

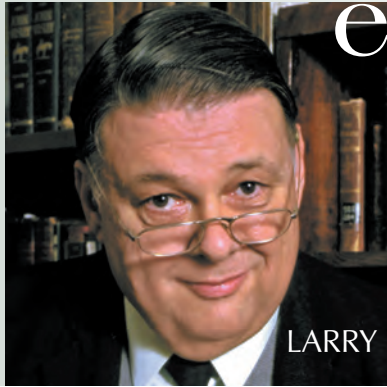
GOD'S REVIVALIST

May 2011

and Bible Advocate

An aerial photograph of a city, likely New York City, taken from a high angle. The city is bathed in the golden light of a sunset or sunrise, with the sun low on the horizon. A large, bright meteor streaks across the sky from the top right towards the center, leaving a long, glowing trail. The city's buildings, streets, and a river are visible below. The word "APOCALYPSE" is written in large, white, stylized letters across the bottom of the image.

APOCALYPSE



the editor's view

LARRY D. SMITH

ESCAPING APOCALYPSE

Apocalypse. This isn't a word we often hear—certainly not in family chatter over chicken and dumplings at the dinner table. From a Greek noun which means "revelation," it's often used for God's portrayal in prophetic scripture of the climactic battle of the ages when He will destroy all evil. This is why the last book of the New Testament is sometimes called *The Apocalypse*.

In broader usage, the term has also come to mean any type of horrific devastation. So the recent cover of *Newsweek* grabs our attention as it screams, "Apocalypse Now," then explains the details: "Tsunamis. Earthquakes. Nuclear Meltdowns. Revolutions. Economies on the Brink."

Thus, *apocalypse* is a powerful and provocative word that annoys, arouses, and alarms us. For its implications are terrifying—especially when we're told by a respected Christian scholar that Western civilization is now threatened by apocalypse. But this would be far worse than tsunamis, nuclear meltdowns, and revolutions. For though Peter J. Leithart does not elaborate, his conclusion suggests the imagery of disruption—perhaps, even collapse—of our entire social structure in Europe and North America.

Yet he believes this may be averted if we take bold and determined steps to re-Christianize our culture. Leithart, senior fellow at New Saint Andrews College, as well as pastor of Trinity Reformed Church, both of Moscow, Idaho, does this memorably in his recent book, *Defending Constantine: The Twilight of an Empire and the Dawn of Christendom*, which has just received favorable review in *Christianity Today*.

Carefully he explores the deep foundations of our culture laid 1600 years ago by the first Christian head of the Roman Empire. In doing this he vigorously refutes (p22)➡

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- Larry D. Smith, *editor*

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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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the president's page



WE ARE BECOMING WHAT WE LOVE

by Michael R. Avery, President

We are all in a constant state of movement. Ask parents, and they will tell you their tumbling little toddler is running rapidly toward becoming a towering adult. Ask teachers and they will tell you that the first grader struggling to read small words and add simple figures will someday be reading the classics and doing calculus. On the other hand, ask the doctor about aging; and he will tell you that we are moving away from strength to weakness and from life to death. For the Christian, Paul says we are, “being changed from glory to glory” (II Cor. 3:18).

We are all in the process of becoming. We have moved from what we were and are now moving toward what we shall be. The troubling thought about this is not that we are moving but what we are moving toward.

Life refuses to let us be still. We are ascending or descending—mounting up or sinking down.

An important question in this process is “What determines our direction?” According to A.W. Tozer, “we are becoming what we love. We are to a large degree the sum of our loves and we will of moral necessity grow into the image of what we love most.”

No wonder the greatest Biblical commandment admonishes us to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matt. 22:37). Jesus infers this in the Sermon on the Mount when He said, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21).

You and I are being molded by our affinities and shaped by the things we love. This is the reason behind much of the drift, compromise, and worldliness that we see happening all around us. Much of what people call a new-found freedom in Christ is nothing more than an unrestrained display of a deep love for this present world.

