! ■



I Found Jesus in a Phone Booth

by Kenneth Harms

I was born into a Catholic family in North Tonawanda, New York, in 1956. I was the middle child of five, and I attended church regularly with my mom, dad, brother, and sisters. I can remember all of us Catholic kids being dismissed early from public elementary school once each week in the 1960s so that we could be bussed to Ascension Roman Catholic Church two miles away to attend catechism classes.

As a family, we never prayed together except to say grace before our supper. We never read the Bible together and didn't even have a family Bible in our home. I did, however, pay attention during Catholic mass each week and recognized that when three Scriptures were read (one each from the Old Testament, the Epistles, and the Gospels), I was hearing God's truth.

We lived in a housing project for most of my public-school years. I did well in school but lived for the weekend. With one foot in church and one foot in the world, I started drinking beer when I was 12 years old, and I smoked marijuana and used other drugs in my teen years.

I had been baptized as a baby, received my first communion as a child, and underwent my confirmation ceremony as a young person. I had learned that the Holy Spirit was the One Who would guide us. I was yet to learn that He also convicts of sin.

Though steeped in Catholicism with all its pageantry and ceremony, I did develop a fear and reverence for God. From my religious educa-

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tion, I knew God in my head—but not in my heart. Intellectually, I understood the doctrine of the Trinity, but I didn't know the Triune God in a personal, saving way.

During my teen years, Friday and Saturday nights were spent drinking beer, partying, and carousing with friends. I certainly found pleasure in my sin, but I was never satisfied. If it met my need, why did I have to seek it again and again? The Holy Spirit sent us a faithful messenger we referred to as "Holy Joe." He gave us illustrated gospel tracts in the midst of our darkness. I would better understand his mission later.

During my senior year of high school, we moved from North Tonawanda to Tonawanda. There I attended the nearby Saint Francis Roman Catholic Church. It was during this time that conviction set in upon my soul, and I began my journey toward forgiveness and conversion.

All the while, I thought I was a fairly good guy, not as bad as some. I regularly attended church and went to confession. The priest instructed me to do penance to "make up" for my sins. I did the penance, but I also committed the same sins over again. I was powerless in my own strength to live a life of victory over the sins which were destroying me. In my youth, I had won more fights than I had lost. Yet, for all my physical strength, I was no match for the dark forces in the spiritual battle I faced.

I believed that I was supposed to do my best to keep the Ten Commandments. But one day in church, 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 was read out loud to the congregation. God was telling me to "flee fornication," that my body was the "temple of the Holy Ghost," and that I was not my own. I was "bought with a price" (the blood of Jesus Christ). Therefore, I was to glorify God in my body and in my spirit, which belonged to Him. "He that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (v.18). Up until that day in church, I had figured that since the seventh commandment said "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14), having sex was okay as long as you weren't messing around with someone else's spouse. I didn't know what "fornication" actually meant, but from the biblical context, I had an idea. So I looked it up in the dictionary. What I found is that while adultery is sexual sin involving at least one who is married to someone else, fornication is a broader term that encompasses adultery, but refers to any sexual activity outside of marriage. Though I tried, there was no arguing with God on this issue.

Deep conviction settled in. Just as Nathan came to David about his sins, God was saying to me, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). And just like Paul, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment

came, sin revived, and I died" (Rom. 7:9). I realized I was in desperate need of salvation!

My Aunt Sue, who was attending a local Baptist church, took me to see her pastor. This man of God was faithful to share the gospel with me. He told me, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). He explained from the Scriptures that Jesus was standing at my heart's door knocking and seeking to come in (Rev. 3:20). I could see in my mind's eye Jesus in a white robe standing outside my heart's door, waiting to enter. I prayed with the pastor but didn't really mean it; I was troubled with counting the cost of such a conversion. My hesitation was fueled by thoughts of "but what about this?" or "what about that?" What would my girlfriend say, for instance, if I told her we had to make changes in our behavior—that certain activities could no longer happen. In addition, I couldn't picture myself being a "Jesus freak" and saying things like "Praise the Lord!"

