

GOD'S REVIVALIST

March 2008

and Bible Advocate

A weathered, grey stone cross stands as the central focus, its surface textured with lichen and moss. At its base, a vibrant bouquet of flowers is arranged, featuring several pink and orange proteas, two white anemones, and several orange and yellow bird-of-paradise flowers. The bouquet is interspersed with long, thin, blue-green grasses. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection,
and the life." John 11:25

the editor's view



LARRY D. SMITH

“BROTHER, SISTER, HOW DOES YOUR SOUL PROSPER?”

Printed here as the second of a two-part series, the following is a paper by your editor presented under the title “The Methodist Class Meeting: Model for Spiritual Formation” at the Wesleyan Study Group of the Evangelical Theological Society, San Diego, California, November 14, 2007. The convention theme was “Teaching Them to Obey.”

Through vividly written narratives, we can step into one of those class meetings of our past and linger for a few moments in its fervent atmosphere. Luccock and Hutchinson, early 20th-century historians, reconstruct the circle of “twelve persons ‘having the form and seeking the power of godliness,’ gathered around their leader during the great revival.”

After the usual order of singing, prayer, scripture, and exhortation, he asks Brother Watson, “the lad from the farm just outside the village,” how it had been with his soul. Timidly the boy stands and under gentle but persistent probing acknowledges temptation to anger but also reports victory over it. Then after a verse of hymn, Sister Lee rises to “pour out a record of spiritual blessings in rich profusion,” which suddenly subsides when the leader asks her about her husband, the town reprobate.

“Him!” The woman can hold no longer. “Why, that worthless scamp, he came home the other night and found me singing a hymn-tune. ‘Ha!’ he says, ‘more religion, is it?’ At once I saw that he was fixing to make sport of me, so I flung a mop at his head, and he’s been quiet ever since.”

With the approval of the class, the leader deals pointedly with Sister Lee, leaving her “glowing with a lively sense of such victories as she has truly won, but also with a lively appreciation of the heights yet to be surmounted.”

There are other accounts that also arouse our curiosity. In one published in 1807, Joseph Nightingale (p19)➡

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

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the president's page



CONNECTED

by Michael R. Avery, President

Radical independence is a highly-admired characteristic in American culture. From the earliest pioneer to the twenty-first century entrepreneur, Americans take pride in the man who can “go it alone” and “make it happen.” These rugged individualists possess a homespun philosophy of life that says, “If you need a helping hand, look at the end of your arm.” We applaud their independence, quote them in leadership seminars, and teach our children to emulate their self-reliance.

This independent spirit is to some degree helpful and healthy; but when taken too far, it can have devastating consequences. A part of what it means to be created in the image of God is that we are created to relate to and

interact with other people. Just as the Divine Persons live in intimate Trinitarian relationship, humans cannot fulfill their created role without intimate relationships. The very nature of true relationships requires inter-dependence. We were not created to be “stand alone” people but members of a family and a community that are both interconnected and dependent. We draw emotional and spiritual strength from one another in order to be whole and healthy persons.

This is never truer than in our own spiritual lives. “There are two things we cannot do alone,” said Paul Tournier: “one is to be married and the other is to be a Christian.” We are part of a living body that depends upon “connectedness” to God and to one another to function properly and develop normally. It is true that we draw our spiritual life from the source and fountainhead of all spiritual life—God Himself. But it is also true that we draw precious and necessary resources from one another that enable us to function as a healthy part of the Body of Christ.

This line of truth is so important that Jesus included it in His final discourse He had with His disciples the night before His crucifixion. It’s found in John, chapter fifteen, and is explained with the analogy of the vine and the branches. It teaches us at least three important lessons about being connected to Him and to one another.

First, we are not self-originating. “I am the Vine; you are the branches.” In counseling sessions I have often reminded people that we are only stewards of the life God has given us, and we are not free to do with it as we please. But occasionally I hear these words in response, “No! It’s my life! I’ll do....” It is a fundamental error to think that our life is our own. Only God is self-originating. The source of all life both physical and spiritual is always in another—someone outside ourselves. The branch does not exist without the Vine. Our life is not our own! It is a gift from God!

Second, we are not self-sustaining. None of us have life within ourselves. Only as we “abide in the vine” do we have life. Just as physical life is maintained by the air we breathe, the food we eat and the relationships in which we engage, even so is spiritual life maintained by connection with Christ and with the members of His body. It is, “in Him we live, and move, and have our being.” And living in Him also means living within His body, the Church. Saint John of the Cross wrote, “The virtuous soul that is alone...is like the burning coal that is alone. It will grow colder rather than hotter.” The Christian faith is not merely an intellectual, internal faith. It can only be lived in community. Abandon the body and your faith will fade.

Third, we are not self-fulfilling. Joy, happiness, meaning, and value come only in and through a relationship to God and service to one another. Real life comes to us through the Vine. We have no ability within ourselves (p9) ➡

MARCH 2008

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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.

A WONDERFUL LIFE

I just read "It's a Wonderful Life" in the latest *Revivalist* [December 2007] online. I was again reminded that enjoying God's blessing of life is something that I need to work on. I remember Oscar Johnson; he was as you wrote. Your article also reminds me of my own father, who always has zest and joy in life, taking each day as another gift from God and bringing a smile to those with whom he comes in contact. My own wife Heather constantly makes each day bright for those blessed enough to be around her. I think Brother Oscar and Brother Case show us how Jesus probably would have been, with a ready smile bringing happiness.

PHILLIP DICKINSON
Colombia, South America
Email

WELL WRITTEN AND BALANCED

I was pleased and even excited as I began to read the articles in the November issue. I especially enjoyed Larry Smith's editorial on the state of church music in the "Wesleyan" church. I am a pastor in The Wesleyan Church, and have more than a passing interest in music and worship, especially as it applies to the church. This article stated many of the thoughts that I have had in the past. I consider myself to enjoy contemporary music; and I agree with Mr. Smith, especially in regards to the "Jesus is my boyfriend" type of contemporary worship. I love the mention of Getty and Townend; there is some great music coming from this hymnwriting team. I have taught several of their hymns at our church along with reintroducing our church to the Wesley classics blending that with the gospel revival songs of experience and the best, in my (p21) ➡

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.

CAMBODIA. Missionaries Robert and Kay Bickert request prayer for Som On, a Bible institute student, and his "witness to his family through his love for them and his faithfulness in following Jesus." He has faced intense opposition from them. His uncle had convinced him to work in a casino; but after a short time, Som On "escaped with the intent to return to Phnom Penh. But he did not have enough money for transportation. He searched for people who could help him. Then God provided a friend who gave him funds for a bus fare." He came to the Bible institute where students and staff prayed for him. "Then he returned to confront his family. God was at work. Only his mother was present, [and she] was receptive. He returned in the evening to sleep at Pastor Rafael's home for protection from his uncle whom he expected to come...looking for him. However, his uncle returned to the casino. God has answered our prayers." —*Email*

ESTONIA. "Pray for the leaders and the future of the Methodist Church of ESTONIAN. Pray that God will keep them and give them strength to do His will in everything.... Praise the Lord for answered prayer in ESTONIAN. The law for home schooling, which has allowed it through the sixth level, has been rewritten. Home schooling has now been allowed until the end of the ninth level. The new law clarifies many things for both educators and parents." (Stephen Blowers, Wesley Chapel) —*Ropeholders*

HONG KONG. "Continue praying for Sister Marilyn Olson as she continues to labor for the Lord in Fanling. She has Bible classes a few times a week and does visitation to people in the area. Pray [also] for the Sunday house church service and meetings throughout the week: Friday evening service, Wednesday (p19) ➡

Camp Meeting

at God's Bible School & College

CINCINNATI, OHIO

May 14-18, 2008

With guest speakers:

