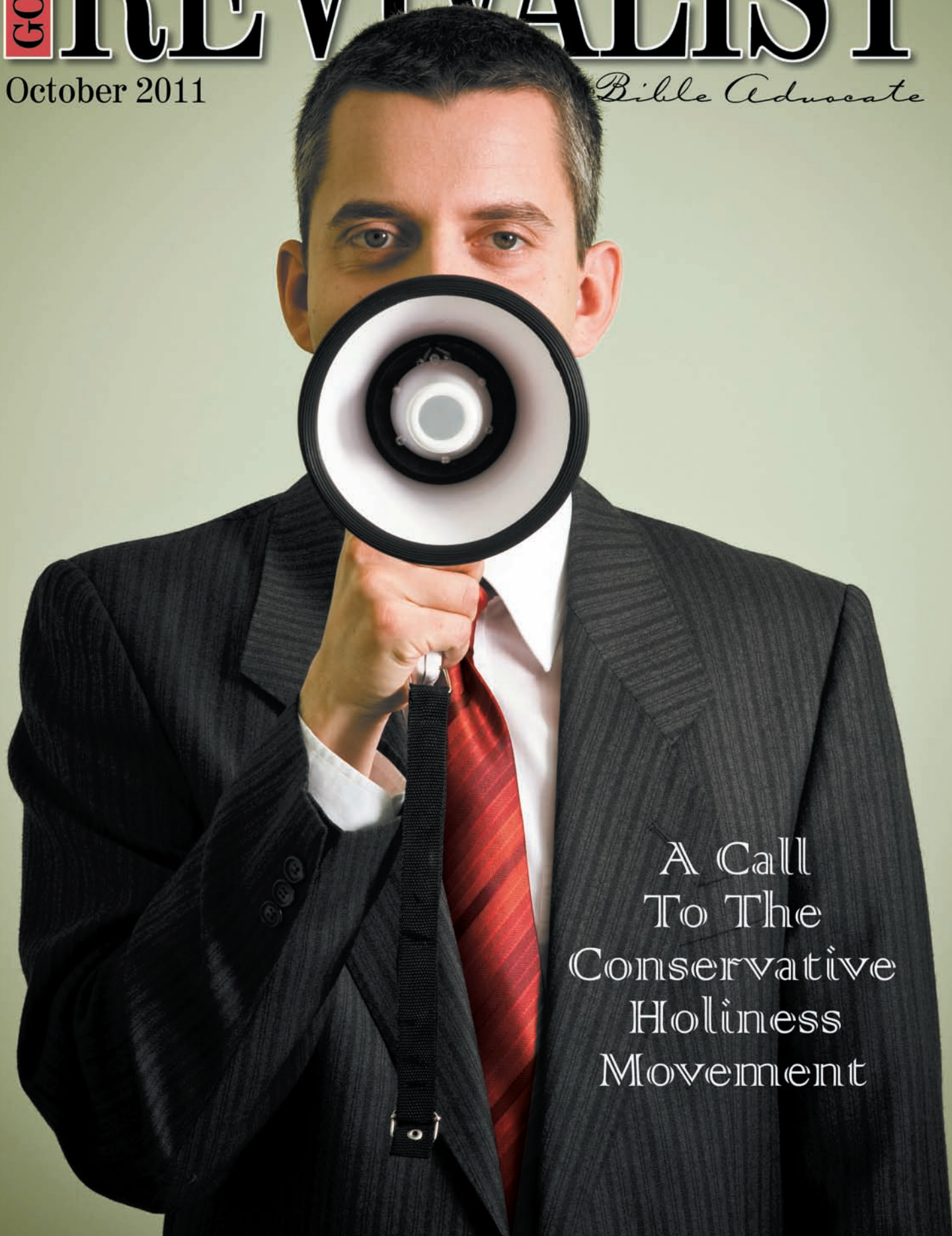


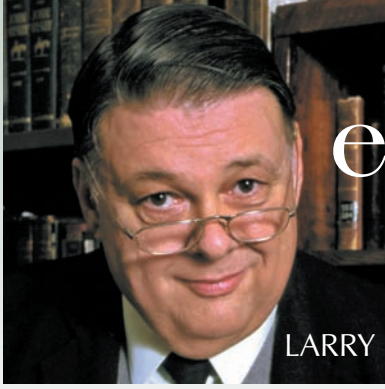
GOD'S REVIVALIST

October 2011

Bible Advocate



A Call
To The
Conservative
Holiness
Movement



the editor's view

LARRY D. SMITH

A CALL TO OUR MOVEMENT

Pledging deep concern “for the future of the Holiness Movement, and especially of the Conservative Holiness Movement of which we are part,” GBS’s Bible and theology faculty has issued an imperative “Call” featured in this issue of *God’s Revivalist*. Its message is so crucial, as we believe, that it deserves the pages that it takes to publish it. On a monthly basis, moreover, we intend to reprint each of the subdivisions that comprise the “Call,” together with appropriate commentary and application.

Both GBS and the *Revivalist* predate the CHM by many decades, but we have served it continuously since its formation a half-century ago. We believe that we are serving it again by raising issues that are tied directly to our prosperity and, perhaps, even to our survival. For who can doubt that we are facing an identity crisis that not only questions the validity of our past but also threatens the promise of our future?

On one hand, there is increasing uncertainty among us about the lifestyle disciplines that played so decisive a role in our formation. In part, this is because we have failed to train our youth in the Scriptural imperatives that validate those disciplines. It also comes in reaction to the abuses and extremes that sometimes have marked our witness. Doubtless, we’re also witnessing the usual pattern of “historical drift”—fueled by increasing affluence and the desire for social respectability—that seems to impact most religious structures. Compounding this problem is a narrowness in understanding and a lopsidedness in development that have moved us painfully away from the careful balance that is our heritage as Christians of Wesleyan descent.

In this “Call” sent out from the historic “Mount of Blessings,” we make no claim either to spiritual superiority or to infallible perception. But every word that we have written is offered humbly in prayerful and urgent hope that it will encourage reflection, renewal, and reform. Ours is clearly a conservative voice, urging uncompromising allegiance to the valid principles of our origin. But it is also a contemporary one, clearly appealing “to our entire movement to unite with us joyfully in this commitment, pledging uncompromising faithfulness to God’s Word and to creative relevance in our ministry.” ■

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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.

God’s Bible School and College does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or against otherwise qualified handicapped persons in its admission of students or employment of its faculty and staff.

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A CALL TO THE CONSERVATIVE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

*by the President and Faculty of the Division of Ministerial Education,
God's Bible School and College, Cincinnati, Ohio*

INTRODUCTION. Deeply concerned for the future of the Holiness Movement, and especially of the Conservative Holiness Movement of which we are a part, we issue this call for the full and vigorous recovery of our heritage as Christians of Wesleyan conviction. We share the distress of those who warn of “historical drift,” spiritual apathy, and surrender to the depraved secular culture that surrounds us. We submit that a renewed commitment to the essential principles of scriptural Christianity which we have received in classical Methodist belief, piety, and mission will prepare and strengthen us for the challenges that confront us. We appeal, therefore, to our entire movement to unite with us joyfully in this commitment, pledging uncompromising faithfulness to God’s Word and to creative relevance in our ministry. Upon the original foundations of our movement, therefore, we must build determined, effective, and contemporary witness to God’s unchanging summons to holy hearts and holy lives.

Implicit in this recovery are the following specific themes:

I. A CALL TO BIBLICAL FIDELITY

As Wesleyans we affirm that the Holy Scriptures, as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, are the basis of authority in the Church, normative for all our faith and practice. We declare with the English Reformers, “Holy Scripture contains everything that is necessary for salvation, so that whatever is not stated in it, or cannot be

proved by it, must not be required of any man as an article of belief or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.”

Yet we have often focused on issues and made demands which we cannot legitimately establish from the Scriptures. As a result, trivial notions and speculations at times have marred our witness. We call, therefore, for renewed submission to the absolute authority of the Bible, not as a revered icon, but as the touchstone for

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both our personal lives and our public proclamation. For in every age, the Church must submit itself unconditionally to the Word of God, interpreting it in harmony with itself, in keeping with the best insights of historical and literary study, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and with respect for the historic understanding of devout Christian scholarship.

II. A CALL TO HISTORIC ROOTS AND CONTINUITY

We gladly affirm our allegiance to the classical Christianity of the centuries, confessing its faith, sharing its historic witness, living out its godly discipline, and claiming all of its treasures as our own. We give God praise for our legacy of evangelical Christianity magnificently set

forth in the heroic lives of ancient Christians, the faithful witnesses of the Middle Ages, the stalwart testimony of the Reformers, the biblical proclamation of the Wesleys, and the earnest piety of the early Holiness Movement. We rejoice in the lives and ministry of earnest followers of Our Lord from every branch of orthodox Christianity.