The law of moral affinity will either cause us to reflect Biblical values in our activities, attitudes, and adornment, or else will mold us into something that reflects the values of this fallen world. Both Jezebel and Judas were at one-time pink-cheeked innocent children, but they set their affections on the wrong things and were carried downstream by a moral undertow. There is no middle ground. It’s not where you are at this moment; it is where you’re moving. You are becoming what you love! ■

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.

"PRAISEFUL PEOPLE" PROBLEM

I wish to express my appreciation for the usually fine quality of the *Revivalist* and saw in the March 2011 issue the note about the passing of Rev. Andrew Whitney. He was a godly man and one of the finest Christians I ever knew. He will be greatly missed by all of us who knew him.

I wish, however, to point out an error in publication. In Dr. Allan Brown's piece, the "Revivalist Pulpit" on "God's Plan for Producing Praiseful People," just before the introduction it lists the Scripture verse as 1 Corinthians 16:1-36. This is an error and should be 1 Chronicles 16:1-36. Other than this attribution and typographical error, the article is well thought and timely.

REV. WYATT M. BUCHANAN
Johnson City, New York

Rev. Buchanan is right, of course. The scripture intended was 1 Chronicles 16: 1-36. Dr. Brown's text was correct in the original copy prepared by him for publication. Our apologies for the error! —Editor

MOTHER, COME BACK

I was looking through a past *Revivalist* and your article "Mother Come Back" ["The Editor's View," May 2010]. It was so touching to my heart. You mentioned the song, "With the resolute few who dare to go through." This was a favorite of my Dad's. I treasure my old 1910 [Wesleyan Methodist/Free Methodist] hymnal. It is falling apart and taped in places, but it still offers enjoyment beyond measure. Thanks so much for your anointed writing.

SAM LAWSON
Email

MISSIONS REPORTS

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. "Brother Edermin Cortes was pastoring in the Andes foothill country of southern Colombia. His church had doubled...in the last three years. But the Lord began to talk to him about the need of a holiness church in...Bogota.... They sold their coffee farm [and], along with money the Lord sent through the friends of EWM, bought the house where they started a church.... God has given them many souls." —Raymond Shreve, *Missionary Beacon* (Evangelical Wesleyan Mission)

HAITI. "We had a three-day-old baby brought in to the clinic. She was found in the bushes tied up in a sack with heavy rocks on top. The umbilical cord was attached, so she must have been born in the night and was thrown away by the mother. A young man, newly married, was going into his garden when he heard a baby's cry. They brought the baby to the clinic today where we did tests, and so far everything has checked out all right. We are so excited that the young couple who found her has decided to keep her and take care of her! They are poor...but the young girl told me...God placed [the baby] in their path! Please keep this 'little angel' and this couple in your prayers." —Joel and April Hess, *Email*

PHILIPPINES. Asuncion V. DeLong, a 2010 GBS graduate (Min. Ed.), is now senior pastor at Anchor of Hope Ministries, Inc. The central church is located in Bauang, and there are several satellite locations. She mentors four other pastors and is supervising the construction of a new church that will seat over 200. During a recent crusade held in a new location, 40 people accepted Jesus as their Savior following her sermon. Please keep this ministry in your prayers because there are many obstacles to overcome. —*Email report* ■

"I have just seen the kingdom of God at work...."

A Little Light in a Very Dark Place

by Rick Hutchison

The Setting: Uzhgorod, an ancient town on the river Uz in western Ukraine, composed of a strange mixture of leftover medieval, czarist-era, Soviet-style, and modern structures.

The Place: A nondescript public school building just a few blocks from the ancient town center.

The Time: Four o'clock p.m., after school.

The Occasion: Soup kitchen ministry for street children.

On face value, it looks like such an insignificant gathering—a few kids and teenagers meeting in a cold lunchroom after school hours with not a lot of food, people, or props. The whole enterprise could easily be underestimated as to value and impact unless you stay and watch it unfold. Then it seems absolutely incredible.

I have known Joseph for several years now. He started this children's outreach ministry with a soup kitchen for street kids based in the unfinished basement of an old Methodist church downtown. From this beginning it has grown into an extensive work that includes multiple ministry points throughout the city and a residential orphan home at the edge of town. Today he wanted to show me the latest "kitchen" ministry he started just a few weeks ago.