Rev. Blake Jones

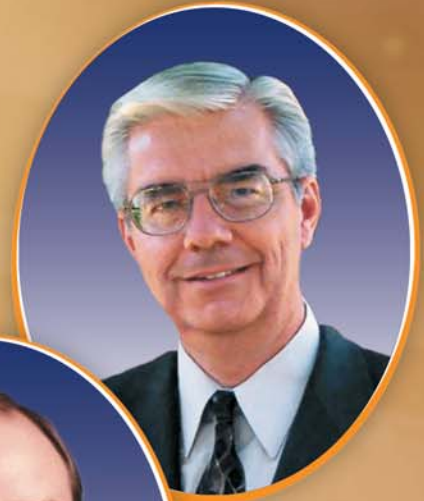
Rev. Knox Bullock

Dr. Wingrove Taylor



Dr. Michael Avery *President*

Rev. Mark Cravens *Campus Pastor*



Music: GBS Division of Music

Children's Services: GBS Students

GBS Commencement: Saturday, May 17, 10:00 am

First Service: Wednesday, May 14, 7PM

Heart Talks: Thursday and Friday, 9AM

Musical Pre-Service: Sunday evening, 6PM

Rooms Available—Call: (513) 721-7944

Prayer and Healing—7:30 AM

Breakfast—8:00 AM

Heart Talks—9:00 AM

Morning Worship—10:30 AM

Children's Meeting—10:30 AM

Lunch—12:00 PM

Supper—5:00 PM

Evening Service—7:00 PM

Nursery service provided during the main services

COME, YOU SAINTS,
LOOK HERE AND WONDER

by Thomas Kelly

Come, you saints, look here and wonder;
See the place where Jesus lay.
He has burst His bands assunder;
He has borne our sins away.
Joyful tidings! Joyful tidings!
Yes, the Lord has risen today!

Jesus triumphs! Sing His praises!
By His death He overcame.
Thus the Lord His glory raises,
Thus He fills His foes with shame;
Sing His praises! Sing His praises!
Praises to the Victor's name!

Jesus triumphs! Countless legions
Come from heaven to meet their King!
Soon in yonder blessed regions
They shall join His praise to sing!
Songs eternal, songs eternal
Shall through heaven's arches ring.



Christ's Resurrection

and our own

by Bishop Matthew Simpson

As the light of morning was breaking upon Jerusalem, a guard was placed at a tomb located in a small garden near the city walls. Startling events had occurred the Friday before. While a man from the hills of Galilee had been put to death on a cross, strange signs had appeared in the temple, the heavens, and the earth. It was rumored that He had said that He would rise from the dead on the third morning, which was now dawning. Two women were silently wending their way toward the tomb, bringing spices in their hands. They were among the small circle of friends who had loved the executed man and who dared come near His grave.

It is now centuries later; and as Easter Day approaches, the whole world is coming to visit Jesus' grave. The eyes of princes and statesmen, as well as the eyes of the poor and lowly, are all turned toward that place. All through Europe, in the Western lands, from ocean to ocean, on mountain top, in valleys and over broad prairies, the thought and love of millions center there. For the song of Jubilee has gone forth; and everywhere Christians rejoice, "The Lord is risen from the dead!"

For the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Christian faith. *"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."* If Christ is not truly risen from the grave, we shall never see our fathers and mothers who have fallen asleep in Him nor our little ones who have passed to another world. If Christ is not risen, we are of all men most miserable, because there will be no blessedness for us beyond the grave. But if Christ is risen, then we shall also rise, as He has promised! God has provided solid evidence to assure us of this truth.

Consider, first, the certainty of His death. Were this not firmly established it would be useless to try to prove His resurrection. Our Lord could have suffered in some obscure place, leaving us without secure evidence that He had really died. But God allowed His Son to be arrested, first by the great council of the Jews, and then by the authority of the Roman governor. Moreover, He was put to death at the time of the Passover when Jews had come to Jerusalem from all the countries through

which they were scattered. The ancient city could not hold the multitudes that had pitched their tents about its walls. There were vast numbers, then, that witnessed the scene of Jesus' death.

God also called upon the heavens and the earth, the air, the graves, and the temple itself for testimony. So the earth rocked at its center, shaking and convulsing; and the sun clothed itself in sackcloth for three hours. Then the tombs were opened, and a voice seemed to say, "Hear, O sons and daughters of men!" All this pointed to the reality of Jesus' crucifixion. He bore the sins of many in His own flesh upon the tree. He drank the cup of bitterness, and He trod the wine press alone. For our sins He was smitten; and in the agony of His spirit, he called out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" See Him voluntarily surrender His life; and as He bows His head and dies, hear Him say, "It is finished!" All this occurred before the crowds who also saw the blood and water gush out as the soldier thrust the spear into His side.

When taken from the cross He was placed in a tomb. The Roman soldiers were there to guard that place of death, and his enemies had secured it with a seal. But I see the angel of God coming down from the opening doors of heaven; he rolls away the stone; and He sits by the mouth of the grave. Christ, girding Himself with all the power of His divinity, arises; He leads captivity captive and makes light the darkness of the sepulcher. As the grave yields its prey, the One whom His enemies had charged with being an imposter is proved to be the Son of God with power!

But to give the amplest proof of His resurrection, He lingered on earth to show He was still the Saviour God. He was seen not only by His followers that Easter morning, but later in the same day by the Emmaus disciples, then later by Thomas and many others. "After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once...." You remember that His disciples saw Him as He ascended into Heaven, extending His hands in blessing. From those outstretched hands He still sends down His favor upon us this Easter as we worship the risen Lord.

By His resurrection, Our Saviour has conquered death and the grave, and He has left us a pledge (p9)➡



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

EASY TO LIVE WITH

By the Rev. Glenn D. Black

The best friends I have are the books which make up my personal library. One of these “friends” captured my interest some time ago. The title of the book is *Easy to Live With*. As is my habit, I scanned the preface to see what the author, Dr. Leslie Parrott, had to say in his introduction to the book. The first two paragraphs warrant the attention of every dedicated follower of Christ.

Dr. Parrott writes, “The real test of maturity is the ability to make ourselves easy to live with. But this goal many people never reach. They will be hard to live with until the day they die. Heaven will have to do radical surgery if they are going to be people to enjoy forever.”

He continues, “Some kinds of religious experiences—glossolalia, legalism and liturgical worship, for instance—seem very satisfying to people who live compartmentalized lives. But the same people can be miserable human beings at home. Some people have a ‘sound’ doctrine which can be defended with vigor [but] who cannot even apply it effectively in getting along with members of their families.”

Most of us, no doubt, are in agreement with the above quote. This is especially true when thinking of the other fellow. Right? It is a natural tendency (or is it carnal?) to be hard on the other person and easy with oneself. The question is: “*Am I easy to live with?*”

Recently I was sitting in a lawyer’s office. Conversation somehow drifted to an incident my lawyer friend had at his grandchild’s home. Just before he left, the little one looked up at Grandpa and said he wished Grandpa wouldn’t leave. When he asked why, the child answered, “Because when you’re here, Daddy and Mommy are more patient with me.”

Humorous? A little. However, serious reflection soon dispels all laughing. Paul S. Rees, speaking about this very type of situation, won my complete approval

when he observed, “My dear friends, we have had at times a kind of eloquence in a camp meeting or a holiness convention that seemed seraphic—Oh, how heavenly it was!—but there was nothing that corresponded to it in the patience that was demonstrated by the preacher, let us say, with his own wife and children in the home.” (Taken from his sermon, “Mandate for Mission,” delivered at a conference on evangelism in Cincinnati, Ohio).

Swifter than the speed of an arrow from an Indian’s bow comes the all-too-justified accusation that some holiness people simply are not holy. Some local churches could just as well close their doors because the community has come to the conclusion that those within the church can’t get along, so why go there? Why join a group of people who are hard to live with?

Thank God not all churches are this way. Not all Christians are at odds with each other. But too many are! Too many are hard to cope with on the church board, in the Sunday school class, at home, on the job, and in the community.

You do not have to be a compromiser to be easy to live with. You are not a weak-kneed or spineless Christian if you are easy to live with at church. It’s a mark of emotional, mental, and spiritual maturity to be easy to live with.

St. Paul admonished us, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). Let’s not be so stubborn as to refuse to explore all possible means to live peaceably with others. Nine times out of ten, the crisis of getting along with others lies with us—not others! ■

Rev. Glenn Black, superintendent of the Kentucky District, The Wesleyan Church, is a former editor of God’s Revivalist, in which this article first appeared, August 28, 1980.