But too often we have smugly disconnected ourselves from our Christian past; and in so doing we have become theologically shallow, spiritually weak, and blind to the work of God in the lives of others. We have withdrawn ourselves into protected enclaves, congratulating ourselves on our superiority over other Christians, sometimes refusing fellowship with them because of our disagreement in doctrine or in practice, and ignoring the continuing work of the Holy Spirit throughout all the universal Church. At best, this

is lamentable ignorance, and at worst, sectarian bigotry. We call therefore, with John Wesley, for a "league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Christ," reclaiming the richness of our Christian heritage and our essential unity with all who truly confess Him as Lord.

III. A CALL TO CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Union with Christ establishes membership in His Church, the community of the faithful,

in all times and places. It is founded by Our Lord and established upon Himself, and we claim His infallible promise that the gates of hell shall never withstand it. As we live out our faithfulness to Him, we must also live in faithfulness to the Church, which is His body and bride, living and dying in its communion. We affirm the traditional Protestant insistence that the visible Church is the congregation of the faithful in which the "pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance."

Too often, however, we have adopted a narrow and individualistic approach to our Christian Faith. Sometimes we have so emphasized personal spiritual relationship that we have forgotten that relationship must be realized, strengthened, and advanced within the company of God's people. At other times, we have imagined that we were the Church, or at least that the Holiness Movement was its most significant component rather than only a tiny segment of its fellowship. We call, therefore, for renewed understanding of the biblical doctrine of the Church as "the pillar and ground of the truth," reverence for its orthodox confessions, submission to its holy discipline, and faithfulness to its common life. As a coalition of holiness believers within its communion, we gladly but humbly offer our gifts to the universal Church—gifts which center in our historic focus on holiness of heart and life.

IV. A CALL TO CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

Holiness of heart and life flowing out of love for God, as we believe, is the "central idea of Christianity," for this is God's redemptive purpose for our fallen humanity. Holiness is both His gift and our pursuit, and as the writer to Hebrews reminds us, without it none of us shall ever see the Lord. Negatively, holiness is separation from all that is sinful and unlike Christ; and positively, separation unto godliness, righteousness, and full Christlikeness. It begins in regeneration by the Spirit, flourishes in the work of entire sanctification, and advances throughout our lives. As Wesleyans, we reassert the biblical passion of our forebears "to reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness over these lands."

We confess, however, that our passion for holiness of heart and life has sometimes been reduced merely to external codes and

Too often we have smugly disconnected ourselves from our Christian past; and in so doing we have become blind to the work of God in the lives of others.

prohibitions, and “holier-than-thou” attitudes toward those who differ from us. As such we have become shell without substance, and betrayed the Scriptural mandate to be holy, because the Lord our God is holy. We therefore call our movement to a renewed love for God from which will blossom consistent and winsome lives of holiness, first in motivating purpose, and second, in outward conduct. This means that we must continue to accentuate both of the definitive moments we identify as works of divine grace, conversion and entire sanctification, all the while giving proper attention to the progressive growth in grace by the Spirit and the increasing separation from the world which our Methodist forebears so firmly stressed.

V. A CALL TO METHODIST PIETY

Our Methodist heritage has underscored the necessity of devout personal piety grounded in sincere love and profound reverence for God. This implies binding and lifelong covenant with Him, living faith in Christ our great sin-bearer, allegiance to the inner principle of “jealous godly fear,” commitment to disciplined discipleship, faithful obedience to His holy Law, dynamic growth in grace, and faithful use of the means of grace. All holiness of heart and life must be grounded in sober and steadfast love for God.

Sometimes, however, our emphasis on external regulation and dutiful performance has ignored the principles of authentic piety. Our appeals to holy conduct, which are both legitimate and necessary, have often been based more in the impulse to preserve the taboos of our religious subculture than in allegiance to the Word of God and its demands. The heart of all Christian obligation is loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and then “to fear Him and keep His commandments.” Not only are we called to do what is right but also to love what is right, for this reason abstaining from all that He condemns and embracing all that He enjoins. We will never stop the “historical drift” among us merely by enforcing traditional legislation but by vigorous and renewed insistence upon authentic relationship with God and passionate pursuit of Him. Gladly we reaffirm our traditional emphasis upon simplicity, modesty, stewardship, separation from the world, and conscientious

lifestyle, but all this must be within this warm and gracious context of loving what God loves and hating what God hates.

As Methodists, therefore, we call our movement to return to our originating commitment to principled covenant with God, which, according to the General Rules of 1743, demanded these commitments: (1) the renunciation of all known sin; (2) the embracing of all positive virtue, and (3) the faithful practice of the means of grace, especially “the instituted means of grace,” defined as the Word, prayer, fasting, Christian fellowship, and the Lord’s Supper. This demands disciplined life within the community of the Church, a renewing of our historic pattern of spiritual formation through small accountability groups, such as the class meeting, and faithful submission to healthy and holy discipline, while at the same time we are altogether dependent upon the gracious work of the Spirit who changes us “from glory to glory” into the likeness of Our Lord.

VI. A CALL TO AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

Christ Our Lord has delegated the powers of government to duly-appointed officers in the Church, and we are mandated to obey them faithfully. All Christians are to be in practical submission to one another and to these designated officials in the Church. The edifying and equipping of God’s people and the administration of church discipline are committed especially to faithful pastors who are called not as “lords over God’s heritage,” but as examples and as shepherds of His flock.

We therefore deplore the spirit of autonomy and even anarchy which so often has marked our movement. Too often in our congregations and denominational life we have exhibited rebellion against the authority structures which God Himself has established, boasting our independence of them, and refusing to submit to their godly discipline. This has been evidenced by continuing divisions among us, often over matters unconnected with allegiance to Scriptural truth. As the heirs

Gladly we reaffirm our traditional emphasis upon simplicity, modesty, stewardship, separation from the world, and conscientious lifestyle.

of classical Christianity, we have not so learned Christ. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable to you" (Heb. 13:17).

We call therefore for renewed exposition of the Scriptural qualifications for leadership within the Church, corporate exhortation to beware the deceitfulness of sin, and biblical obedience and submission to those whom God has made under-shepherds over us. God grants no Christian autonomy from mutual submission and accountability within the Body of Christ. We must therefore repent of our oft refusals to exercise the Scriptural means of restorative discipline within the Church and commit

ourselves to loving one another even as our Father loves us in chastening and scourging every son whom He receives.

VII. A CALL TO CORPORATE WORSHIP

Corporate worship is the exalted glory and central pulse of every Christian congregation. At its core, worship is the adoration of God, Holy, Blessed, and Undivided Trinity, and by apostolic mandate, it is to be conducted with decency and order. In the public worship of the Church, as the old Methodist communion service reminds us, we join "angels and archangels and all the company of heaven [to] laud and magnify" the Lord of hosts, joining in their eternal hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory."

As Wesleyans we have a two-fold heritage in Christian worship. On the one hand is the warmth and earnestness of fervent and joyful devotion. On the other is the sober restraint of form, dignity, and tradition. Both are essential. Too often, however, we have emphasized the first and neglected the second. We need not neglect the subjective emphasis so characteristic of our services, but we must ground our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving in the great objective acts and truths of God Himself.

We call therefore for the renewal of our corporate worship, based in the mandates of Scripture and in the tradition of evangelical orthodoxy, centered in the faithful ministry of Word and Sacrament. Our preaching must be based in conscientious interpretation and earnest proclamation of the Holy Scriptures, and our administration of the sacred ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper must be meaningful and faithful. We lament our neglect of baptism and the Lord's Table, for this is to slight the Saviour who so kindly has established them to fortify our faith, calm our fears, and nourish us with grace.

VIII. A CALL TO CONSISTENT DISCIPLESHIP

Christ commissioned His followers to make disciples through Trinitarian baptism and instruction in all His commands. The early church responded to Our Lord's call to aggressive evangelism by taking the gospel to every corner of their world. Yet they realized that the central thrust of the Great Commission was discipleship accomplished through baptism and teaching, so they largely invested their time and energy in systematically teaching new converts the whole counsel of God and equipping them for ministry. This same emphasis elevated Wesleyan Methodism to towering stature in the kingdom of God, while without it Whitefieldian Methodism proved "a rope of sand." We confess that, despite our heritage, evangelism has languished among us. We have largely abandoned our Methodist system of spiritual formation and forgotten how to fulfill our Lord's command to make disciples. We have sought revival without preparing to preserve its fruits. We have emphasized spectacular conversions and neglected the biblical necessity of disciplined growth in faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. We further acknowledge that where evangelism is taking place among us, a systematic plan for incorporating new converts into the visible Body of Christ through baptism and instruction is largely non-existent.