All my life I had been told "Jesus died on the cross for your sins." I didn't fully understand the truth of this until I realized that I was the sinner for whom He died. It was like a veil was removed from my heart, allowing me to see my sinful state clearly. Throughout my life, others made decisions for me; but the decision that was before me now was mine alone to make. And yet, I was not totally alone, for Jesus said, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44a). But it just seemed impossible that I could ever love the things I hated and hate the things I loved. I didn't know that my heart could be transformed by the grace of God.

Because I put off the decision to ask Jesus to come into my heart, the Devil





was allowed to bring in condemnation. Whereas the Savior offered forgiveness, peace, and joy, the Devil rubbed my face in the sins of my past. “You’ve been so bad, God could never forgive you,” he accused. Like a drowning man whose life flashes before him, things I did in the past—sinful things, shameful things, lies and thefts and evil words—all flashed through my mind and weighed heavy on my soul. It was awful! I became depressed, knowing I was going to hell, a prisoner of sin and guilt. As I assessed my condition and situation, there was no way out. In desperation I even made a promise: “God, if you get me out of this, I’ll become a priest.”

God was faithful. In the middle of my torment, I opened a paraphrase of the Bible, and there, by a black-and-white picture of a stream in the wintertime with snow-covered banks on either side, were these words: “No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I (the Lord) can take it out and make you clean as freshly fallen snow” (Isa. 1:18b, TLB). This gave me hope at a time that I was hopeless.

In the summer of 1976, I entered a phone booth in downtown Tonawanda to contact a local Christian call-in line that offered spiritual help. A young man answered the phone. He shared the same gospel message I had heard previously from the Baptist minister. This time when I was invited to pray to receive Jesus into my heart, I prayed and meant it. This time when the “buts” came, I dismissed them and said, “I must go with God!”

I came out of that phone booth a different person. It wasn’t like a bolt of lightning, but I knew something happened and that this was the beginning of a new

period. Jesus gave a peace to my heart I had never known before. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

I began reading the Bible and attending a Catholic charismatic prayer group on Wednesday evenings. Although men and women of all ages attended, the core of the group was made up of many older women. These people had a genuine love for me and their fellowship was a source of strength as I sought to rebuild my new life in Christ. Many knew Jesus as their personal Savior, even though they still held to Catholic positions. My soul was fed when we prayed, sang, and worshiped together, freely offering praise to our Lord. (It was there also that I met a beautiful young lady who would become my wife, but that is a different story.)

God wasn’t finished with any of us yet. Some of us eventually felt led to leave the Catholic Church as we walked in the light of God’s Word. That is a big step for a lifelong Catholic. It is amusing to me now, but immediately after I received Christ I thought, “Thank God I got saved in the one true Church!”

I wasn’t always faithful in my new Christian life, but God certainly was. He taught me repentance rather than penance so that I could walk in victory over my besetting sins. “...Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4b).

As I have grown in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, He has shown Himself mighty on my behalf. I have learned never to give up, even when I can’t see a way out. God’s grace is stronger than sin, and His Word is not restrained by man’s religion and tradition.

After I had been in factory work for over 30 years, we moved from New York to South Carolina. Since October, 2018, I have been the local parts delivery driver for Honda and Acura in the Greenville area. I drive approximately 150 miles each day in a 25-mile radius around Greenville. My job has been a real godsend as it allows me to interact with many different customers from different ethnic backgrounds and walks of life. I can honestly say this is the best job I have ever had. I get to share a Christian testimony with my customers as the Lord leads.

To Him be glory, both now and forever! Amen. ■

Kenneth B. Harms and his wife Shirley live in Greenville, SC. They have five adult children, three of whom attended GBS: Bethany (BA '04), Stephen (AA '08), and Timothy (2009-2010). Stephen has been working in the Information Technology department at GBS since 2008.

PREVIOUS PAGE. Bottom left: Ken’s first communion. Top left: before Christ; Right: after Christ.

BELOW: Ken and Shirley and their eight grandchildren, Katie Fleming, Stephen Harms, Stewart Harms, Emmalee Harms, Annabelle Harms, Genna Harms, Daniel Harms, and TJ Harms.