➡(p3) to bear the fruit of a meaningful and satisfying life. It can only be found as we relate to and draw from the Vine and the other branches.

Too many branches of the visible Church believe and practice isolation. They isolate themselves from the Church at large; but worse yet, they isolate themselves from those within their own religious tradition and in some cases from those within the same four walls of their own local church. They have developed an approach to discipleship where people are exhorted to do what is right and then placed under rigid structures of accountability or fear of rejection to see that they do it. This has yielded poor results because it ignores the deepest need of the human soul—true connectedness to another Christian. I have seen my share of people in spiritual trouble, and in so many of their cases there was more than a stubborn will involved that needed firm admonishment. There was a desperate hurting soul that needed the nourishment that only a loving community and a meaningful relationship could provide. (I believe isolation and the resulting loneliness may be the devil’s most successful tool in luring people into sin.)

One poor soul expressed it like this: “They preached to me and prayed with me, but no one ever asked me over for lunch.” It is often true that those churches that stress accountability and the “you need to stand on your own two feet” approach often do so because they simply don’t know how to relate to other people. They either don’t know how or are too afraid to lock arms with those who are struggling. Building meaningful relationships with needy people is time-consuming, uncomfortable, and costly. But the successful results are indisputable. If you are still not convinced, take special note of the words spoken at the next communion service in which you participate. The minister will hand you a piece of bread or a wafer and say, “The Body of Christ, broken for you...” The Church was founded by One whose body was broken to give us life. Shouldn’t we then go forth and pour out our lives for one another?

There really are no “self-made” men in our world, but men and women who have been fortunate enough to have other people invest so much in them that they in turn were able to make a huge difference on the visible stage of life. If you are reading this article and truly want to make a difference, then find someone to connect with and pour your resources into that person. When we truly “connect,” we can change a thousand lives—one at a time! ■

➡(p7) of our own resurrection. “*But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept*” (1 Cor. 15:20). Perhaps you know the figure of the firstfruits as understood by the Jews. Their religion was connected with the seasons of the year. When the first heads of grain began to ripen in the field and there was thus a pledge of the harvest, they cut off those first ripened heads and went up to Jerusalem where they presented them to the Lord. Later, when the whole harvest had been gathered, they went again to Jerusalem where they held a feast of thanksgiving and shouted harvest home.

So Christ came as the firstfruits of the glorious resurrection that shall take place. He came, the first man to rise by His own power from the tomb, having snatched the crown from death and having thrown light into the grave. He ascended among the shouts of angels; the heavens opened gladly before Him; and He sat down upon the throne, where He remains until His enemies become His footstool. He is the firstfruits, but the angels are to be sent out like the reapers; and by and by the harvest will be gathered. Just as Christ, the firstfruits, passed through the grave and went up to glory, so all who are Christ’s shall awaken from their long sleep, arise and shout the harvest home!

Let the grave be our resting-place, for Christ rested there. Christ shall burst the tomb. He will burst the tomb, though deep it be, and we shall rise through His almightiness. Though our dust may be scattered on the wings of the wind, He has marked every particle; and it shall rise again by His own almighty power. If we are like Christ in our dying and in our burial, we shall also be like Him in His resurrection! Yes, “we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is.”

All this comes to us in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. He died once. He dies no more, and the condemnation of death is forever gone. He sits on the throne of everlasting dominion; His kingdom is an eternal Kingdom. As He died once and has risen to die no more, so when we have died once and gone to the grave, then come up safely on the other side, death shall be passed forever. We shall then put our feet on the neck of the King of Terrors and shall be able to say, “O grave, where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting?”

Then rejoice in God. Cast away your downcast look. Child of the dust, you are an heir of glory. There is a crown all burnished for you; there is a mansion ready for you; there is eternal glory for you. Angels are to be your servants, and you are to reign with the King of Kings forever. Alleluia! ■

Bishop Matthew Simpson (1811–1884) was among the foremost bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a friend of President Abraham Lincoln, and one of the finest preachers of his day. He also was an outspoken friend of the American holiness movement. This sermon was abridged and updated by the editor.



enrollment is 297. Please pray with us about this, urge college-bound students to consider GBS, and pass along information about them to Tim Makcen in our Student Recruitment Department. You may contact him at tmakcen@gbs.edu.

—Dr. Ken Farmer, Vice President for Academic Affairs



SECOND SEMESTER GBS COLLEGE ENROLLMENT IS 267

For the spring semester 2008, GBS college enrollment stands at 267 (237.8 FTE), a figure which includes the 45 (16.2 FTE) students in our Aldersgate Distance Education Program (ADEP). This year's 6.32% drop between the first and second semesters is slightly larger than the 5.29% decrease that we have averaged over the last 10 years.

Remember that the STAND Plan goal for the fall semester 2008

RODNEY LOPER SPEAKS AT WINTER REVIVAL SERVICES

Second semester at GBS began with winter revival services, January 15–18, 2008, with the Rev. Rodney Loper (GBS BA in Min.Ed. '01), as evangelist. "God wonderfully used Rev. Loper to challenge our students to a full commitment to Christ," writes Jack Hooker, Vice President for Advancement. "A number of students sought and received spiritual help. Thursday morning was one of those special services where God

broke in and numbers of students sought God. It is wonderful to sense the spirit of freedom to mind God that prevails on campus." Loper is a member of the pastoral staff at Hobe Sound Bible Church, Hobe Sound, Florida.

PRAYER PARTNERS FOR GBS's MINISTERIAL STUDENTS

GBS's Division of Ministerial Education is seeking prayer partners for its ministry in training (p12)➡

REVIVALIST FAMILY

On these pages, we feature items about GBS alumni, vital statistics, significant events scheduled throughout the "Revivalist family," and brief news notes from across the holiness movement. An item for inclusion in the "Revivalist Family" must be submitted within four months of the event which it reports and should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202; or revivalist@gbs.edu.

DEATHS



Rev. Helen (Pappas) McClure, died January 11, 2008, in Cincinnati, Ohio, at the age of 76. She attended God's Bible School and College 1949–1951 and was an ordained deaconess in the Church of the Nazarene. She is survived by Dean McClure (GBS BA '51), her husband of 57 years; her daughters Sheila and Marsha; her son Mike; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and other relatives and friends. Funeral services were held at the Montana Avenue Church of the Nazarene with interment in Crown Hill Cemetery, Cincinnati. Officiating were Dr. Joe C. Brown, Dr. Ron Dalton, Dr. Doug Van Nest, and Rev. Arno Wilson.

BIRTHS



To **Ron (GBS BA '00) and Sarah (McClurg) (GBS AA '01) Cook**, Kettering (Dayton), Ohio, a daughter, **Hope Christiana Cook**, born December 13, 2007. As noted in the December *Revivalist*, Ron has suffered from serious health problems. "Many thanks for your continued prayers and the cards we've been receiving," the Cooks write. "God is helping us; and with His grace, we press on."



To **James (GBS BRE '90) and Sharonda (Rish) (GBS '87-'90) Baker**, Cridersville, Ohio, a son **Joshua Daniel Baker**, born Thanksgiving Day, November 22, 2007. (p12)➡

photo courtesy: iPhone, Inc. The Apple Media Company does not sponsor or support God's Bible School & College. iPhone is a trademark of Apple Media, Inc.



answer the call vip day '08

04.18.08

At God's Bible School and College, we believe that as Christians we are all called to lives of ministry. Whether that call leads you to the pulpit or the pew, we believe that there is no better place to answer the call than right here at GBS!

Come to VIP Day '08 and see how GBS can equip you to answer your call! You will have the opportunity to see for yourself everything that GBS has to offer. Check out our campus. Worship with us in chapel. Chat with our staff and faculty. Sing in our choir. Play basketball and volleyball. Tour Cincinnati. Enjoy a special banquet, great music, a closing challenge, and much, much more. See you at VIP Day '08!