We call, therefore, not merely for a reaffirmation of the importance of evangelism and discipleship, but for a commitment to equip our laity for the work of the ministry, for the establishment of solidly Wesleyan cur-

We have largely abandoned our Methodist system of spiritual formation and forgotten how to fulfill our Lord's command to make disciples.

ricula for systematic discipleship, and for the implementation of these training methods in all our churches. This will necessitate a concerted effort on the part of our leaders to reclaim the skills of discipleship, reinstitute regular systems of accountability and affirmation, and to resume obedience to Scripture's mandate to teach faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. We shall begin again to bear much fruit when our disciples themselves become disciple-makers.

IX. A CALL TO CHRISTIAN SOCIAL WITNESS

Our Lord's call to take up the cross and follow Him is a call to Christian social witness, for everywhere the Master went He ministered to both the spiritual and physical needs of people. We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10), indeed, saving faith works through love (Gal. 5:6), first in meeting the needs of fellow believers, and second in doing good to all men. Love for Our Lord and passion for holiness should impel us to minister compassionately to the sick, the suffering, and the forsaken, and to resist courageously societal structures that oppose divine purpose and degrade human dignity. "Whenever the Christian lives an authentic life, the world around is permeated with God's presence..." as Dr. Leon Hynson has written. "[He] raises the quality of life, makes social justice, equity, and integrity work. The pure in heart not only 'see' God, but become the letters through which society sees Him."

Unfortunately, we have sometimes withdrawn from that society into the cloistered walls of a narrow and narcissistic piety. But this was not the pattern of our spiritual forebears who raised Christian consciousness in all the forums of public life and who filled their land with works of grace and mercy. Their stated mission, "to reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness over these lands," asserted God's sanctifying purpose to transform lives and in consequence to transform culture.

We call therefore for renewed commitment to Christian social witness. This means that we will lovingly and forcefully proclaim Christ's power to liberate from sin, both public and private, asserting the claims of His

Kingdom against all that militates against it. This commitment will also lead us to minister compassionately in His name to the imprisoned, the needy, and the oppressed.

X. A CALL TO RESURGENT HOPE

All Christian life is centered in the resplendent hope that we have through Christ's victory accomplished in His incarnation, atoning death, and resurrection. The sure and certain anchor of the soul, this hope has given gladness and assurance to faithful believers all throughout the centuries of the Church's struggle with the forces of entrenched evil. It assures us of present victory in our personal lives and corporate ministry, but it also points to the final triumph when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Never have we so needed a renewed sense of the hope that we have in Him. We know the power and devastation of sin, and we acknowledge the increasing degradation of our culture. We are Wesleyans, however; and as our theologians have said, the keynote of our theology is not the "pessimism of [fallen] nature" but the "optimism of grace." We therefore call our movement to the joyous expectation of victory which so motivated our spiritual forebears to claim the American frontier for Jesus Christ. We cannot cower before the darkness, paralyzed by "the encircling gloom" which continually we must confront. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The same power which brought the Roman Empire to bow before the cross, renewed the Church in the days of the Protestant Reformation, and reshaped the culture in the Wesleyan Revival is also ours as we encounter the moral depravity and sneering secularism of our times. Let us be joyfully faithful, then, creatively relevant, and utterly confident that Jesus' victory is our own. With gladness we do the work which He has given us, even as we await the consummation when all the earth shall echo with the song of conquest, "Alleluia! The Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" ■

Never have we so needed a renewed sense of hope. The keynote of our theology is not the "pessimism of [fallen] nature" but the "optimism of grace."



CAMPUS ENROLLMENTS CONTINUE TO GROW

by Dr. Ken Farmer, Vice President for Academic Affairs

One of our long-term goals has been to stabilize college enrollment above 300. After an increase last year to 310, we set an enrollment goal of 315 for the college. With the economic environment being as difficult as it is, we knew we had our work cut out for us. Therefore, we are pleased to report that we have again exceeded our goal. Praise the Lord!

Enrollment statistics for the college department at God's Bible School and College for Fall 2011 are as follows: 321 (268.67 FTE) which is a 3.5% increase from 310 in Fall 2010. In fact, five consecutive years of growth have yielded an 18% increase in enrollment. Our highest enrollment was 338 in 1983. This year is the second highest enrollment with 244 on-campus students and 77 ADEP students.

The goal we had set for Aldersgate Christian Academy was 150. While we did not reach that goal, ACA enrollment this year is 145, up from last year's 140. This 3.6% increase is on top of last year's increase of 14.4%.

Thanks to all the campus family who tirelessly worked to make this happen. Also, thanks

to each of our readers who act as good PR representatives for the great things that are happening at GBS!

MARC SANKEY SPEAKS AT FALL REVIVAL

Rev. Marc Sankey, Bedford, Indiana, missionary, pastor, and GBS alumnus, was evangelist at fall revival services at GBS, August 22-26. His messages were thought-



REVIVALIST FAMILY

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

BIRTHS



To **Rev. Jesse A. and Elvira D. Aaron**, Dayton, Kentucky, a daughter, **Rachel Renee Aaron**, born July 10, 2011. Jesse is a senior ministerial student at GBS and pastor of the Dayton Church of the Nazarene.



To **Michael (GBS HS '94) and Beth (Lavy) Dickinson (GBS HS '96)**, a son **Jeremiah Wesley Dickinson**, born Dayton, Ohio, May 6, 2011. Jeremiah joins two siblings, Isaiah, 5, and Sophia, 2. Paternal grandparents are former GBS staff members Bud and Sherry Dickinson.



To **Robert (AA General Studies '98) and Deanna (Paulus) (BA Music Ed '98) Kennedy**, Goshen, Ohio, twin sons, **Riley Konal and Ruarc Kaven Kennedy**, born at home, November 30, 2010. The twins join older siblings Kiana, 8, Duston, 7, and Sean, 5. Robert is the owner of Legacy Custom Builders and Deanna is a full-time, stay-at-home mom and home-school teacher. The Kennedy family attends the Christian Nation Church in Goshen.



To **Joshua (GBS '06-08) and Rhoda (Gilley) White (GBS '06-07)**, Salem, Illinois, a son **Sebastian Kenneth White**, born July 14, 2011. Joshua is a diesel mechanic. The Whites attend the Wesleyan Bible Holiness Church in Salem.

ful, anointed, and eloquent, urging students to hear God's voice and give themselves in full consecration to His service, and warning them against spiritual idolatry and the bondage of sin. Response was positive and immediate, and the chapel was filled with the sounds of prayer, testimony, and exhortation. A gracious sense of the Spirit's presence pervaded the campus, bringing renewal and obedience to His voice.

RIBBON-CUTTING FOR NEW STUDENT COMMONS

Renee Langworthy, president of the student Music Service Organization, cut the ribbon officially opening GBS's new Student Commons, Friday morning, September 2. She did this representing the Division of Music, which had raised more money for this project than any other academic division. The Student Commons, located in the Standley



Administration Building's former bookstore area, is a place for "students and faculty to interact," as President Michael Avery explained.

Constructed by the campus maintenance staff under its director, Mr. Tom Butcher, the Commons contains student mailboxes; a small

coffee shop selling Starbucks coffee, snacks, and drinks; booths for eating and socializing; several computers for general use; and the campus Resource Room, offering needed supplies for classroom use. Outside is a newly-constructed arbor sheltering a patio area. ➡



DEATHS

Henry Clinton Milam, 90, died June 24, 2011, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Born and raised in Elmore County, he was most likely a farmer from the start. He graduated from the GBS high school in 1940, where he met Harriet, who was to become the love of his life and his wife for 70 years. Mr. Milam served in the United States Army during World War II as well as doing a stint with the United Parcel Service. But some of his most wonderful work was in his garden, for he prided himself on the amazing quality of the vegetables that he produced and sold.

Preceded in death by his son Stephen, he is survived by his wife; four children, Carole Jean, Linda, David, and Darrell; eleven grandchildren; seventeen great-grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild. Funeral services



were held in Milbrook, Alabama, with the Rev. Stephen Vernon, his nephew, and Rev. Ken Stodola officiating.

NOTICES

The **10th Annual Indianapolis Christian Writers Conference** will be held November 4–5, 2011. With over 3 million books sold, Christy Award winner Angela Hunt headlines this year's conference with featured guest Todd Burpo, author of the New York Times #1 non-fiction book, *Heaven is for Real*. For more information on skill-building workshops, consultations, and registration, visit www.IndyChristianWritersConf.com.

Ben Durr Books, formerly situated on the GBS campus, offers new and used religious books online. Featured are a wide variety of classical Methodist and holiness movement authors. Check out the website at www.bendurrbooks.com or call (513) 731-9383. ■

NEW STAFF AND FACULTY FOR FALL 2011

God's Bible School and College announces the employment of the following new staff and faculty, or changes in assignments for previous employees:

Elisabeth Avery (GBS HS '02; BA '06) will serve as a college adjunct



professor in elementary education. She has an MEd degree from Liberty University and has taught for three years at Aldersgate Christian Academy

and two years at Liberty Bible Academy. She and her husband Jonathan (GBS HS '03; two AA's in Theology and Business '05) have a newborn daughter, Aviah Christine.