Echoes *from a* Neighbor's Knock

by Jack Hooker



The story of my conversion really starts with the story of my mother's conversion. I will not know until I get to Heaven the name of the neighbor who knocked on our door one day in 1956. She graciously invited my mother to a revival meeting held at a small church one-half block down the street. The basement was the only part of the building completed, so it was very unattractive. My mother attended the revival service that night. She returned home feeling really bad, a feeling described as being "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). Although my mother was college-educated, she was spiritually unlearned. She did not know that the feeling she was experiencing was actually conviction—the work of the Holy Spirit awakening her spirit to her lostness and need of salvation.

The next morning my mother took my sister Joan and me, ages 3 and 4 respectively, and headed to that little church down the street. In God's great providence, the pastor and evangelist were there praying. The pastor took care of my sister and me as the evangelist led my mother in the sinner's prayer. In a moment of time, conviction changed to joy, sin to salvation, lostness to hope, and Heaven became her destination instead of Hell. Since that day our family has never been the same.

Sometime later I asked my mother, "Can I be saved?" Mother was so new in the faith that she really did not know if children could be saved. Regardless, she took me into my bedroom, and we knelt at my

maple twin bed. She led me in the same prayer the evangelist had prayed with her. And, praise the Lord, Jesus saved me!

For years I went through times of mental and spiritual bondage. Because of the young age at which I was saved, I never thought about marking the month, let alone the day or time. I also never had a testimony of deliverance from a life entangled by sin. But one day I heard a preacher testify in a ministerial conference. He said that the Lord had delivered him from a sinful life *before* he actually lived out that rebellion. A light went on in my mind and joy in my heart. I could look back and see the many things from which God had preemptively delivered me. I remembered times when there were opportunities to get involved in things that may have changed the course of my life—but God was faithful to protect me from the destructive effects of a wrong choice. Did I have bumps in my walk with Christ? Absolutely. But by His grace I never remember a moment where I did not want to serve the Lord. Praise His Name! And throughout my life the mother that led me to the Lord faithfully prayed for me. ■



Jack Hooker (BRE '74), is a pastor and evangelist. He served as Vice President for Advancement at GBS from 2001 to 2004 and is a long-term member of its Board of Trustees. He and his wife Jane (1973-74) live in Westfield, IN.



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

HOW DO WE BECOME HOLY?

by Tom Hermiz

God didn't say, "Be omnipotent, for I am all powerful," or "Be omniscient, for I am all wise." He said, "Be holy for I am holy." God doesn't expect us to attain to His divine attributes, He expects us to live holy lives by His grace and power.

Personal holiness is simply loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. But, loving anyone or anything more than God is sin (see Ex. 20:3). Human nature demands a master. Personal holiness is giving our heart wholly to God, and allowing Him to be the Master of our lives.

REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

Before we begin to live holy lives, we must repent of our sins and receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23 NKJV). When we repent of our sins, we become new in Christ Jesus (see 2 Cor. 5:17). This spiritual transformation, the new birth, frees us from the guilt of past sinful living.

NEED AND SURRENDER

The next step is to make a complete surrender of our heart and will to God. At some point following conversion, the believer will sense the need of a deeper cleansing of the heart from its sinful condition. This experience, called entire sanctification, is different from the new birth:

- The new birth deals with guilt caused by the acts of sin committed in the past.
- Entire sanctification deals with the sinful condition of the heart, which is the cause of rebellion against the Spirit until the heart is purified.

ASSURANCE AND VICTORY

How do we know we are entirely sanctified? The Holy Spirit always bears witness to His work. Spiritual

fruit produced by His presence is as natural as fruit on a tree. We are partakers of His divine nature. The presence of a holy God produces holiness of character and action. As we walk in the light of His truth, we grow in likeness to Him.

We will still be vulnerable to temptation and the possibility of sinning, but we live by the promise: "Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14a). Our part is

At some point following conversion, the believer will sense the need of a deeper cleansing of the heart from its sinful condition.

willingly (and continually) to acknowledge the lordship of Christ. God's part is to cleanse us from sin and to fill us with the Holy Spirit. "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16 NKJV).