Call 800.486.4637 or register online at www.gbs.edu/vip





GBS Ministerial Education Students and Faculty

➡(p10) future ministers and especially for the spiritual and academic welfare of its students. "We have 46 ministerial students for the spring '08 semester," according to Divisional Chair Dr. Allan P. Brown,

"and these students are a real blessing, serving in various ministries in the Cincinnati area. We have over 600 prayer partners now, but we would like to have 1,000." Readers of *God's Revivalist* who wish to add

their names to the list of prayer partners should contact by mail the Division of Ministerial Education, GBS, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202; or by email: schmulcenter@gsb.edu.

REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡(p10) He joins siblings, Christianna, age 17, Evangelyn, age 14, and Nathaniel, age 13.



To **Chad (GBS BA in Min.Ed. '06) and Brook (Sagely) (GBS '04-'06) Cowherd**, Tuscaloosa, AL, a daughter, **Alivia Faith Cowherd**, born January 30.



To **Eric (GBS HS '00; College '00-'01) and Sarah (Popplewell) Davison (GBS HS '01; College '01-'02)** Cincinnati, Ohio, a daughter, **Savannah Jo Davison**, December 2, 2007. Paternal grandpar-

ents are GBS Public Relations Director Don Davison and his wife Linda.

NOTICES

"One People, One Cause: Holiness Forevermore!" is the theme for the 2008 Inter-church Holiness Convention (IHC), April 15-17 at the Convention Center, Dayton, Ohio. The convention commemorates IHC's 56th anniversary. For further information call (812) 275-2119 or send an email to ihconvention@sbcglobal.net.

"John Wesley said that every command of God is a promise of the needed grace. Scripture can

therefore be interpreted in light of the 'Promise Hermeneutic.'"

These words of Dr. Stephen Gibson, educator, pastor, and theologian, underscore the central message of his new book *The Sincerity of God: A Demonstration of the Wesleyan Promise Hermeneutic*. It is endorsed by GBS President Michael Avery, who comments that "Gibson has excellently demonstrated the consistency and Biblical accuracy of Wesleyan holiness theology in *The Sincerity of God*." The book, which contains 100 pages with bibliography, may be purchased for \$7.00 (mailed free in the USA) by contacting its author at 1771 S Butler

ACADEMY STUDENTS SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER

“You were the messenger of God and reminded us that He would be with us during this operation.” These words from a woman whose husband faced surgery were written to Aldersgate Christian Academy elementary students, thanking them for visiting The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati, December 12, “to share God’s love at Christmas,” as teacher Janna Hooker explains. In addition to singing carols and greeting patients and staff, students distributed gift bags which included

cookies, candy and a Christian message. “You must know that my husband’s operation was very successful,” the letter continued, “and also please know we enjoyed your songs, your gifts, your caring and your love.”



BRIEFLY NOTED: Three deteriorating buildings purchased by GBS have been removed on Josephine Street, while another awaits demolition. This is to advance

development of a new campus “entrance,” which will include both space for new construction and attractive landscaping.... **The GBS Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble (SWSE) will appear** 10:30 AM, Sunday morning, March 16, at the Bible Methodist Church, 529 Stadium Drive, Findlay, Ohio. Rev. Chris Cravens is pastor. In the evening the SWSE will present a 5:00 PM service at the Bird Lake Wesleyan Missionary Church, Osseo, Michigan, where Rev. Rick Maloyed is pastor. ■



GBS Alumni Reception at IHC

Wednesday, April 16
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm
Dayton Convention Center, Dayton, Ohio
Rooms 302 – 304

Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46203. His website is Globalseminary@cs.com.

HITHER AND THITHER

National Holiness Association Camp. Rev. Leonard Sankey (GBS ThB '60) and Rev. Darrell Stetler (GBS HS '73; BRE '77) were speakers at the Indianapolis Area Indoor Camp Meeting, held January 15–18 under the auspices of a newly-formed organization adopting the name of the former National Holiness Association (NHA). Gerald (GBS BA '83) and Becky Glick (GBS '84) served as musicians. The indoor camp was

held on the ICHA campgrounds near Greenfield, Indiana.

Ten Commandments Ministry. “Pray for our Ten Commandments ministry,” writes retired minister Rev. Carl Dennis, Nashville, Tennessee. He explains that the “Spirit of the Lord gave me the plan to distribute the Ten Commandments posters” during a 1999 Kentucky rally supporting the placement of the Commandments in courthouses. “As of January 1, 2008, God has helped me to distribute, free-of-charge, these beautiful, framable, 11-inch x 14-inch prints to many individuals and churches, including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. The

total...we have given has reached... 27,400. We were instrumental in having our printer [also] print them in Spanish. The pure word of God goes out with each print, becoming like 10 sermons, preaching to all who read them.”

WHA Officers. Rev. John R. Brewer was re-elected General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Holiness Association of Churches at that denomination’s 25th General Conference. Other officers are Rev. Armen O. Rhoads, Assistant General Superintendent; Rev. Robert W. Wilson, General Secretary/Treasurer; and Rev. Nathan Shockley, General Youth President. ■



Dear Phil

RESISTING THE DEVIL

James 4:7 says, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” How does one resist the devil?

—Your Student

Dear Student,

Effective resistance depends largely on proper preparation. If you wait till temptation strikes, you will be an easy kill. We must do several things in preparation to resist the enemy.

First, we submit ourselves to God. James 4:7a says, “Submit therefore to God.” No one can resist the devil who is not in submission to God. An unyielded will makes you open prey to our roaring adversary (1 Pet. 5:8). You have submitted yourself to God if you are walking in full obedience to God’s word, are willing to do whatever God wants you to do (John 7:17), and have cast all your anxieties upon him (1 Pet. 5:6-7).

Second, we must know God’s word. We put on the whole armor of God through regular reading, memorization, and meditation on His word. Most know that Jesus quoted Scripture when Satan tempted him (Mat. 4:3-10). Few know that Jesus quoted only from Deuteronomy (Deut. 8:3; 6:16; 10:20). Apparently Jesus had memorized large portions of Deuteronomy, perhaps all of it. How much Scripture have you

memorized? If you are a typical Christian, not much. I would encourage you to begin with Matt. 22:37-40, and then identify passages that discuss the virtues that you know God wants to build into your life. If you struggle to memorize scripture, work at it. Read it repeatedly. Paraphrase it. Talk about it with your friends. Ingrafting God’s word arms us against the foe.

Third, we must know ourselves. Knowing ourselves involves recognizing our areas and times of weakness, i.e., where and when the devil is most likely to attack. Romans 13:14 commands, “Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.” We prepare to resist the devil by avoiding known areas of temptation and making ourselves accountable to trustworthy fellow believers.

Fourth, we must know our enemy. The devil is a liar, a thief, and a murderer (John 8:44; 10:10). All his temptations distort the truth. That’s why it’s so crucial to know the truth of God’s word. The devil’s tactics commonly include questioning God’s goodness, love or wisdom, enticing us to satisfy a legitimate desire outside of God’s parameters, focusing on the negative aspects of our circumstances and trying to get us to compare ourselves with others. Although some have claimed that the devil does not know our thoughts and does not have access to our minds, I know of no biblical

basis for this claim, and the testimony of believers throughout the ages contradicts it. The mind, in fact, is the battleground of the soul. It is where the enemy most often aims his fiery darts (Eph. 6:16).

When an attack actually begins, we resist the devil first by asking God to rebuke the devil. Man was made a little lower than the angels (Heb. 2:7, 9). On our own we are no match for Satan or his minions. It has been common in some circles to talk about “giving the devil a black eye” or to call the devil abusive names (e.g., “ol’ split hoof”). In Jude 9, we learn that Michael, an archangel, did not dare to rail on Satan, but instead appealed to God to rebuke Satan on his behalf: “May the Lord rebuke you.” In the next verse, Jude compares men who revile (fallen) angelic beings to unreasoning beasts. It is, therefore, foolish for a Christian to rail at the devil.

Second, we resist by asserting God’s truth that exposes the enemy’s lie. To Satan’s whispered, “No one will ever know,” we reply, “There is no creature hid from His sight” (Heb. 4:13). Do not argue with the devil. Those who pit their minds against the devil usually lose; and none are better for it. A scriptural response should be followed by focusing our mind upon God and what is true, honorable, pure, and praiseworthy (Phil. 4:8). You don’t resist the devil by focusing on him or his temptation. Replace evil thoughts with good. Have a ready store of worthy thoughts prepared for times of temptation.