Scott Blackmon will teach social science and other miscellaneous



courses in the middle school at Aldersgate Christian Academy. He holds a BA degree from Hobe Sound Bible College ('05) and an MA in Church

History from Carolina Evangelical Divinity School. He has served as an assistant pastor and is the founder of Carolina Youth Camp, which he continues to lead. Scott and his wife Ashley (daughter of GBS staff members Bill and Sherilyn Marshall) have a young son, Marshall Cole.

Cheryl (Martin) Comparativo (GBS BA '11, salutorian) will direct



the college Student Learning Center, which is now restructured as the Academic Resource Center, incorporating the Writing Lab. She also has begun

graduate work at the University of Cincinnati, and we expect her to

join the college faculty on a full-time basis in the fall of 2013 to teach literature and writing. Cheryl has recently married Chris Comparativo (GBS BA '08).



Melody Creech (GBS HS '90) will work in the kitchen as assistant to the cook. She and her husband Brian have three sons: Isaac, 18; Samuel 13; and Josh, 9.



Anthony Frederick will work in the kitchen as assistant to the cook. He is the son of David and

Charlotte Frederick, both of whom are employees of GBS.

Carol Gardner (GBS BA '92) will teach the combined third and



fourth grades at Aldersgate Christian Academy. She taught for 13 years at Liberty Bible Academy before assuming a position at Judson Care

Center, where for six years she served in various capacities.

Stephanie Hoffpauir will serve as Administrative Assistant to



Richard Miles, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Ken Farmer, Vice President for Academic Affairs. A GBS student since fall 2010, she

replaces Jodi Marshall whom she previously assisted. Stephanie, who holds an AA degree from Hobe Sound Bible College, will continue studies to complete a BA in Church and Family Ministry.

Nancy Lambeth will be Coordinator of the college Resource



Room and the adjoining, newly-opened Student Commons. She is completing her BA degree at GBS and is the wife of Registrar Chris Lambeth. They have three children: Lauren, 11; Michael, 9; and Caleb, 5.

Sherilyn Marshall (GBS BA '76), will serve as receptionist and



phone desk operator. The wife of Aldersgate Christian Academy principal Bill Marshall, she has worked for 34 years in Christian education, and has three children: Matt, Kirk, and Ashley; and four grandchildren.

Shane Muir (GBS BA '09), will be Director of Marketing Media,



working in the graphic design office. Most recently he has worked in Pine View Homes, Evart, Michigan.

Angie Sackett will be an office



assistant for Aldersgate Christian Academy, replacing Nila Dilbert, who has resigned after serving ably as both a part-time worker and as a volunteer

for the past 11 years. Angie, who most recently worked as the main



GBS receptionist, will also serve as a teacher's aide.

Adam Sickler (GBS '11 AA) is now a member of the GBS maintenance staff, having worked previously in this department as a student worker. Adam was recently married to Kyndra Tichenor.



Kyndra (Tichenor) Sickler (GBS '11 AA) is now Housekeeping Coordinator and Facilities Administrative Assistant. She has recently been married to Adam Sickler.



Kendra Smith (GBS '11 BA) will serve as office manager for the Division of Music, replacing Lisa Robison.

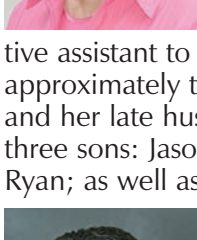
Kendra has had previous experience working part-time in this office.

Monica Williams will be a college adjunct teacher in elementary education while she continues to pursue her graduate degree at Cincinnati Christian University. For the last three years



Monica has taught in Aldersgate Christian Academy.

Cheryl Watters will serve as Executive Assistant to the President, as well as directing the Personnel Office. Cheryl previously worked at Lenawee Christian School, Adrian, Michigan, where she was administrative assistant to the principal for approximately twenty years. She and her late husband Steven have three sons: Jason, Andrew, and Ryan; as well as six grandchildren.



Ryan Watters (GBS '11 BA) will be an assistant to the Men's Residence Director, as well as an assistant to the Vice President for

Student Affairs Richard Miles. As a student Ryan held a work-study position as Ministerial Division Assistant. He will also be pursuing a Master of Arts in Counseling at Cincinnati Christian University.

SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTED AT CONVOCATION SERVICES

In Sunday morning convocation services, August 21, President Michael Avery issued a stirring call for renewed commitment to our common heritage in early Methodism. The services, which marked the opening of the fall 2011 academic term, were held in the Adcock Memorial Chapel. In the evening, Campus Pastor Mark Cravens preached on the subject of prayer, linking GBS to its long and continuing tradition of faithfulness in this area of Christian devotion.

Faith Avery, Director of Institutional Advancement, presented 59 scholarships totaling \$52,305 to 77 students. Listed according to the appropriate academic division, these scholarships are as follows:

Ministerial and Bible and Theology Scholarships. *Ervin and Jane Bohall Scholarship*, Josh Williams; *Norma J. Sturgeon Memorial Scholarship*, Rachel Langworthy, Jonathan Pepple, and

Matthew Potter; Dr. J.D. Young Memorial Scholarship, Josh Cravens; *Oral E. and Lucille Cox Memorial Scholarship*, Stephen Nelson; *Paul E. Drummond Scholarship*, Jesse Aaron; *Chester C. Elliott and Leliah E. Roberts Scholarship*, Dwight Crosley; *Elmer C. Farmer Pastoral Scholarship*, Thomas Ridenour; *Carl Victor and Bessie Hedstrom and Alvin and Gertrude Hedstrom Memorial Scholarship*, Christopher Baird; *Myrtle Jessup Ministerial Scholarship*, Jesse Aaron; *Marvin Jewell Ministerial Scholarship*, Jesse Aaron; *Frank Little, Jr. Ministerial Scholarship*, Jesse Aaron; *Isaac T. Monce Memorial Scholarship*, Blaine Hartman; *South Bend Union Chapel Scholarship*, Chris Adams and Blaine Hartman; *Hazel (Trouten) Scheid Memorial Scholarship*, Gale Brown; *Vernon Scholarship*, Andrew Blankenship; *Dr. Edward Palm Scholarship*, James Riley; *Rev. Francis A. Taylor Scholarship*, Blaine Hartman.

Intercultural Studies and World Missions Scholarships. *Norma J. Sturgeon Memorial Scholarship*, Laura Boyd; *Dr. Leslie Wilcox Scholarship*, Derek Jones; *Leonard and Janet Sankey Scholarship*, Derek Jones; *Ada Mae Conrad Memorial Scholarship*, Ben Smith, Anna Rasmussen, Cortney Prior, and



Fall 2011 GBS Scholarship Recipients

Janeane Yaryan; *John O. (Mickey) and Annie E. McGuire Memorial Scholarship*, Amanda Meadows; *C. Helen Mooshian Scholarship*, Nicole Brown; *Ethel Belle Baughey Scholarship*, Caleb Clark; *Stanley and Evelyn Kendall Christian School Scholarship*, Amy Weddle.

Music Division Scholarships.

General GBS Scholarship, Shelley Carey; *Grossman, Reiss, and Woods Memorial Scholarship*, Shelley Carey; *The King Family Scholarship*, Renee Langworthy; *Robertson Scholarship*, Ashley Muir; *Ward Family Legacy Memorial Scholarship*, Leah Rodriguez; *Evelyn Ware Scholarship*, Esther Hough; *Mr. and Mrs. K.W. Wong Scholarship*, Mark Richmond and Alanna Smith; *Allan Clarence Strong Scholarship*, David Olson; *Mary Ann Bell Scholarship*, Kimberlee Russell; *John Case, Jr. Scholarship*, Michael Olson; *Nathaniel Joslin Memorial Scholarship*, Ashlee Elliott; *McNeill Memorial Scholarship*, Jonathan McConkey and Dana Paxton; *N. Keith and Sharon Waggoner Scholarship*, Mark Richmond; *Merle D. Wolf Scholarship*, Thomas Olson; *Vaughn Somers Memorial Scholarship*, Dana Paxton.

Teacher Education Scholarships.

Marjorie Wolfe Bryner Memorial Scholarship, Yoshikazu Koike; *The Aubrey Elam Indoor Camp Scholarship*, Maria Stetler; *Dr. R.G. Flexon Memorial Scholarship*, Yoshikazu Koike; *Peter J. and Patricia Moran Scholarship*, Brenda Palacios; *H.E. Schmul, Sr. Scholarship*, Raelyn Wood; *Ronald M. Sherrill Memorial Scholarship*, Sarah Sproles; *Connie A. Tiede Memorial Scholarship*, Tiffany Neal; *Minnie Ruth Wallbrown Memorial Scholarship*, Elias Abraham, Jen Bange, and Maria Meadows; *Joyce Ann Marshall Memorial Scholarship*, Brenda Palacios; *David and Clare Martin Scholarship*, Talia

Knox; *Gertrude Taylor Memorial Scholarship*, Rebecca Haynes; *Meredith and Florence Vance Scholarship*, John Sutton.