When our heart has been cleansed from all sin, and our wills totally surrendered to God, we can live victoriously through the power of the Holy Spirit. ■

Dr. Tom Hermiz served for 12 years as the General Superintendent of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union. He is now active as a speaker for camp meetings, Bible and missions conferences, and local church crusades. He currently serves as the president of the Avon Park Holiness Camp Meeting. He and his wife Ella Mae make their home in the Circleville, OH, area. This article appeared online at HolinessLegacy.com and is used here with permission.

What the World Needs Now Is the Church That Jesus Started

by Garland R. Wallace



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Look at the status of our American culture quickly reveals that America is fast moving away from the belief in the God of the Bible and His plan for human beings. America is on a fast track to experience the wrath of God's judgment. Scripture informs that the most severe form of God's judgment is not fire and brimstone, but rather the removal of His presence and protection from rebellious prodigals. It is as if God is saying, "If you do not want Me, okay. I'll leave you alone."

Nothing is more frightening! God turns those who reject Him over to degrading passions, as the Apostle Paul spells out in Romans chapter one. In reality, no one wants to live in a society where the God of the Bible is absent.

THE AMERICAN CULTURE

The sad fact is that America as a nation is morally and spiritually bankrupt. Many Americans act as if God no longer exists or that He just does not matter. The strange thing is that some of these very people still believe they are going to Heaven when they die. A quick assessment shows that many are worshiping created things rather than the Great Creator. Individuals become their own moral arbiter. The absolutes of their lives are "their truth"—not God's! This deficiency can result in a detachment from a common good that can rightly claim its roots

in Scripture. The various institutions of society begin to break down, even to the point of anarchy.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH

This crisis in America, to a great extent, is due to the failure of the church. What might happen if children in America were taught that God is real, and that the Ten Commandments are great instructions on how to live?

The Church is not simply a "body of people" congregating together for religious purposes. While they may call themselves a church, the reality is that no church is real without the activity of the God of the Bible. God always works consistently with His revealed truth.

The Church today must be what Jesus started while on earth! We will never have a spiritual awakening in America without Spirit-anointed preaching regarding sin, salvation, and judgment to come. How can the Church be so silent in such spiritual darkness?

Sadly, too many pulpits in America today are promoting a feel-good, pop psychology with the promise of financial prosperity and health—yet these preachers never mention sin and God's wonderful promises of a radical cure for the life of sinning.

Think about some areas where the Church is in crisis in America. ***One concern is the issue of the Biblical un-***

derstanding of sin and salvation. I wonder how many pulpits in America even mention the word “sin.” If there is no sin that separates one from the Holy God of the Bible, then there is no need for a Savior and, therefore, no salvation. God has to be more than a buddy in the sky who gives us self-esteem, good health, and the promise of financial prosperity and security.

If sin is mentioned at all, it is often presented in a questionable way. The result is that sin is “no big deal.” Everyone commits sins to some degree or another, so “what’s the problem?” Sin can be defined in one way for one group of people while having a different meaning for another group. This is seen in expressions like “saved sinner” and “lost sinner.” Repentance may not even be mentioned at all. But Jesus did not die for a change of labels. He died to give a change of heart resulting in a change of status and behavior. Genuine conversions seem so rare today that we are shocked when we see them happen. The new birth—the birth from above by the Holy Spirit—results in a radical change of heart.

Another concern is the silence of the pulpits in America regarding the sanctity of marriage and sexual purity. Where is the outcry regarding fornication, adultery, and the LGBT/Trans revolution? These sins are destroying the family and, as a result, our nation! A related concern is how many professing Christians watch the filthy trash produced by Hollywood. The devil could not come up with a better “how to sin” as a teaching tool that degrades the standards of God. The list of concerns could go on. Suffice it to say, the Church must change.

THE NEEDED CHURCH

In order to be the Church that Jesus started, we must be God’s people—living God’s ways. The Church must

be **VIABLE—alive by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.** Without the Spirit, the Church is not the real Church of Jesus. Without Him there is no salvation or sanctification. Jesus said the Church must be salt in a decaying culture.