Finally, stand firm in faith that God’s word is true, and sooner or later the enemy will flee!

Sincerely,
Philip Brown ■

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

pbrown@gbs.edu



mediaminute

Resources for the Christian Family

Compiled by Robbie and Rachel England, this feature is provided as a service to our readers. The opinions presented here are those of the individuals making the recommendations and do not necessarily reflect an endorsement by God's Bible School or the Revivalist Press.

Devotional Resource

Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference by Philip Yancey

"This is the most powerful book on prayer I have ever read. The author presents the information in a simple way that is easily understood, and then adds personal stories that illustrate how prayer has changed his life as well as the lives of many others. With his easy-to-read style and brutally honest approach, Yancey has given us a book that is a must-read for any who desire to grow in their understanding of God. It was very enjoyable to read as well as highly beneficial."

—Brenda Herring

Men's Resource

Men in Mid-life Crises by Jim Conway

"Conway's book gives a very transparent perspective regarding men and women in mid-life crises. This is very real for people between ages 35–45. Young pastors especially need to read this because it's not something they are going to understand from experience yet!" —Cathy Parker

To submit your recommendations for the Media Minute, please send titles, authors, and a sentence or two about each book to robnrach@paonline.com.

These resources may be purchased at a reasonable price through the GBS Bookstore, Amazon.com, ChristianBook.com, Half.com, or your local Christian Bookstore.

"Be fishers of men... You catch them and He'll clean them."
—from a church sign

NUMBER OF LEGAL US ABORTIONS FALLS

In the *Christian Post*, reporter Lawrence Jones writes that the "number of abortions nationwide has dropped to their lowest levels since the year following the Supreme Court's landmark decision *Roe v. Wade*, according to the latest annual Abortion Surveillance report by the Center for Disease Control." The report notes that in 2004, there were 839,226 "legally induced abortions" in the United States, a 1.1 percent drop from 848,136 abortions reported the year before.

FORMAL MARRIAGE IN DECLINE

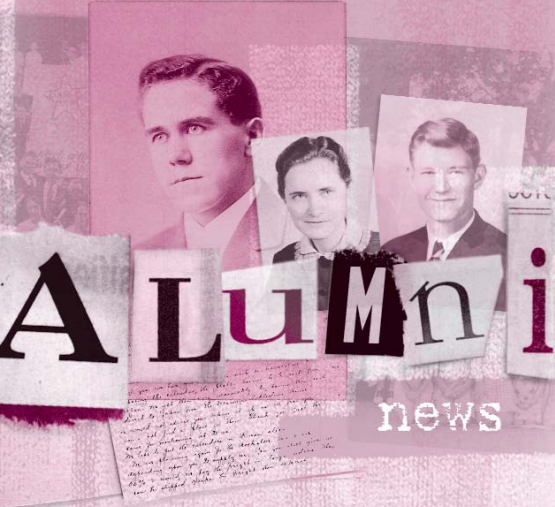
"All over the industrialized world, marriage is in decline." writes Marsha Garrison of the Brooklyn Law School in an article, "The Decline of Formal Marriage: Inevitable or Reversible?" in *Family Law Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2007. "Cohabitation, which has waxed as marriage has waned, is a much less stable and more varied relational form than marriage." Her paper concludes "that well-designed policies that promote the socioeconomic conditions in which successful marriage flourishes, reduce economic disincentives to marry, and offer clear dividing lines between formal marriage and cohabitation are all supported by the evidence."

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT CALLS CCCU TO RENEWED HOLINESS COMMITMENT

As the Churches of Christ in Christian Union approaches its 2009 centennial, General Superintendent Dr. Thomas Hermiz has called his denomination to renewed commitment to "living holy lives and the clear proclamation of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace." Declaring that "it is shocking to see the tragic decline in the proclamation of this liberating truth," Hermiz asks, "Will we remain committed to our doctrinal beliefs or will we begin to move away from the truths upon which this denomination has been built."

CHRISTIANS IN INDIA: "BECOME HINDUS OR DIE"

"Christians in India's Orissa state who were victims of the recent wave of communal violence are now being told to 'convert or die' by Hindu fanatics," according to Peter B. Belta, writing in the *Christian Post*. "A clash over a decorative arch for the Christmas celebrations on December 24 led to large-scale communal violence and attacks against churches throughout the district.... Four people were confirmed dead, while 95 churches and 730 houses were burned down or destroyed." ■



coordinated by Rev. Jack Hooker,
GBS Vice President for Advancement

GREETINGS FROM UKRAINE

Esther Bogomazyuk (GBS 1998-99) writes: "I had a wonderful opportunity to attend GBS as a foreign student. I am thankful for the experience that I was able to get there and the many good friends I was able to make. Now I live according to the calling that God gave me for my life. I am married to a pastor, and we have three little children: Martin, Abigail and Kristie. We are in full-time ministry. We recently started working in a Bible college and already see the result of our work, which is very encouraging. Please pray for us and for our ministry in Ukraine."



MISSIONARIES TO AFRICA

David L. Keith (AB; ThB '51) writes: "I recall with delight my years at GBS from 1948 to 1951. I earned my BA and ThB there. I met my wife, Huberta Carver (1950-51) there. We left for Africa as missionaries, and served there for 12 years. My parents attended GBS in the '20's and left for Africa in 1928. They



served for many years as Pilgrim missionaries. Six of us children attended GBS. I am so pleased to say that all of us have served the Lord over the past years. Most of us are now retired. I enjoy receiving *God's Revivalist*. May God continue to bless GBS to greater days."

PRECIOUS MEMORY

Wilbert Vandervort (1958-60) shares this memory from his days at GBS: "In answer to earnest prayer, God's presence was manifested in the services during revivals and camp meetings. But the one that has stood out to me the most was one morning in chapel service. Sister Nettie Peabody, who was seated on the platform, stood up and raised her hands and head heavenward and said, 'It is finished.' The Spirit's presence filled the auditorium; students began to get out of their seats and fill the altar and the front row. Others just knelt where they were. A volume of prayer rose to the throne of grace. What victory was wrought because of her prayers and obedience to the Holy Spirit's prompting! Only eternity will reveal what all was wrought that morning in the heart and lives of the students." Rev. Vandervort pastors the Holton, Indiana, Wesleyan Church.

A LIFE IN EDUCATION

Carl Heintzelman (BA '69) has served a number of years in Christian education. He attended GBS from 1965 to 1969 and then went on to receive his BA at Malone College in 1976. Carl also holds two Masters Degrees, a Master of Religious Education from Trinity Theological Seminary and a Master of Arts in Educational Technology from Johnson Bible College. He married alumnus Sara Miller (GBS 1968-71). They have three children and



four grandchildren. Carl has been at Wesleyan Education Center in High Point, North Carolina, since 1989. The Heintzelmans reside in Thomasville, North Carolina.

LIFE'S LESSONS

Robert Dittman (HS '56) left home to attend his senior year of high school at GBS. While on the Hilltop, as he reports, he learned what it meant to trust in God and to lean on His understanding. The decision to surrender his life to Christ and be used by Him was made at GBS. Robert married the former Wanda McIntosh (HS '54) and has three children, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He worked in sales most of his life. The last 19 years were spent working with churches in their building programs, providing most of the items that go into a church. He has also served the church as Sunday school teacher, superintendent, music director, and vice chairman of the board. His wife is an assistant principal in a Christian school. Robert says some of his best memories of GBS are these:



"(1) Upon arriving at the school I was assigned to a work detail putting new tar on one of the roofs. It was there I learned that heights and I did not get along. (2) Collecting money for the Thanksgiving dinner. On one of those evenings I first met the girl who would become my wife of 50 years. (3) I also learned as a young man that trusting God had to be first in my life."

GREATER CINCINNATI GBS ALUMNI MEETING

March 14, 6:00 p.m.
GBS Cafeteria

All alumni and their families are invited to attend. ■

Pinnock, Clark H., editor. *Grace Unlimited*. Minneapolis: Fellowship, Inc., 1975. 264 pages.