General Studies Scholarships. *Che Brown Scholarship for African Americans*, Jasmine Norris; *Crawford Family Scholarship*, Jaelea Brewer, Janae Waggoner, and Jordan Waggoner; *Rev. and Mrs. William Jackson Scholarship*, Sharlenea Dotson; *Oscar Johnson Memorial Scholarship*, David Hawn; *David and Clare Martin Scholarship*, Heidi Rebman; *Messerschmidt Memorial Scholarship*, Brittany Brander and Regina Thawley; *Jim and Dorothy Miller Memorial Scholarship*, Katrina Behm; *Louise Rhyne Memorial Scholarship*, Kent Stetler, Sharree Pouzar, and Katie Newman; *H.E. Schmul, Sr. Scholarship*, Christianna Baker; *Norma J. Sturgeon Memorial Scholarship*, Sharonna Mitchell and Mark Hunter; *Gertrude Taylor Memorial Scholarship*, Charity Frazier; *Connie A. Tiede Memorial Scholarship*, Chad Bladen; *Meredith and Florence Vance Scholarship*, Mike Vollmer and Melissa Morgan; *Minnie Ruth Wallbrown Memorial Scholarship*, Carolyn Conrad and Alex Fourman.

THREE NEW SCHOLARSHIPS ESTABLISHED AT GBS

Included in the above listing are three newly-established scholarships at God’s Bible School and College:

(1) The Che Brown Scholarship for African Americans

has been established by Ms. Eleanor Nunley. As a public school teacher, she has witnessed first-hand the difficult circumstances that students face in America’s inner-cities. Especially touched by one student, Che Brown, she found inspiration in the words of



Everett Hale, “I am only one, but I am still one; I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.” The first recipient of this scholarship is Jasmine Norris.

(2) The King Family

Scholarship was established by Rev. Marlon King to promote development of Christian leaders at GBS and in loving memory of his wife, Renotta, who died in January 2011.



As a senior student in the GBS high school in 1981, he heard President Bence Miller

say in a sermon, “If you go here you will be required to look like a Christian and act like a Christian, so you might as well be one.”

As he remembers, this “made perfect sense” to Marlon; he responded to God’s call to forgiveness and redemption, and continued his studies on the Hilltop, graduating with the BRE degree in 1987. He recalls those years as “extremely influential,” for the “concepts of sin, salvation, sanctification, and a clear understanding of our proper relationship with God were set firmly in place.” The first recipient of this scholarship is Renee Langworthy.

(3) The N. Keith and Sharon

Waggoner Scholarship was established for a student intending to pursue music ministry by Keith and Sharon Waggoner, who attended God’s Bible School and College from 1972–1974. For over 30 years, they have been in music ministry at camps, revivals and concerts; served as ministers of music at Frankfort Bible Holiness Church, Frankfort, Indiana, and Sanford Wesleyan Church, Sanford, North Carolina;



Letters

TO THE EDITOR

recorded three studio productions; and written several songs. Their son and daughter-in-law, Keith and Lori, have both graduated from the music division, and their other children, Robert and Sharilyn, have also attended GBS. Keith is a division manager with Caterpillar in Illinois, and he and Sharon continue in music ministry in their local church. The first recipient of this scholarship is Mark Richmond. ■

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

GOD SAVE OUR HOMES!

Not many realize how much kids depend on a successful marriage [ref. September 2011 issue of *God's Revivalist*]. Because I work at a school which has over 700 children, I see the pain they carry from broken homes. It affects their whole life, including their education. I pray, "God save our homes!"

BOB HUNT
Email

PRAYER, FASTING, AND GOLF

The article in the May 2011 *God's Revivalist* concerning the Apocalypse [Editor's View] was interesting. We cannot put our heads in the sand concerning the day [in which] we live. Yes, GOD is able to turn things around, and He hears prayer; but where are there people in the CHURCH [who] will pray and fast to that extent?

Then I thought it was interesting when I turned to the back cover of the *Revivalist* and saw an announcement of the 3rd Annual Hilltop Golf Tournament in October. I am sure this would not have been on the agenda of the Wesleys or of those fasting and praying for a godless nation.

DELORES SPRAGUE
Boise, Idaho

We thank Delores for her letter and would like to point out that the annual GBS Homecoming activities are planned and sponsored by the Alumni Association of God's Bible School. Comments or questions concerning this or other alumni activities should be directed to Alumni President Rev. Jack Hooker (jhooker@gbs.edu) or members of the Alumni Council.

The underlying question implied by our reader is one which deserves attention: To what extent can a serious Christian be involved in leisure sports and activities? We are passing this question along to Philip Brown to be answered in an upcoming "Dear Phil" article.

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PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)			

Dear Phil

GENDER-DISTINCT CLOTHING, Part 2

“Does the Bible really require us to wear gender-distinct clothing?”

In my last column, I noted (1) that gender-distinctness in clothing is a part of the much larger biblical theology of the image of God in man, (2) that God regards failure to be gender-distinct in clothing as an abomination (Deut. 22:5b), and (3) that God did not spell out precisely how men and women are to express gender-distinctness in clothing.

Before addressing how to apply the principle of Deut. 22:5 to our culture, let me explain that what I mean by “culture” is the values, perspectives, and practices shared by a group of people. Culture is multi-layered. We belong to national, regional, local, family, church, and, perhaps, corporate cultures. Culture is multi-faceted. It includes our entertainment, education, work, methods of relating to others, modes of self-presentation, and so on.

There are at least three aspects of any cultural practice we must evaluate when seeking to view it biblically: its direction, message, and theological character.

The “direction” of a cultural practice involves its history, its present practice, and its future direction.

The “message” of a cultural practice involves answers to questions like: “Why do the creators and participants say they engage in this cultural practice? What do partici-

pants and observers say this cultural practice means? What values and perspectives are promoted or demoted by this practice?”

Paul enjoins us to consider how our “message” is perceived by three groups of observers: the Jew, the Greek, and the church of God (1 Cor. 10:32). The “Jew” was the unsaved monotheist with deeply held conservative values. The “Greek” was the unsaved pagan polytheist, who nonetheless had ideas and values about what is appropriate and what isn’t. The church of God included all true believers, whether weak or strong in their faith. Paul commands, “Don’t give offense” to any of these groups of people, even in matters as mundane as eating and drinking (1 Cor. 10:31). Rather, we are to seek their profit—salvation for the unsaved; edification for the saved (1 Cor. 10:33).

The “theological character” of a cultural practice is determined by asking questions such as, “How does this practice reflect love for God and for others? To what degree are its direction and message in harmony with Scripture?”

Without careful attention to all three of these components, cultural analysis is easily skewed either in favor of what is traditional or in

favor of what is popular. My best effort to analyze these three components of clothing trends in America has led me to the following conclusions:

1. Direction: Prior to the 1880s, our American culture was monolithically gender-distinct in its clothing. The trend of the last 120 years has been unisex and seems now to be “any sex—your choice.” These are trends Christians should reject. God desires us to be visibly gender-distinct in our clothing.

2. Message: The original promoters of pants worn by women were unapologetically opposed to any form of men’s clothing being off-limits to women. Contemporary cultural observers (social critics, fashion designers, feminist ideologues) say that pants on women still communicate masculinity and power, despite its near universal adoption by women. This surprises me. I wonder if ads like Dockers’s “Men Wear the Pants” reflect a desire for unambiguous masculinity, even in clothing.

3. Theology: A rejection of God’s plan for gender distinctions is one error which helped spawn our culture’s rejection of gender-distinct clothing as a value.

When a culture **retains** gender-distinctness in clothing as a value, and **replaces** one form of gender-distinct clothing for another, then a Christian is free to adopt the new style without compromising the biblical value of gender-distinct clothing. Our culture has *not* retained gender-distinctness in clothing as a value and has *not* sought to replace the old norm (pants-dress) with a new norm that honors that value.

Blessings,
Philip

Dr. A. Philip Brown II is a member of the faculty in the Division of Ministerial Education at God’s Bible School and College.



student focus

COLUMNIST TIES BRITISH LAWLESSNESS TO UPPER CLASS CORRUPTION

British columnist Peter Osborne has charged that the devastating riots that recently raged in London and other cities in his homeland reflect the moral decay in the top levels of society as well as in the lower ones. The “entire British political class came together...to denounce the rioters,” he comments. Yet Osborne believes that “there was something very phony and hypocritical about all the shock and outrage” from the ruling class, adding that “criminality in our streets cannot be dissociated from the moral disintegration in the highest ranks of modern British society. The last two decades have seen a terrifying decline in standards among the British governing elite. It has been acceptable for our politicians to lie and to cheat... An almost universal culture of selfishness and greed has grown up.”