The Church must be **VISIBLE—light in a dark world.** How shall our world come out of darkness if there is no light to show the way? The life of each Christian within the Church must reflect the values of God, follow His commands, and be holy before a secular nation. This must be done in a spirit of humility, love, and compassion. Can you imagine the impact the Church would have in this world if professing Christians seriously committed themselves to follow Jesus, and if the Church was careful to help them to do just that?

CONCLUSION

There is a final point to be made regarding the Church in America and in our world, and it is encouraging. The Church that Jesus started **FINISHES IN GLORIOUS VICTORY!** Jesus is alive! He is present today in the real Church. He said He would build His Church: “I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The Church wins!

My prayer is that God’s people will once again become and build the Church Jesus started. Our work is cut out for us. I wish to be a part of His construction crew! When this **VIABLE** church is **VISIBLE** within our American culture, it can start a spiritual awakening. Let’s be salt and light! 📌

Garland R. Wallace is a retired minister who spent over 45 years in full-time ministry in the Church of the Nazarene. He has previously published articles in the Herald of Holiness and The Preacher’s Magazine, and is currently working on a 365 daily devotional dedicated to the study of the Book of Hebrews. Garland and his wife Pat live in Gainesville, TX.

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Dear Phil

DIVISIONS AND PUNCTUATION IN THE BIBLE

I ran across a Bible without chapter or verse divisions. When were they added? —Floyd

Dear Floyd,

The story of how divisions and punctuation were added to the Hebrew, Greek, and English Bible is fascinating and complex. All chapter and verse divisions were added centuries, even millennia, after it was originally written. (Punctuation was also added long after the original authors were dead.) Chapter numbers were created in the early 1200s by Stephen Langton, a University of Paris professor and Archbishop of Canterbury. Arabic verse numbers (e.g., 1,2,3) and verse divisions were added to printed Bibles in 1551. These divisions were added to aid readers in locating texts. Imagine trying to find where Jesus healed the blind man or Isaiah prophesied the destruction of Leviathan without chapter or verse divisions! Or think of creating a concordance without such references! Here's the basic story of these divisions in the Hebrew Bible, the Greek New Testament, and the English Bible.

The Hebrew Bible (OT) was composed between 1400–400 BC. In Dead Sea manuscripts dating to 100 BC, we find only paragraph divisions. Blank lines were sometimes added between paragraphs to indicate breaks in thought. Scribes called Masoretes added “periods” to the end of

each “line” by the AD 900s. Around 1330, Rabbi Solomon ben Ismael used the chapter numbers created by Stephen Langton in the margin of the Hebrew Bible he produced. Verse numbers weren't added until 1571 when Arius Montanus added Arabic numbers into the text of his printed polyglot Bible known as the Antwerp Bible or Plantin Polyglot. Most modern Hebrew Bibles continue to follow these chapter and verse divisions (which are different from our English divisions in over 40 places).

The Greek New Testament was composed between AD 45–100. Originally, it had no chapter or verse divisions. Neither did it have punctuation, capitalization, or even spaces between the words! Early in the life of the Church, the gospels and epistles were broken into various sections called pericopes or lections for reading in churches. However, these sections do not correspond to modern chapter divisions. In 1516, Erasmus included Stephen Langton's chapter numbers in the margins of his first printed Greek New Testament. By 1535, he had marked verses with an asterisk in the text and placed Greek letters as numbers in the margin. Arabic numbers were first used to mark verses in Robert Estienne's 1551 Greek-Latin New Testament.

The English New Testament was first printed by William Tyndale in 1526. He included Stephen Langton's chapter numbers and separated each chapter with a blank line and chapter title. The text of each chapter was arranged in paragraphs, without verse numbers of any kind. In 1535, Miles Coverdale added capital letters to the margin of every two paragraphs for easier reference. In 1560, the Geneva Bible was the first English Bible to have separate numbered verses that each begin a new line. The 1568 Bishop's Bible and 1611 King James Version both adopted the Geneva Bible's layout with divided chapters and separate numbered verses.

The benefits of these divisions are well-known; the dangers are less so. Dividing the text by verses has led many to treat each verse as a stand-alone unit. The Book of Proverbs has stand-alone sentence sayings (Prov. 10–21). Yet, not all proverbs are single sentences. Proverbs 2 is one sentence in Hebrew that has been divided into 22 lines. Ephesians 1:3–14 is one sentence in Greek. Beware assuming verses are separable truth nuggets and taking them out of their context.