Essays establishing the Biblical basis for teaching that Christ's atonement was universal and that God desires the salvation of all sinners. The various writers deal with three important concepts: election, faith, and predestination, giving each a thorough examination. Recommended reading.

*Shank, Robert. *Elect in the Son*. Springfield, Missouri: Westcott Publishers, 1970. 242 pages.

A very helpful book when seeking to understand the Biblical teaching on election. Also deals with theological issues such as predestination, atonement, propitiation, ransom and redemption, reconciliation, justification and reprobation. Definitely recommended reading for all ministers.

III. Other Helpful Works

*Forster, Roger and V. Paul Marston. *God's Strategy in Human History*. Wheaton: Tyndale house Publishers, Inc, 1973. 296 pages.

An excellent book dealing with God's method of providing salvation for mankind. Gives helpful treatments of subjects such as the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and contains invaluable word studies on "chosen and elect," "righteousness," "harden," and "foreknowledge." Explains why Romans 9 is not speaking of individual election. Required reading for all ministers.

*Foster, Randolph. *Objections to Calvinism As It Is*. Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishing Company, reprint, 1998. 215 pages.

Originally written in the mid-19th century, this book is a classic refutation of Calvinism. Chapters deal with the following topics: God's eternal decrees, election and reprobation, the atonement, effectual calling, perseverance, the heathen world, and the will. Highly recommended.



—sermon outline by DR. ALLAN P. BROWN



"COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE
IN PREACHING"

THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

Part Four of Four

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

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"
(2 Peter 1:10).

In our last three sermons we have looked at the typical neo-Calvinistic arguments for "once saved always saved." We also examined passages that teach the eternal security of a believer is conditioned upon continuing in the faith. We stressed the fact that a believer does not "lose" his salvation. If a believer does not continue in the faith, it is because he has chosen to sever his relationship with Christ.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews knows nothing of a "once saved always saved" theology. He tells us that we shall remain part of Christ's household only "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end" (Heb. 3:6). In other words, the believer who perseveres in the faith shall be saved. Again the Hebrews writer says, "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Heb. 3:14). And once more, he urges, "Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:38).

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews also warns his readers about backsliding. He says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs

useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned" (Heb. 6:4–8).

The phrases, "once enlightened," "tasted the heavenly gift," "become partakers of the Holy Spirit," and "tasted the good word of God" are all aorist participles which indicate the actual past experiences of believers. If such persons should choose to turn away from Christ, it is impossible for them to be renewed again to repentance so long as they continue to "crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame" (Heb. 6:6). The phrases "crucify again" and "put Him to an open shame" are present participles which indicate the persons are continuing in such behavior. *This passage teaches there is no forgiveness for sinful behavior that is not confessed and forsaken.*

However, if such a person truly repents and turns from sin, he or she could be restored to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The same thought is repeated in Hebrews 10:26–27: "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries."

CONCLUSION

The Bible does not teach "once saved always saved." But even though we strongly disagree with those who hold this position, let me urge all of us to show Christian love toward those who claim Jesus as Savior. Try to remember that we all are a product of our religious training and church background. If we desire to help neo-Calvinists who believe "once saved always saved" see the error of their way, we must not unchristianize them. Nor should we ignore the verses they use to bolster their arguments. We must be able to answer contextually all of their verses. This is why I am providing a bibliography with this message.

If you will master the books with the asterisk (*), you will be able to answer scripturally all the arguments of the neo-Calvinists. Be careful not to be unkind in your attitude or approach.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Books Refuting Unconditional Eternal Security.

*Marshall, I. Howard. *Kept by the Power of God: A Study of Perseverance and Falling Away*. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc, 1969, 281 pages.

Marshall contends that there is Biblical truth in both the Calvinistic and the Arminian positions concerning the security of the believer. He conducts a historical-grammatical investigation of all the Scriptural materials which treat the subject of apostasy and falling away and produces ample evidence to support the thesis that the security of the believer is conditioned upon his faithfulness to Jesus Christ. This should be required reading for all ministers.

*Purkiser, W.T. *Security: the False and the True*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, revised edition, 1971. 60 pages.

Easy-to-read, short chapters. Deals with the basic arguments given by unconditional security advocates and shows the fallacy of each. This is a good beginner's volume. It is not exhaustive, but does have some good material. Recommended reading for all ministers.

*Shank, Robert. *Life in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Perseverance*. Springfield, Missouri: Westcott Publishers, 2nd edition, 1961. 380 pages.

The best refutation of unconditional eternal security I have seen. Written by a former Baptist. Shank says that his book is "in a sense the testimony of one whose study of the Scriptures led him to abandon a definition of doctrine he once cherished" (p. vii). Excellent source of information. A good work to refer to others who desire a careful, scholarly, yet easy-to-read treatment of the subject. Should be required reading for all ministers.

II. Books Refuting the Calvinistic Idea of Unconditional Election and Limited Atonement.

Klein, William W. *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001. 284 pages.

A helpful treatment on why the Bible teaches unconditional corporate election but conditional individual election. This book may be easier to read than Shank's book, *Elect in the Son*.

➡(p4) and Thursday afternoon Bible studies. Also, pray for the Saturday afternoon children's service." —John E. Knight, *Far East Prayer Letter*

INDIA. "Please pray for the state of Orissa on the east coast of India. Thirty graduates of the COGH Bible Institute are working to plant churches. In the space of six months, 400 families were counseled, and 104 individuals believed in Christ as their Saviour. Pray that the efforts of the church planters will be successful. Pray also for the people there who in some districts are facing extreme hunger. Pray that God will supply the needs." (Pramrod Nag, director of the Church of God Holiness in India) —*Ropeholders*

INDIANAPOLIS. "This past year we served nearly 6,000 hot meals and helped countless families with clothing and other basic needs. We blessed over fifty people with temporary shelter, and we helped three families with permanent housing. Victory Acres, our non-profit farm, supplied 73 families with up to 300 pounds of quality, naturally-grown produce for the year, as well as offering agricultural, hands-on educational tours to a variety of school and youth groups. In 2007, we had over 120 elementary, high school and college students visit, learn and work at Victory Acres. Three formerly homeless individuals have benefited from transitional employment at Victory Village Shoppe. An average of 95 diverse congregants each week call Victory Chapel their church home." —Eric Himelick, *Victory Inner-city Ministries, Email Newsletter*

PHILIPPINES. "The Shepherd's Seminar was well attended and beneficial to each one of us, missionaries and Filipinos alike. Three messages stand out to me from the seminar: Duane Quesenberry's message on the problem of discouragement and its cure; Steve Gresham's closing challenge to 'Model the Heart and Ministry of Jesus'; and David Black's anointed message, 'Sanctify them through thy Truth' (from John 17). —Tim Keep, *Email*

UKRAINE. "It has been so exciting to return to the classroom at Wesley Bible College this semester. October was a very busy month for us. We were involved in much travel, which included a visit to Kiev (about 500 miles away); two trips to Budapest (about our visas); and a trip into the mountains about one hour away to visit and participate in a Christian family conference sponsored and planned jointly by Barnabas Ministries and Wesley Bible College. —Tim Boyd, *Boyd's Ukraine Update* ■

➡(p2) records the usual class meeting pattern, then adds that those "who are groaning for *full* redemption...who will not be comforted until the last remains of sin are removed from their hearts...are more than commonly solicitous that the Holy Ghost will come and dwell in their souls without a rival."

Appearing ten years later, *A Description of Class Meetings in an Epistle from a Young Lady of the Methodist Connexion to a Female Acquaintance* stresses the spiritual blessings received:

For when we have our testimony giv'n,
We really often feel a little heav'n.
Bound in the chain of our Redeemer's love,
Our mounting spirits soar the world above.

The sacred leaven spreads throughout the whole
Till all th'assembly seems one mutual soul,
And a rich stream of grace pour'd from the skies
Each true believer's thirsting breast supplies.