We park in front of an old public school building right off the city street. It is adjacent to the business district, but behind it and down the street I can see the buildings quickly become a collection of decrepit, dirty tenements. Trash, bottles, and gloom collect in almost every corner.

Staffed entirely by volunteers (mostly teens and college students from church), he does this on a shoestring budget based on no steady support—i.e., a faith ministry. He pays a nearby café to provide a couple of plates of cold sandwiches and cups of thin soup. The gathering is loosely organized and led by two college students (twin sisters) who learned to do this by helping him since they were in grammar school. They are assisted by some younger girls from the orphanage who were street kids themselves just three or four years ago.

By ones and twos I see children appear at the door, first furtively looking in to see who is there. When they see the sisters there smiling to greet them, they rush in for a hug and warm words of welcome. Several of the smaller ones come immediately to Joseph when they see him. They wrap arms around his waist and seem to relish being enfolded in his fatherly embrace. I watch and wonder if they get anything like this anywhere else.

Their very appearance speaks of want and streetwise caution—the shabby, unmatched clothing, touseled hair needing a brush or barber or both, the furtive looks like a small animal not sure if all is safe, and a certain hollowness that is not physical but emotional.

As the room begins to fill with children, the noise level rises correspondingly. Lots of childish chatter, banter, and laughter creates an (p12) ➡

photos by Rick Hutchison

MAY 2011

05



CAMP MEETING 2011

Michael Avery



Mark Cravens



Larry Smith



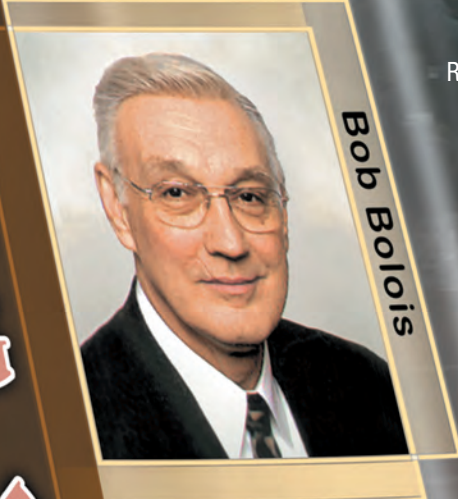
Blake Jones



Chris Cravens



Bob Bolois



James Plank



David Gibbs



MAY 11-15, 2011

Dr. Michael Avery, president
Rev. Mark Cravens, campus pastor

PRAYER SERVICES

Thursday – Friday, 7:30 am

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

Thursday – Friday, 9 am

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICES

Rev. Blake Jones: "Heart Talks"

Thursday – Friday, 10:30 am

Rev. Larry Smith: "Serving Our Generation
According To The Will Of God"

Sunday, 10:30 am

EVENING SERVICES

Rev. Mark Cravens: "Victory In Jesus"

Wednesday, 7 pm

Rev. James Plank: "God Wants To Do
Something In Zarephath"

Thursday, 7 pm

Attorney David Gibbs Jr: "In The Last Days
Perilous Times Shall Come"

Friday, 7 pm

Rev. Bob Bolois: "When God Was At His Best"

Saturday, 7 pm

Rev. Chris Cravens: "The Best Of Things
In The Worst Of Times"

Sunday, 6 pm

GBS COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, 10 am

COMMUNION SERVICE

Sunday, 9 am

STUDENT MINISTRIES

SERVICE

Sunday, 2:30 pm



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

HOLINESS AND EVANGELISM

by J. B. Chapman

Holiness implies separation from the world, and yet it does not imply the canceling of our debt to the world. We are yet in the world, even though we are no longer of the world. Jesus describes His disciples as “the salt of the earth,” and salt is worthless if it is isolated. It must be brought into contact with that which it preserves. Likewise those who withdraw from the company of men and live in monasteries or in social seclusion have little value as evangelizing agents. Personal separation from the world must be consistent with the Master’s command to “Go ye into all the world and make disciples.”