Chapter divisions break up long texts into manageable reading units. But, beware thinking that the “end of a chapter” is the end of a thought unit, or that reading a “chapter” has special spiritual significance. Sometimes a chapter contains two or three thought units (e.g., Isaiah 30). Other times chapter divisions occur inside a thought unit. For example, verse one of 1 Corinthians 11 belongs with the previous thought unit (1 Cor. 10:23–11:1). Finally, remember, all punctuation was added by editors and is not inspired.

Blessings,
Phil ■

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72% OF EVANGELICALS CAME TO FAITH BEFORE ADULTHOOD

A new study titled “The Spiritual Journey: How Evangelicals Come to Faith” featured research conducted by Grey Matter Research and Infinity Concepts and was based on responses received from 1,010 Evangelical Protestants collected in early 2023. The survey revealed that 72% of respondents came to faith before the age of 18, while the remaining 28% didn't start holding Evangelical beliefs until they were adults. When asked for the “single biggest influence” that caused them to become Evangelicals, responses included: their parents (28%), their church (16%), and “other family members” (11%).

ADMINISTRATIVE ENVOY PAID TO PROMOTE TRANSGENDERISM ABROAD

In September 2021, the U.S. administration-appointed LGBT activist serving as Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of “LGBTQI+ Persons” reportedly earned a six-figure salary (\$183,100 in 2022). This was substantially higher than the average pay for both federal agency employees (152.6%) and national government employees (164.0%). The White House said that the special envoy would help implement the “Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons around the World.”

NO SOLID SCIENTIFIC BACKING FOR “GENDER AFFIRMING CARE” FOR CHILDREN

The World Health Organization (WHO) has been in the process of developing guidelines for the “health of trans and gender diverse people.” However, it has not extended those guidelines to people under the age of 20, because they have concluded that there is no solid scientific backing for giving “gender affirming care” for children or adolescents. It has been reported that of the 21 members of the panel developing the guidelines, only eight are doctors and seven are transgender.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PEOPLE OF FAITH ARE HAPPIER THAN THOSE WITHOUT

In a recent interview with Christian Headlines and Crosswalk, Arthur Brooks, author and college professor who teaches the science of happiness, says the happiness principles work—“I have become a better husband, father, grandfather, and friend.” Brooks says that happiness and living a fulfilling life “begins and ends with four main pillars: faith, family, friends, and work. The first three pillars are essential.... We should also raise our children to respect and enjoy the bonds of family and friends, especially because research shows it is almost impossible to be happy without these loving relationships.”



student focus

ANSON SHUEY, from Bernville, PA, was homeschooled his whole life, and while he admits that GBS was certainly a change from his homeschooling experience, he remarks, “I love GBS’s variety of teaching styles, and the Christlike environment is priceless for spiritual growth, both relationally, and in knowledge.”

Anson feels drawn to the counseling/medical field. GBS offers a “great selection of counseling and psychology classes” that Anson intends to “dabble in to see what field might interest me most.” He desires a career where he can “connect with people personally and see them find the help they need.” He also enjoys music and is involved in the Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble and College Choir at GBS, as well as some musical endeavors at his church.

Anson is currently working towards a BA in Integrative Studies as he learns about professions of interest to him. He may take classes from other universities after finishing his degree at GBS. ■

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

ALUMNI news

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

WHEN THE GBS SAYINGS START TO MAKE SENSE

by Janna Cressman

As a college freshman in the fall of 1997, I began to hear famous quotes that all alumni from GBS would quickly recognize: “The sun never sets on the students of God’s Bible School” and “God’s clock keeps perfect time.” As a young person, those sayings didn’t hold a lot of significance for me; but now, almost 27 years later, these words are a reality.

Our family recently relocated as missionaries from Honduras to Spain. Although we had left a part of our hearts with the people in Honduras, God had clearly given us His approval for this ministry change and had opened doors to make it possible. Moreover, in recent days, some of the connections we have made have been quite amazing!