Drawing from his own memories, the Rev. Charles Goodell recreates a class meeting on a snowy evening, probably in New England. It was held in the home of Uncle Henry, a devout old Methodist who "sits by the fireplace as we open the door," and as others enter the room, cries, "Glory to God, see the troops gather!" Goodell's 1902 narrative tells of a man in attendance who "had been under conviction for his sins for three months and could see no light":

As a last resort a friend brought him to Uncle Henry's, for it was known in all the country round that the members of this class were past masters in the art of getting a soul to God. They crowded around him like doctors at a clinic. A question or two, as clear-cut as Christ's words to Nicodemus, and they had the diagnosis of that case. And then the remedy—and the remedy did the rest! It fared worse with the devil that night than with the Spanish fleet at Santiago. Uncle Henry was so utterly beside himself with joy at the result that he shouted, "I could leap over a troop or run through a stone wall."

Although the Brooklyn pastor rejoiced that he had known "the class meeting in its power," he sadly acknowledged that "it is gone, like the men who made it. No eddy of the stream of time will bring it back...."

Dr. Kenneth Cain Kinghorn agrees with Goodell that by "the beginning of the twentieth century, the class meeting had all but ceased" throughout mainstream Methodism. He believes that three factors were responsible: (1) the general movement of the circuit riders into settled pastorates; (2) the growing emphasis (p22)➡

Meal-A-Month

For 107 years God's Bible School and College has been a ministry of faith. Today forty cents out of every dollar it takes to operate GBSC must come from donations. GBSC has been blessed over the years by friends who faithfully remember the school as part of their monthly giving. We want to give our *Revivalist* family an opportunity to support GBSC in a systematic way. The Meal-A-Month Program is a new initiative to build monthly partners who want to invest in the training of young people for ministry. An ongoing donation equivalent to the cost of one or two meals a month will make a real difference. We have three giving options for your convenience:

- Pay by check • Pay by Credit or Debit Card • Automatic Electronic Funds Withdrawal from checking or savings •

Our goal for this year is to sign up 1,810 members in the Meal-A-Month Program. Many of you will recognize 1810 as our historic address here on the Hilltop. Each month you will see listed the new additions to this strategic program.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 37. Travis and Shanna Pemberton | 51. Doug and Kathy Walker | 61. Greg and Brenda Johnson | 70. Joshua Avery |
| 38. Jewwana Carrico | 52. Nathaniel Davison | 62. Bill Justice | 71. Faith McManaman |
| 39. Judith Colburn | 53. Don and Linda Davison | 63. Floyd and Virginia Hyatt | 72. Marie Ford |
| 40. Jeff Blankenship | 54. Beulah Haggard | 64. Lillian Turner | 73. Jewel Parker |
| 41. Michael Avery | 55. Glen Reiff | 65. Jane Wetherald | 74. Erma Tyler |
| 42. Ruth Avery | 56. Kim Daugherty | 66. Ruth Hooker | 75. Tom McClain |
| 43. Jack and Jane Hooker | 57. Candy Davis | 67. Susan Day Underhill | 76. Mary J. Pace |
| 44. Beth Avery | 58. Pamela Groves | 68. Keith and Gwin Hobbs | 77. Sharon Bowman |
| 45. Jonathan Avery | 59. John Neville | 69. John Jefferson | 78. Edward Morse |
| 46. Ken and Paula Farmer | 60. Kathryn Hamlin | | 79. John and Joella Wollack |
| 47. Allan Brown | | | 80. A Friend from Wisconsin |
| 48. Nadine Brown | | | |
| 49. Richard and Brenda Miles | | | |
| 50. Steven Miller | | | |

Join online at www.gbsgift.com, or fill out this form and mail it to God's Bible School and College, Office of Advancement, 1810 Young St., Cincinnati, OH 45202; or email the information to jhooker@gbs.edu. We will send you a thank-you gift as a token of our appreciation for your generous support.

Please get me started in the Meal-A-Month Program

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Giving level ___\$5 ___\$10 ___\$15 ___\$20 ___other: _____

Giving options: ___Check ___Electronic Transfer ___Credit Card

➡(p4) opinion, of the contemporary/modern worship songs. Thanks for a well-written and balanced article. Usually articles like this tend to sway to one side or another.

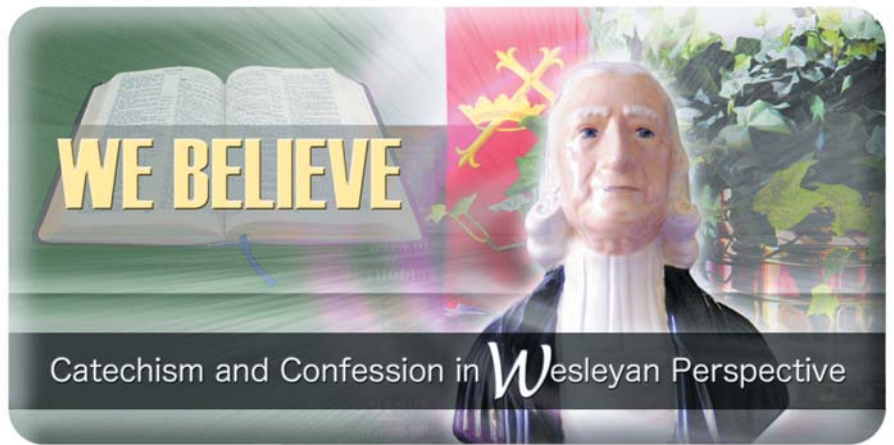
DALE ARGOT,
Preston Wesleyan Church
Email

DEGREES OF HEAVENLY REWARD?

I find myself in some disagreement with Dr. Phil Brown's answer to the question about degrees of reward in Heaven [*God's Revivalist*, December 2007). Although Dr. Brown uses scripture to support his views, there are, I think, other scriptures that should be taken into consideration. When I look back on forty years of ministry and remember all the mistakes I made along with many errors in judgment, I can only conclude that my reward will be getting into Heaven at all. And if per chance I do have any reward coming, I will say, "Give it to my mother, give it to faithful laymen who stood by me and the churches that I pastored; and give it to my wife without whose support I might not have been able to carry on.

I do not want to spend an eternity thinking if only I had prayed and fasted more, or witnessed better, or given more, I might have had a bigger mansion or a larger crown. An eternity of regret sounds more like hell than Heaven. Only our Lord knows for certain who has done "the most," and I suspect eternity will show that our earthly estimates are incredibly skewed. We are all "one" in the work of the Kingdom, and without each other nothing could or would be done. Therefore, the idea that some have earned a greater reward than others is impossible for me to accept.

KENNETH L. DODGE
Email



We continue our series of brief statements reasserting basic truths foundational to Wesleyan theological conviction.

XVII. SAVING FAITH

"*Trusting only in thy merit, Would I seek thy face.*" These words from a familiar hymn by Fanny Crosby point to the essence of saving faith: personal trust in Christ alone.

In the order of salvation, faith follows repentance, for no one can ever cast himself upon divine mercy until he has first acknowledged his sins, turned from them, and renounced all claims of goodness in himself. But it is faith that actually appropriates Christ's promise of forgiveness. In this sense, then, faith is the only necessary condition of salvation. "By grace are ye saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast."

John Wesley defined saving faith this way: "Christian faith is not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trusting in the merits of his life, death and resurrection; a resting upon Him as our atonement and our life, as given for us and living in us. Faith is a sure confidence which a man has in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven and he is reconciled to the favor of God."

Faith is a gift from God, for it is He who gives us the ability to trust in Christ. But faith is also our own act, for we must choose to believe. This choice involves our whole person. With our mind we accept the truth about Christ; with our will we accept the demands of Christ; and into the center of our being, we accept the Person of Christ. Thus, we fully rest in Him, trusting in Him alone to forgive our sins and to receive us as His own.

True faith always results in a life of good works and positive obedience, walking "as he walked." These works do not justify us, but they do give evidence that our faith is valid. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26).

There are those who claim that a single act of faith forever secures one's salvation without any necessity of continued faith. But biblical commands to "believe" are in the present tense, indicating ongoing action. And we are specifically told that we must keep our trust in Christ: "For we have become partakers of Christ—if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Hebrews 3:14). —*Mark Bird* ■

➡(p19) upon education offered in the Sunday school; and (3) the waning of “the fires of revival” throughout the church.