In Revelation 2:14, “the doctrine of Balaam” is roundly condemned. By reference to the Old Testament account of this prophet’s activities and counsels we find that his doctrine was “evangelism by mixing.” Balak could not win over Israel in an out-and-out conflict with these people, so Balaam said, “Go along and intermarry with these people and win over them by absorbing them.” The results were disastrous, not to the heathen, but to the people of God. And yet there are those who still think the way to save the world is for the Church to become worldly. But when the world and the Church mix, it is the world that captures the Church and not the Church that captures the world.

How then can men be holy and still be saving agencies in a sinful world? The answer is that they must be insulated, but not isolated. Our Master’s example is in point. He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and even His enemies reported they found no fault in Him. Yet He met men on the streets, in the markets, in their homes, and at their own tables. It is true that some criticized Him as being “the friend of sinners,” but He accepted this as a compliment and adopted this as one of His favorite

roles. Ordinarily to touch a leper was to become defiled, but when Jesus touched a leper the leper was cleansed. And this is the key to the whole matter. The healing touch does not defile. But the agreeing touch does defile. And everyone must keep his own soul from the saturating effect of sin and worldliness by keeping alive the inner protest against all that is wrong. Still he must limit his touch only at that point where healing and agreeing meet. It is an honor to eat with publicans and sinners when to do so is to heal and save them, and every man must know and observe his own limits not to be overcome of evil, even in the sense of prevailing influence, but to overcome evil with good.

Dilution almost always means weakness, and strength practically always requires concentration. This is true whether the subject is a state, a home, a church, or an individual life. Men who are known too well as “good mixers” are seldom also effective soul winners. The nucleus of the individual life must be kept pure if the impact of evangelism is to be effective. We must ourselves be thoroughly evangelized before we can succeed markedly in evangelizing others. Men readily become exercised over the subject of widening their scope of influence, whereas, the greater need is to wield an effective influence. When the choice is between influencing a few people much, the instant choice should be the latter. Bringing people near to the kingdom of God is not enough; we must bring them in and introduce them to the King.

The principle of soul winning is divinely inherent in all truly born again people, although the method by which the lost are sought and found varies as much as the number of Christians in the world. The principle is indicated by that early desire to see one’s loved ones

God's Way

by Freda Drake

and friends brought to Christ. One of the first and best evidences of conversion is the desire to see others converted. But it is always a bad thing to be stirred and then do nothing about the stirring. If one does something about it, the stirring will increase until soul winning becomes a passion. And there is nothing more fundamental in the whole task of evangelism than that of a burden for the salvation of souls. If that burden is real and heavy, ways and means will be found. And nothing encourages a burden for others more than getting genuinely through for yourself. Holiness of heart is therefore a great boon for soul winners.

The description of a soul winner requires but a few lines, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24). It is as though the cause and effect were stated. Nothing is said of the pedigree, breeding, education, gifts, or talents of Barnabas, for such things do not enter into the qualifications of soul winners. He was simply a man in the fullness of the blessing of Pentecostal sanctification and, as the oasis gathers about the palm tree, souls followed him into the kingdom of God. There is no indication of strain or effort. He had the blessing and followed the leading of the Lord and his work was fruitful.

Dr. A. M. Hills wrote that during four years in college, it being known that he planned to be a preacher, and three years in the theological seminary, although he was told many things that would help him in the pursuit of his calling, he was never told the simple thing that the baptism with the Holy Ghost is the one indispensable qualification for success in the divine art of soul winning. Much of the intellectual training given to divinity students and those preparing for Christian work has almost as little direct connection with the task to which the students are called as a course in gymnastics would have. For the task is not primarily intellectual, but spiritual, and the greatest need not a full mind, but a full heart.

But even if the expressional life in the business of soul winning is to be considered, the great need here is for the anointing of the Spirit upon song, prayer, testimony, and sermon. Even personal evangelism makes heavier demand for immediate inspiration and direction than for knowledge in psychology and sociology. If you would be a soul winner, seek and obtain a holy heart and then walk in the light of the true Spirit-filled life. This is the apostolic way. ■

Dr. J. B. Chapman was a General Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene from 1928–1947. He also served as editor of *Herald of Holiness* and was the first editor of *Preacher's Magazine*.