Perhaps you will remember a past article in *God’s Revivalist*, December 2021, p.21, which told about our family stopping for popsicles at a small food stand in Honduras. As we talked with Elsa, one of the owners, we found out that she was also involved in two ministries—a women’s Bible study group and a



BELOW LEFT: Meeting Elsa’s daughter in Barcelona.

BELOW RIGHT: Wesley and visiting missionary intern Randy Mercado make sandwiches for a ministry to homeless people.



ABOVE: Jana teaches children a Bible lesson in a cafe where they met.
LEFT: Celebrating fathers with cookies on Spain’s “Father’s Day.”
BELOW: An “Abundant Life Group” meets for spiritual growth and fellowship.



children's ministry. She invited us to visit, and we did. As we were exchanging contact information, her sister came out and showed us a photo on her phone of Elsa's son and his wife. We were shocked because we knew them! Her son was my husband Wesley's tutor in the language school, Rio Grande Bible College, that we had attended in Edinburg, Texas! We had had him over for meals in our home! We also discovered that I had taught Elsa's daughter-in-law's sister and brother at the GBS academy!

Just last week here in Barcelona, our family had the opportunity to meet Elsa's daughter! It was so amazing to sit and share our connections clear back to my time at GBS. We realize that this meeting in Spain could only have been orchestrated by God. She invited us to visit her in the town of Tarragona where she lives. Whether or not this leads to other new ministry connections is something we are leaving in the hands of God. We are simply walking through the doors He is opening. But knowing this new connection started with a student and teacher in the academy at GBS proves "The sun never sets on the students of God's Bible School."

My husband Wesley has started attending two small groups with two other missionaries who have come to Spain from Cuba. Recently, while riding the metro back from an evening session with one of them, Wesley mentioned GBS alumnus Raymond Shreve (HS '59). The Cuban missionary asked Wesley to repeat Bro. Shreve's name. Then, to Wesley's shock, the Cuban said, "I have heard of Raymond Shreve all my life. My mom and aunts attended his church." The Shreve family had ministered in Cuba when Raymond was a teen, and Raymond returned for a while after finishing high school and before entering Hobe Sound Bible College. What an amazing connection was made on that metro that night! It's true, "God's clock keeps perfect time!" Bro. Shreve has a great interest in Spain, and God has allowed a life touched by the Shreve family to work in ministry in Spain while God was using the Shreves elsewhere.

God is at work in a country that is in desperate need of the light and love of Jesus! Spain is a new work for us, and so many there are in need of the gospel message! I will forever be indebted to my time at God's Bible School, and I know God's timing and will are always perfect! ■

Janna (Hooker) Cressman (BA '01) was a full-time GBS professor (2001-2009) and continues as an adjunct professor. After serving as missionaries in Honduras from 2017 to 2022 under Hope International Missions, Janna and her husband Wesley are now serving as HIM missionaries in Barcelona, Spain, with their two children, Ella (10) and Carter (5).



by Sonja Vernon

WATCH THE CLOUD

"At the command of the LORD the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the LORD they camped. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they remained in camp." —Numbers 9:18 (ESV)

As a child in Sunday school learning about the Israelites in the wilderness, I never thought about the complexities of making and breaking camp for a mass movement of that scale. The need to daily care for livestock, raise children, and gather basic necessities in that environment wasn't on my radar. But it is now. I'm stunned when I think about the sheer magnitude of what needed to happen to move a group of that size. And yet, it happened. Watching the cloud by day and fire by night and using trumpet calls for guidance, the people journeyed onward or remained encamped. And what of those days in camp? Those extended periods when the cloud stood still? They lived. They worked. And they stayed ready.

Reading this passage recently, I was reminded that, as present-day Christians, we too are watching for a cloud. Just as a cloud took Jesus up into heaven, so He will descend when He returns again (Acts 1:9-11). And what should we do in the meantime? We live. We work. And we stay ready. Jesus gave His disciples a mission: to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. The work is still unfinished. There is much to be done. All the while, we keep living—raising families, washing the dishes, emptying the trash. We too must "engage in business until [He comes]" (Luke 19:13) while keeping our eye on the sky. When the cloud moved, the Israelites moved. Let's be prepared to do the same! ■

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



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