It was this last factor that most alarmed Methodist conservatives, who protested that the old fervency and focus had been dissipated by the church’s *embourgeoisement*—its push for middle-class respectability as it had grown in wealth and influence. In retrospect, we may agree that in the years immediately before and after our Civil War, the Methodist Episcopal Church became a fashionable, affluent, and broadly-based denomination, very different from Wesley’s “United Societies” whose members had been urged to “take up their cross daily, submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, [and] to be as the filth and offscouring of the world.” The same paradigm shift occurred in Great Britain, and the class meeting was increasingly regarded as an obsolete and unwelcome intrusion into personal autonomy.

This was not without controversy. As early as 1854, Bishop Morris had warned against those who were pressing the church to drop its rules forbidding “superfluous ornaments” and requiring weekly class meetings so that it would become “the most popular of any in the United States.” Should that happen, he said, “persons without piety” would flock into its doors, only “half-awakened, but slightly penitent, unbelieving and without any fixed purpose to lead new lives.” “To make class meeting attendance voluntary,” he added, “would be practically to abandon the institution itself, and to abolish class meeting would be virtually to abandon Methodism and let our church members fall back into lifeless formality.”

Thousands of “old-time Methodists” agreed, including Benjamin Titus Roberts, later co-founder of the Free Methodist Church. In 1858, he charged that “New School Methodism” was subverting the church’s holiness commitment, relaxing its historic discipline, and undercutting its devotional life. He pointed specifically to increasing opposition to the class meeting and love feast as examples of his concern. In the years following, many loyal Methodists expressed their distress at the new direction of the church by withdrawing from its membership into the newer denominations within the expanding holiness movement.

By the end of the 19th-century even the bishops acknowledged the vast changes that had come. “The rigid and minute discipline of former times is relaxed,” they said in 1900; “the plainness of the early Methodist congregations has disappeared.” Eight years before, they had painfully lamented the disappearance of the class meeting from the church’s life:

We cannot look upon the decline of the class meetings without profound concern. We sadly

admit that no such proportion of our people are regular class-goers as formerly, and that in some places the class meetings have entirely died out or have been displaced by other forms of service, which cannot accomplish the purposes in view. To this fact, in large part, we attribute the increase in the numbers of unspiritual church-members, and the presence of worldliness in the church, and the lack of more numerous, searching and sweeping revivals.... It seems to us certain that if the great mass of the members of our churches should meet once a week in class meetings under competent leaders...the essential glory of early Methodism would burst forth anew on every hand....

It is well over a century later, and the class meeting is only a fading memory. True, many of our congregations have “small groups galore,” as Outler observes, though “not many of them are covenanted to Christian mutuality in prayer, to the ‘searching of the scriptures,’ to the moral reinforcement of their members, [and] to onsite works of love and mercy.” If we are really to understand John Wesley’s system of spiritual formation, which he designed “to raise a holy people,” it is time “for recalling our origins, not for nostalgia’s sake,” as Outler urges, but “with a view for the transvaluation of the perennial.”

For that purpose we now summarize the principles foundational to the Methodist class meeting, hoping that we may find them valuable in our own attempts to “make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey.”

1. *Grace*. Holiness of heart and life was the passion of the early Methodist message, but that message was saturated with grace. Every class meeting was held in steadfast confidence that the Spirit could transform the worst of sinners into the best of saints.

2. *Method*. God used many tools to reshape human character, but chief among them was holy discipline with its emphasis on structure, restraint, and rhythm. Using the means of grace would produce the effects of grace; doing the will of God would advance us in the grace of God; and godly habits would eventuate in godly character.

3. *Covenant*. Like marriage, the whole Methodist “method” was centered in holy vows, deliberately assumed, solemnly declared, and continually affirmed, all within a structure of continual encouragement and examination.

4. *Community*. Personal religious commitment was essential, but it was to be lived out in the corporate fellowship of the faithful and the structures of holiness into which they were gathered. Within this network of support, the young were instructed, new leaders were pre-

pared for “equipping the saints,” and all the people of God were advanced in holiness. “O let us stir each other up,” they often sang, “Our faith and works t’approve, / By holy, purifying hope, / And the sweet task of love.”

5. *Service.* Methodist piety was not sterile and introverted, but focused first in love for God and then for others. Thus, all who “joined in class” were to do “good of every possible sort...by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prisons.” Their works of mercy are legendary.

“How does your soul prosper?” That’s a pointed question too few of us ever hear. It was basic, of course, to the old weekly class meeting in which every Methodist was once trained and toughened, inspired and instructed, restrained and reproved—helped “on toward heaven,” to use Bishop Hedding’s words. That system of spiritual formation was used mightily by the Spirit to produce stalwart saints among us; and its loss is so great that it can hardly be measured.

“In our day there is a need to recover the experience of Christian conference within the church,” writes Dr. Steve Harper of Asbury Seminary. “I agree with those who believe that Methodism lost its heart when these dimensions were abandoned.”

He believes, moreover, “that we would see a resurgence of vitality if we could rediscover the dynamic of relational ministries.”

Chief among those ministries was the weekly class meeting which, as Harper says, “became the heart of Methodism.” Rediscovery, however, does not necessarily mean “a return to eighteenth-century models,” as he adds, but rather “a recovery of the principles which gave rise to the specific expressions of Christian conference.”

Those principles, as we have said, are *grace, method, covenant, community, and service*; and as Wesley



MARKED!

by *Sonja Vernon*

The Lord said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.” (Ezekiel 9:4, NASB).

In this passage, the prophet Ezekiel has a vision of Jerusalem, a vision in which God causes executioners to pass through the city and purge it of its wickedness. None are spared except those who have the mark—those who “sigh and groan” over the sin around them.

Now travel ahead a few thousand years and look around. The scene, though different in time and place, is startlingly unchanged. Our society is steeped in selfishness, drunk with its own importance, rampant with abominable practices, and enslaved to idols of lust and greed. The same God reigns with the same attitude toward sin. But I wonder if God should send an angel through our cities today, how would we fare? Would we receive the mark?

Do we “sigh and groan” over the abominations around us, or do we bring them into our homes via various forms of media, satisfying our curiosities about the forbidden? Have we followed the example of Jesus by changing the culture around us, or have we been slowly and subtly lulled into complacency and then into acquiescence? Are we thinking and behaving biblically, or are we drifting along with the tide of popular philosophy, heading swiftly toward the precipice of spiritual ruin? Oh, may we stop and get fresh perspective from the Living Word. May we see sin as God sees it, and may our hearts break with His. ■

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

knew, these are principles that are essential for any model of spiritual formation. If somehow we could bring them together again in this age of uncommitted and undisciplined religious expression, someone might say again, as Chalmers said so long ago,

“Methodism is neither more nor less than Christianity in earnest.” ■

Readers who wish a copy of the original paper with footnotes citing sources should send a self-addressed envelope plus \$4.00 to the editorial office.—LDS

Symphonic Wind & String Ensemble



GAREN WOLF I, CONDUCTOR

**March 28, Friday,
7:00 PM**

Southcentral Ohio GBS Rally
Peebles Church of Christ in
Christian Union
480 Portsmouth Rd.
Peebles, OH 45660
Rev. Dave Hopkins, Pastor
(937) 587-5758

March 29, Saturday, 7:00 PM

Fort Mill Church of the Nazarene
Harris St. and South Hwy. 21 Bus.
Ft. Mill, SC
Rev. Aubrey Smith
(803) 548-4633

March 30, Sunday, 10:30 AM

Faith Community Chapel
345 Faith Chapel Rd.
Thomasville, NC
Rev. Michael Wetherald
(336) 472-6881

March 30, Sunday, 6:00 PM

Parkway House of Prayer
3230 King Street
Roanoke, VA 24012
Rev. Jeff Keaton, Pastor
(540) 982-0115

March 31, Monday, 7:00 PM

Archdale Pilgrim Holiness Church
431 Aldridge Rd.
Archdale, NC 27263
Rev. Benjamin Crawford, Pastor
(336) 431-6151

April 1, Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Grace Church of the Nazarene
499 Second Ave.
South Charleston, WV 25303
(304) 744-2838 or (304) 395-2838
Pastor Chuck Goddard

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