MUSLIM MOB BURNS CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN EGYPT

According to *Church Around the World*, “a mob of nearly 4,000 Muslims attacked Coptic homes in a village 20 miles from Cairo [Egypt] and burned the Church of St. Mina and St. George.” The report asserts that the mob refused to permit fire fighters from entering the village. When the army belatedly sent in three tanks, “Muslim elders sent them away, saying that everything was ‘in order now.’”

The mob, it was said, “vowed to conduct their morning prayers on the church plot after razing it.”

JOHN STOTT REMEMBERED AT LONDON FUNERAL SERVICES

Dr. John Stott, one of Western Christianity’s most beloved spokesmen, was remembered with gratitude at funeral services held at All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, England, August 8. Friends and admirers thronged the church and heard uplifting hymns and stirring tributes to the evangelical leader’s “cross-centered, Christ-glorifying life, lived in obedience of love.” Stott, who died July 27 at the age of 90, was pastor of All Souls Church 1950–1970, wrote 51 books on the Christian faith, and was credited by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

PRESBYTERIANS TO ALLOW HOMOSEXUAL CLERGY

“The two million member Presbyterian Church (USA) has become the latest mainline Protestant denomination to implode on sexual standards,” according to Mark Tooley writing for the *National Review Online*. “On May 10, Presbyterians in Minneapolis became the needed 87th local presbytery to vote for deleting the denomination’s expectations for ministers and elders of ‘fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity and singleness.’” ■

“An extraordinary tuba player and a good leader.” That is the GBS orchestra director David Hartkopf’s impression of **FERNANDO ESCOBAR**, adding, “other students respect him as a musician and a godly example.”

From Chihuahua City, Mexico, Fernando had been playing the tuba for only a few years when at age 17 he began playing with the symphony orchestra of the University of Chihuahua...but God had bigger plans for his life.

In 2010, Fernando chose to study at GBSC where “every class has a Christian focus and is based on biblical principles.” He wanted a path that would not only develop his professional career, but nurture his Christian walk. After his first year, Fernando got an even greater offer—an invitation to play for the State Philharmonic. Not wanting to use his talents only on himself, he declined the position to continue his studies at GBSC.

Fernando has already used his GBSC education to pour his heart for music into starting a children’s orchestra and teaching music lessons at his church. He has overcome high financial obstacles to attend GBSC, difficulties he would not face had he taken the professional jobs offered. ■

If you would like to support Fernando or a student like him, you may send a gift to:

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

*or give online anytime at
www.gbsgift.com*



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

SOMEBODY CHANGED THE SIGN

by Leslie Wilcox

Have you observed the importance of signs? One can hardly go anywhere or do anything without being in some way dependent on signs. We use them to mark highways and identify streets. They are used to warn of dangers of various sorts. They show locations of all sorts of places like filling stations, restaurants, motels, and stores.

Are you aware that God also has used signs to indicate both His will and His warnings. They are found most of all in the Book; but they are also in God's providential dealings with us, in the voice of the church, in the moral sense of the human race, and sometimes just in a still, small voice.

We live in an age when there has been a shift in the signs or sometimes a total removal of them. The moral climate of our day resembles what would happen if someone would tamper with the traffic signs we use. People would be going the wrong direction, stopping at the wrong places, and demonstrating a grand mix-up in every way. This is like the moral and spiritual situation condemned so strongly by the prophet Isaiah: *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter"* (Isaiah 5:20).

In recent years there seems to be a concerted attempt to change the vocabulary of the English language in such a way as to cover up sin and make it sound acceptable. It seems as if the printed page and the silver screen vie with each other to make the sordid and licentious look attractive and harmless. What used to be known as drunkenness is now a disease. What was once sodomy came to be called homosexuality and now has become merely an "alternate lifestyle." What was once adultery is now just merely "having an affair."

But we need to remember that changing a name does not change the character of something. If I call a

rattlesnake a harmless garter snake, it does not change the poison of the viper; it only changes the thinking of people until they are no longer afraid of the poison; they have only substituted a new label.

Along with this sign-changing trend there is also the growing emphasis in the thinking of people that guilt twists and deforms one's personality. These two tendencies are related to each other and both have the same effect, which is to nullify God's warnings about sin and its consequences. We must remember that changing names does not change the real character of anything. It only muddles our thinking.

But it has a more disastrous effect than that. It removes the sense of guilt. This is a tragedy far worse than a mixed-up vocabulary. If we remove guilt there remains no possibility of repentance, for we think we have nothing for which to repent. And if we remove the possibility of repentance, we close fast the door of eternity, for it is still true, as Jesus stated, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Someone might be inclined to give a glib retort, "What difference can the meaning of a few words make?" But we need to consider the relationship between our speech and our thought. It is true that our words reveal our thinking. But it is equally true that our words mold our thinking, and then our thoughts bear fruit in actions. Mixed words such as we have considered will change our attitudes toward issues that are eternal in their outcome. If the signs have been changed, we will end up at the wrong destination. ■

Rev. Dr. Leslie Wilcox was a well-known theologian, church administrator, and GBS faculty member. This article, condensed by the editor, is reprinted from the April 6, 1989, issue of God's Revivalist.

III. The SPECIFIC MODE of Christian Water Baptism

The early church recognized and practiced three modes: immersion, pouring, and sprinkling. Of these three, the preferred mode was immersion. The imagery evoked by Paul when he speaks of being “buried” with Christ in baptism into His death (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), and his statement that all the people of Israel were “baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:2), a picture of a mystic cloud covering the people, strongly lends itself to the idea of immersion.

The earliest non-biblical account of the mode of baptizing occurs in the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (The Didache)*, dating possibly as early as 125-150 AD. It says,

“Now concerning Baptism, thus baptize ye: having first uttered all these things, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, in living water. But if thou hast not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water upon the head thrice in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost” (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, I, 388).

This seems to say that immersion was the recommended practice, but that the mode of pouring (affusion) was also valid and could be used if necessary. Sprinkling (aspersion) seems to have been reserved for the sick as well as for infirm persons too weak to submit to immersion or pouring. Sprinkling did not gain wide use in the church until the 13th century (*ISBE*, I, 389-90).

CONCLUSION

As the Hebrew writer indicates, the doctrine of baptism forms a foundational principle of the Christian faith—one which ought to be in place in every believer’s life so that he may go on “unto perfection” (Heb. 6:1-2). Paul places it among the cardinal elements of the gospel around which all believers should unite. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all...” (Eph. 4:4-6). The early church understood the phrase, “one baptism” to be a reference to Christian water baptism.

Have you been baptized? Perhaps you were not previously aware of the Biblical requirement; however, now that you have learned of this truth, you should walk in its light. It may be that many years have passed since you first trusted Christ as your Savior. You may even be an unbaptized Christian leader. Your obedience to this command of our Lord will provide the proper example for others to follow.

To those who are making disciples, are you baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as Christ commanded?

—sermon by DR. ALLAN P. BROWN



“COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE
IN PREACHING”

A FORGOTTEN COMMANDMENT

by Dr. Allan P. Brown, Chair
GBS Division of
Ministerial Education

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

INTRODUCTION

J. Wesley Adcock once asked, “What is God going to do with all these holiness people who have not obeyed the scriptural command to be baptized?”

Recently, while speaking at a large interdenominational group of Christians, I asked how many of them had been saved over two years but had not yet been baptized. The great number of raised hands makes me wonder if pastors have forgotten that baptizing converts in the Triune name of God is a requirement of the Great Commission. I’m afraid that Rob Staples’ lament over the “near-silence from the Wesleyan/holiness pulpit regarding baptism” is valid (*Outward Sign and Inward Grace*, 119).

I once met a person who expressed the opinion that baptism can be “a slippery slope to hell.” Of course this can be true. If a person trusts in anything besides the finished work of Jesus for his salvation, the object of his trust becomes “a slippery slope to hell.” However, the fear of a formal, lifeless, sacramental liturgy should not cause people to adopt a casual attitude toward baptism. Granted, to have the husk of Christianity without the heart-changing kernel is to substitute liturgical rites for eternal realities, and Paul warns us about people who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5).

In his sermon, “The Means of Grace,” John Wesley gives practical ways to differentiate between the *proper use* and *possible abuse* of what he calls, “the means of grace.” Obedience to any Biblical practice, if trusted in as the grounds of one’s salvation, can become a “slippery slope to hell.” This includes such fundamental Christian practices as prayer, Bible reading, receiving the Lord’s Supper and water baptism. Trust in any external practice as the meritorious ground of salvation, Wesley asserts, is to God an abomination and “a stink in His nostrils” (*Works*, I, 381).

On the other hand, water baptism was central to the early church. While reading the first volume of Thomas Oden’s systematic theology, *The Living God*, I discovered that “the earliest summaries of Christian teaching were lectures to prepare people for baptism” (p. 13). These included the early creedal confessions, such as the Apostle’s Creed.