From Trauma To Triumph

*God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.*

These words from an old hymn flashed across my mind that day last summer as I ran out to the ball diamond to see four young people—two of them my own grandchildren—stretched out on the ground after having been struck by lightning.

“What is this all about, Lord?” I prayed. Through the cracks of thunder and the sheets of rain I had just heard my son Dan cry out desperately to God and then to his wife, “Missy, I think we are losing Noah.” Noah, Dan’s son, was not breathing, and he was turning blue. “We are losing him!”

From somewhere in my distant memory I could hear again the childish voices of Jamin, Noah, and Mahlah four or five years ago as they sang the chorus: “*God has a plan for my life; Oh, I just can’t wait to see what He has in store for me. Oh, yes, God has a plan for my life.*”

At that very moment I realized that this incident which Satan had meant for death and evil would be used by God for good and life. Yes, He was riding “upon the storm.” For as Scripture assures us, “*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope*” (Jeremiah 29:11). God did bring “future and a hope” to us that day, and in an astounding miracle, the children are all alive, even though they were struck by lightning.

Days later while I was meditating upon this severe trial, I was awakened to what God purposes to do in the lives of His people as they respond to His call in II Chronicles 7:14: “*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*”

Just as my son Dan did not care who heard his agonizing cry for deliverance for Noah, so we must cry out in fervency for real revival—for God’s deliverance for our country, our community, our friends, and our family. Spiritually speaking, they too are “turning blue,” and in so many cases, we are losing them. Remember that the “effectual fervent prayer” of God’s people “availeth much,” as James tells us (5:16).

But how do we obtain this burden of “effectual fervent prayer”? How do we humble ourselves, and

how do we “turn from” those ways that God calls us to forsake? I have come to the solemn conclusion that the answer to these questions is the same that Jesus gave His disciples when they questioned Him. Remember His words: “*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting*” (Matt. 17:21).

This was made more real to me last December when at a family bookstore I picked up a book entitled *Fasting* by Jentezen Franklin, which, as its name implies, calls us to open “the door to a deeper, more intimate, more powerful relationship with God” by the Biblical discipline of fasting. This has certainly changed my life and my walk with God.

Unfortunately, fasting has become a lost spiritual art; but our godly forefathers used to practice it regularly, for it helps to humble our flesh as we seek God. I would like to encourage everyone to examine this book and to set aside regular times of fasting and prayer, seeking the Lord with a righteous and earnest heart. If you do this in a way that pleases God, you will experience wonderful deliverance in your life and in the lives of others. Fasting and prayer is God’s method to lead us from “trauma to triumph”—yes, from ruin to revival! ■

Freda Drake, who lives in Remus, Michigan, attended GBS in 1958 and 1959. Through the near-tragedy of last summer’s lighting strike, she came “to the realization that God was giving us a wake-up call for our people to begin to cry out to Him for real revival.”

MIRACLE IN MICHIGAN

“Hundreds of people...are convinced that prayer saved the lives of four kids struck by lightning last month at a church camp near Vestaburg...” according to the *Cadillac News* for the weekend of August 14–15, 2010. Referring to the same incident Mrs. Drake mentions above, the article lists the four struck by lightning as Noah Drake, 12, Mahlah Drake, 10, Ashlee Elliott, 18, and Charity Tucker, 14. “An outpouring of prayer was held for the stricken,” according to the newspaper. “After three days, all four were released from the hospital and returned to camp on Sunday for evening worship. There they told their stories and praised God.” As Noah and Mahlah’s mother Melissa Drake said, “We saw at least a dozen doctors and they said this is a miracle.”

NEWS

from the Hilltop

GBS PROFESSORS GIVE SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Joshua Avery (Head Librarian), Dr. Mark Bird (ADEP Chair) and Lyle Witt (Assistant Professor, General Studies Division) gave a presentation at Online and Up

Close, the 2011 Higher Education Conference co-sponsored by the Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities, of which GBS is a member. Their presentation focused on no- and low-cost technological tools that colleges can use to serve their students better, both on and off campus.