I. The SCRIPTURAL MANDATE for Christian Water Baptism

(Mat. 28:19, 20; see also Mark 16:15, 16)

After His death and resurrection, Jesus made a special appointment to meet His disciples in Galilee. There He told them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mat. 28:19, 20). This climactic paragraph in Matthew's Gospel proclaims our Lord's mandate for Christian water baptism. Since Jesus' command is universal in its scope, this commission remains a requirement today. The Lord of the church requires all her members, if physically possible, to experience water baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16).

There is a definite sequence to the Great Commission. First, God's children are to go make disciples of all nations. Second, Jesus tells His followers to baptize those whom they disciple in the Trifune name of God. Third, the new disciples are to be taught to obey all of Christ's teachings.

In Acts, Luke tells us that the early church baptized all Christian converts in water. Peter required it of the three thousand converts on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 41). Philip required it of his Samaritan converts (Acts 8:12, 16), and later baptized an Ethiopian official that he led to the Lord in the desert (Act 8:36-38). Upon his conversion, Paul was baptized (Acts 9:18; 22:16). Peter baptized Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:47, 48). During his missionary travels, Paul baptized Lydia (Acts 16:14, 15), the Philippian jailer and household (Acts 16:33), Crispus and Gaius at Corinth (Acts 18:8), and the Ephesian believers (Acts 19:3-6).

Luke's frequent description of baptism as being "in the name of Jesus" is commonly misunderstood. It is not a contradiction of Jesus' command to use the Trinitarian formula. When John the Baptist baptized people, they were baptized in John's name. In other words, they became disciples of John the Baptist. In the same way, to be baptized "in Jesus' name" refers to becoming Christ's disciple, not to a pronouncement of "in Jesus' name" during baptism. Thus, new converts were baptized in Jesus' name in the sense that they were declaring their allegiance and loyalty to Him. In the actual process of water baptism, however, the early church pronounced the Trinitarian formula as the believers were baptized.

Commenting on the fact that our Lord commanded His followers to baptize new converts "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and to teach them "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Oden says,

"In this way, Jesus forever linked two crucial actions: baptizing and teaching. In subsequent periods of Christian history they have remained intimately interwoven. Implicitly included in the instructions for baptism is the charge to teach its significance. This is why the Christian study of God has been so often organized into these three divisions, for Christian teaching is baptismal teaching, and Christian baptism has required some clarification of itself as faith in God the Father, Son, and Spirit. Christian theology came into being to explain Christian baptism" (p. 12).

II. The SYMBOLIC MEANING of Christian Water Baptism

(1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:11-12; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:20, 21)

Paul tells us that baptism symbolizes a believer's identity and union with Christ. In baptism the believer declares his renunciation of his old way of living which was dominated by the world, the flesh (Col. 2:11-12), and the devil (Eph. 2:1-3). He renounces all previous faiths and declares his faith in Christ alone as the sufficient sacrifice for his sin. Baptism is symbolic not only of separation from the old life, but also separation to inclusion within the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Romans 6 teaches us that when we were baptized in Christ we died with Christ to sin; were buried with Christ to sin; were raised with Christ to walk in newness of life, a life free from bondage to sin; and were given hope of future resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5). Thus going beneath the baptismal waters visibly symbolizes the fact that we have forever turned our back on our life of sin and have embraced Christ and His cross. Rising from the baptismal waters symbolizes our spiritual resurrection to newness of life in Christ. Surely this is what Peter meant when he compared Noah's flood to Christian baptism (1 Pet. 3:20, 21). The water of baptism, like the water of the Flood, is symbolic of the end of the old life. "The old life must die, just as the old world had to die, if a new life and a new world are to be born" (Jansen, *The Meaning of Baptism*, 67, as quoted by Staples, 126).

Christian water baptism also speaks of our entrance into the church and into the family of God. The church fathers spoke of a two-fold gate into the church: faith, the *invisible* gate, and water baptism, the *visible* gate. "Water baptism produced outer authentication of one's faith in Christ, even as the coming of the Holy Spirit provided *inner* authentication. A Spirit-less Christian or an unbaptized Christian were equally incongruous in New Testament times" (Richard Howard, *Newness of Life*, 122, italics his). The Hebrew writer classifies water baptism as one of the essential foundational "principles of the doctrine of Christ" (Heb. 6:1-2).

Repentance of sin and faith in Christ must precede water baptism. Baptism is to be administered only *after* one has demonstrated true repentance. This was true of John the Baptist's ministry (Lk. 3:8), as well as Paul's ministry. In fact, Paul deals a death-blow to the idea that conversion occurs in the act of water baptism (baptismal regeneration) when he says to the Corinthian church, "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius.... For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." (1 Cor. 1:14, 17). If salvation occurred during the rite of water baptism, Paul would be saying, "I'm glad I led none of you to the Lord, but Crispus and Gaius." Further, he would be saying, "For Christ sent me not to convert people, but to preach the gospel." Instead, Paul makes a clear-cut differentiation between water baptism and the gospel itself.

Let no one misunderstand. Water baptism is *not* the means whereby one secures forgiveness of sins. Christ forgave the thief on the cross and joined him in paradise that very day even though the thief was not baptized (Lk. 23:43). Yet, for those who are able, submission to water baptism is the obedient response of a believer to the command of his Savior. It serves as a visible sign of regeneration (Tit. 3:5) as well as of the believer's submission to the Lordship of Christ.



Estate Planning Tips

for friends of God's Bible School & College

There will come a day when our earthly possessions are given to others. The process that provides for an orderly distribution of these items is referred to as estate planning. It is estimated that only twenty percent of the readers of this article will have taken the time to have planned for their estate's final passage. The remaining readers have left their heirs in the position of having to face many difficult and often expensive choices that could have been checkmated by an effective estate plan. So, what is it that the eighty percent need to do? Address three questions:

Who Gets What?

The answers are the estate planning foundation which serves as the basis for the entire plan. One needs to decide how the stocks, mutual funds, bonds, cash, life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, real estate, as well as other personal properties will be divided. Failure to give directives leaves open the possibility of squabbles and hard feelings as heirs seek to engineer the dividing process. Most readers of this article can remember at least one instance where families were at odds due to a disagreement over inherited items—all because the owner did not address the first question in the estate planning process. And, for those who have minor children or disabled adult dependents, the decision as to who should take responsibility for their futures is too important a matter to leave to others. Now is the time to decide "Who gets what?"

When Should They Get It?

All now? Some later? Outright or left in custodianship, trusts, or some other vehicle for future distribution? The outright possession of inherited wealth for some could be more of a burden than a blessing. Trusts are instruments used to make certain that the heirs receive the assets at a time when they will be in a position to properly appreciate and appropriate such. For those whose heirs are minor children or disabled adults, the use of trusts in addressing the question of "When should they get it?" takes on even greater significance.

What's the Price of Transfer?

Here we look at the potential costs of fees and taxes associated with the estate distribution process. What are they and how will such be paid? Under current federal law, taxable estates for individuals exceeding \$5,000,000 especially need to review the possible impact of taxes on their estates using professional counsel as their guide in dealing with the sometimes complex aspects of tax law. Numerous options and opportunities exist for those who plan ahead to make certain that taxes as well as fees are kept at a minimum.

It is an overt act of caring to take the time, while you still have time, to address these three questions. You need not try to do it alone as there are professionals in the legal, accounting, banking, and life insurance fields who have expertise in making the estate planning process a positive experience for you today and for your heirs tomorrow. Just do it now. ■

Please call Faith Avery at (513) 763-6565 or email favery@gbs.edu for a copy of our Better Estate Planning brochure.

Office of Advancement / God's Bible School and College / 1810 Young Street / Cincinnati, OH 45202



compiled by Rev. Jack Hooker, President,
National Alumni Association of GBS

A LIFE DEDICATED TO HELPING OTHERS

Linda Davison shares how God led her to a life of nursing and used GBS in that pursuit

I was an eight-year-old missionary girl, sitting at my home-school desk in High Rock, Grand Bahama. As I struggled with a math assignment, I noticed a large, tattered book with a thick cover on the top shelf of the mission library—a medical-surgical nursing volume. When I read the opening story about Clara Barton, the pioneer nurse and humanitarian, I knew I wanted to be a nurse. My resolve to read the whole book, however, quickly vanished after making several trips to the big Webster’s dictionary in the corner of the room while trying to read the first few pages.

I felt that same stirring again while watching the needy Carib Indians (a people after whom the Caribbean Sea was named) crowd around the mission van on the island of Dominica after Sunday services. They needed the bandages, salve, aspirin, and Tylenol that my parents, Richard and Mary Raines, missionaries living among these people, generously shared from their personal medicine chest. I remember wanting to know more so that I could help people.

I married Don Davison and had four beautiful children, Eric, Amber,

Mandy, and Nate. When the youngest went off to kindergarten, I began thinking about my dream again. Why not take some courses right here at God’s Bible School and College where my husband served in public relations?

GBS played a key role in pivoting me academically as an adult learner to being ready to conquer the demanding nursing school curriculum that followed. Of all my capable GBS instructors, I have heartfelt regard in particular for the investment made in me by Prof. Donald Hubbard in statistics class.

After taking that first subject, I never looked back. I “crammed” a two-year Associate’s Degree of Applied Science in Nursing into five years while working as a home health aide, acting as a busy owner of a cleaning business, and still trying to be a good wife and mother. I took one prerequisite at a time while the clock ticked away on a three-year waiting list at Cincinnati State Technical College School of Nursing.

As I look back on my school days, there are two special sources of encouragement that stand out to me. Before every test, I would look at the crayon-scribbled note given to me by my kindergartner, Nate, and which I had taped to the front of my notebook: “I can do all things through Christ....” School had never been easy for me. I worked hard for my grades! So I needed to stay reminded of God’s promise.

I also continually drew on the advice of one of my Cincinnati State nursing instructors, Suzanne Zellner, “You don’t have to know everything, but you do need to know where to find the answer.” Her counsel not only helped me in school, but also still serves me well today as I share it with nursing students whom I mentor.

In 1998, I began working at University Hospital in orthopedics and trauma. I transferred to the Emergency Department where the

dream born on the mission field is finding expression today on the front lines of human need. My responsibilities also involve a specialty as a certified Sexual Assault Nursing Examiner (SANE) and a part-time instructor in the SANE Program. In this patient-advocate role, I have the unique opportunity to testify in legal proceedings and to provide forensic evidence to assist in the pursuit of justice.

I love my work as a health care provider and thrive on the team spirit in the ER. There is never a dull moment. Opportunities abound to personalize real love and concern, even for fleeting moments, at the center of so much pain. I am convinced that wherever one works, he or she is ultimately in service for God. I have not forced my witness into my work. Simply living out biblical ethics and attitudes opens doors for my faith to shine.



When humbled with the honor of a hospital-wide exceptional nurse award, I knew in my heart that it had come about indirectly from an intentional focus on my relationship with Christ.

God’s Bible School and College believes that you cannot live what you don’t know; you can’t give what you don’t have, and you cannot love without serving. These guiding truths are not only foundational to GBS but to my life work as well. ■

Please Note: In the fall of 2010, Linda Davison, wife of GBS Public Relations Director Don Davison, received the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurses, having been nominated by University Hospital nurse administrators, peers, physicians, patients, and families. She was also nominated as one of 24 finalists who was honored at the annual Business Courier Health Care Heroes Award Dinner at the Hyatt Regency, Cincinnati, March 14, 2011. That event recognized finalists for their achievements ranging from research and inventions, management skills, innovative programs for employees, and service to the poor and uninsured.

GOD'S OPTIMISTIC GRACE

by Matt Palm



“*Optimistic grace is the reason we exist.*” God knew before He created us that we would turn to evil and rebel against Him. Yet He reaches out to us in goodness, mercy, and forgiveness. This is all because of His grace, which is the heartbeat of heaven, the hope of humanity, and the center of His love. To describe grace, I offer this acronym—**God’s Reason All Creation Exists**.

GOD’S. God is sovereign. He can do whatever He wants, but He has chosen to make our responsibility part of the equation that He offers for our salvation. The message that He gives us is the story of His love, which we must accept, not because we are coerced, but as an deliberate act of our will. Grace is meaningless without someone to respond to it, and the word *love* becomes meaningless also if we are forced into it—overcome by His irresistible force. There will always be a certain tension between God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility, but they can and do coexist in a mutually exclusive and perfect partnership.

REASON. One of the greatest gifts that God gives us is the ability to reason. But this ability to reason lays upon us a responsibility to respond to His offered grace. Because we have understanding, we know what is wrong or right about a situation, and we are responsible for the choices that we make. It is inconceivable that God who knows the future would think it reasonable arbitrarily to condemn numbers of people to eternal separation from Himself. Everywhere in Scripture He emphasizes His patient understanding and longsuffering with His people. We can trust the reasonable God who so graciously extends His love to us.

But how are you responding to that love? What is the passion at the center of your life? What would you say governs what you do and how you do it? It is possible to gauge to some degree a person’s future by how he or she is now putting meaning and reason into life.

ALL. God chooses to love all of us, and in response to that love, we choose happiness instead of heartache, hope instead of despair, and life instead of death. The heart of the story of optimistic grace is found in Jesus the Christ. Jesus was born in humble circumstances and died as a convicted criminal. The stories of Jesus tell us

about a homeless man born in poverty who never owned anything but the clothes on His back. In spite of His humble beginnings, royal blood flowed in His veins. But He chose poverty over power and love over hate, showing us the face of God. Some of the last words He uttered on the cross were “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34 NIV). Just as through one man, Adam, sin entered the world and separated us from God, so also through one man, Jesus Christ, grace is extended to the world. When God looks at us, He does so through the grace provided in the sacrifice of Jesus.

CREATION. We are not just physical beings but also spiritual ones—never-dying souls in need of Christ’s redemptive work. There is a depravity to our humanity that cannot be overcome by our positive thinking or strenuous efforts. But God’s grace is given to us in Jesus who came to us in human form that He might perfectly restore all creation to Himself.

EXISTS. We exist in God’s time and space. Each of us must decide whether to enter into a personal relationship with our holy God. Look carefully at your own life and ask yourself, “What does the ideal person look like to the God of the Universe?” Ask, “What does God expect of me to do in response to His grace?” Ask, “Am I being obedient to what I know He wants me to do now?” Remember that God has an optimistic expectation for each of us—that He believes in our future!

CONCLUSION. How important is our message of optimistic grace? What if our message of hope and holiness should be silenced forever? It is more important now than ever to recognize the importance of clearly communicating our message of optimism to the world around us. God has placed us on this earth for this time and this day. The church is God’s plan for building His kingdom. This is our generation, our opportunity for our finest hours. Like a coal from the altars of heaven, may our hearts burn once again with a passion for holiness and for sharing our great message of optimistic grace. ■

This article, condensed by the editor, is from a chapel sermon presented at GBS, January 28, 2011.



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the world to win

Each month we publish brief “field reports” from missionaries around the world. Missionaries are invited to send us their newsletters and other information about their activities. GBS graduates are especially urged to respond, but we also wish to include others who uphold our vision and our commitment.

COLOMBIA. “Thanks for praying for the trip into Peru. In four days we preached or spoke five times to congregations. Pastor Luis and his family live in Peru and are trying to hold to a standard of holiness and careful living. They are starting a church in the Lima area and in a poor town an hour away. They are poor and live very humbly. As God wills, we want to serve them with spiritual support, materials to work with, friendship, and help as needed.” —Phillip and Heather Dickinson, *Dickinson Update*

The Dickinsons have established a new website at dickinsonjourney.blogspot.com for ministry news, prayer requests, etc.

HAITI. “Our VBS...was a great success. Each day we averaged around 220 children. We had over 30 children come forward...to give their hearts to Jesus. Our lessons were about how to be saved, how to live holy and pure...and how to be faithful to the end. We’ve just completed the annual mission convention. The messages focused on living a holy, sanctified life before God. Many of our young people were at the altar seeking God during the convention. —Hess Family Update

RUSSIA. “Vyborg Christian Center is affiliated with Hope International Missions...[and under its leadership] we have been bringing the Good News of Hope to Russian people. Every Sunday night men come from the House of Hope rehabilitation center for a worship service and a time of fellowship afterward. [Many] young men who not long ago were drug addicts...have now found salvation in Christ. Every Friday night we fix dinner for our weekly youth meeting with one to two dozen active young people.” —Richard and Judy Grout, *Rejoice in Him* (newsletter)

THOUGHTS for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

OUR EYES ARE ON YOU

“...For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You.”

—2 Chron. 20:12 NASB

There are many things in this life that I will never understand, and, to be honest, suffering is one of them. I know the right answers, but when one is staring raw pain in the face, those answers aren’t always extremely comforting. My spirit rages against this fallen world, against the brokenness that shatters bodies and spirits. This isn’t how things are supposed to be!

And then the words from 2 Chronicles are whispered to my spirit, “*but our eyes are on You.*” My focus shifts, and I see the broken body of our Messiah as He takes our fallenness upon Himself. I hear, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?” from His bleeding lips. I feel the broken heart of a Father who watches His Son suffer. I recall the words of that same God to His people through the prophet Isaiah, “*As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you...*” (Is. 66:13). And I realize that He knows, that He enters into our pain, and that truly He is Emmanuel—God with us.

As the Body of Christ in this world, our job is to enter in as well—to perform our sacred privilege of intercession; to cry out without ceasing to the God who promises comfort, grace, and ultimate healing; and to trust the heart of a God who will one day wipe away every tear and make all the wrongs right at last. Let us fix our eyes on Him today! ■

Sonja Vernon is Dean of Women at God’s Bible School and College.



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