Avery presented academic libraries' use of Facebook (including GBS's Flexon Library's experience); Bird presented BrainHoney, the online course-delivery system



Avery, Witt, and Bird

ADEP uses; and Witt presented educational uses for selected Google Applications.

As an attendee at their session, I was proud of their excellent representation of God and GBS. Clearly,

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 **Jeremy (GBS AA '04) and Emilie (Charlton) (GBS '01) Leach**, a daughter **Annabel Violet Leach**, born March 9, 2011, Cincinnati, Ohio. Jeremy is a manager at Integrity Mortuary, Florence, Kentucky. Emilie works as an RN at The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati. They attend Kenwood Bible Methodist Church.

DEATHS



Rev. Dr. William Greathouse, 91, general superintendent emeritus of the Church of the Nazarene, died March 24, 2011. Converted in his youth at a Nazarene tent revival, he served as a pastor from 1938 until 1963, at which time he was elected president of what is now Trevecca Nazarene University. In 1968 he became president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, a position he held

until he became general superintendent in 1976, serving in this capacity until his retirement in 1989. Dr. Greathouse will be remembered as a superb scholar deeply committed to the life and doctrine of scriptural holiness. He was a widely-recognized theologian, speaker, and author.

Preceded in death by his first wife Ruth, Dr. Greathouse is survived by three children, seven grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and his wife Judy. Funeral services were held at the First Church of the Nazarene, Nashville, Tennessee, with entombment at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Dr. Greathouse was a great churchman and scholar. He was also an enthusiastic supporter of God's Revivalist and its holiness message, expressing his wish that the publication would be in every home in the Church of the Nazarene. —Editor

Alice P. (Belcher) Trouten, 77, died March 6, 2011, in Meridian, Idaho. A graduate of God's Bible School and College (ThB '60), she was married August 6, 1960, to Edsel Trouten whom she had met at GBS. She became his faithful partner in ministry throughout his years as pastor, evangelist, teacher, and church administrator. She also served God's Bible School in the 1970's as dean of women



the session audience appreciated their presentation as well, based on comments and conversations I overheard. God has blessed GBS with wonderful faculty and staff, who serve Him well on campus and in other venues! —Aaron Profitt, Chair, Division of General Studies

BAND TOUR CARRIES GBS MISSION TO HEARTLAND CHURCHES

“I feel a special sense of anointing like the Lord is hovering over this group, blessing in an unusual way [with] a keen and sweet sense of His presence.” These words, sent by Public Relations Director Don Davison



enroute, characterized reaction to GBS’s Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble spring tour, March

25–30. The tour, directed by Davison, carried the mission of the college to seven churches in ➡



and as a faculty member, and returned later to her alma mater during her husband’s tenure as campus pastor. Hers was a devout, sacrificial, and lovely life offered to Christ and to others.

Funeral services were held at Grace Bible Church, Nampa, Idaho, with Dr. Michael Avery, GBS president, and Rev. Richard Miles, GBS vice president for student affairs, officiating. Interment was at the U.S. Military Cemetery, Boise, Idaho. Memorial services for Mrs. Trouten were also conducted at the GBS chapel in Cincinnati, April 6, with President Avery, Rev. Jack Hooker, and Rev. Richard Miles, participating. She is survived by her loving husband of 50 years, Rev. Edsel R. Trouten, as well as their son, Jack Trouten and his family.

We praise God for His gracious gift to us of Sister Trouten. Those who knew her will remember her unwavering dedication, her sense of sanctified humor, and her profound influence for God and righteousness. —President Michael Avery.

NOTICES

Bird Lake Wesleyan Missionary Church, an independent conservative holiness church in rural southern Michigan, is seeking an experienced minister who has an appreciation for Christian education, is

excited about growing the kingdom, and has a passion for preaching. Positions also available in our ACE School, founded in 1970, are Principal/Teacher, H.S. teacher with experience in math and science, Jr. High and Elementary teacher. Minimum education requirement is a BA Degree. If interested send resume to Bird Lake Wesleyan Missionary Church, c/o Larry Siegel, Chairman, 7251 Carncross Rd., Pittsford, MI 49271. Phone contact is Larry Siegel (517) 523-2346. Website is birdlakebibleschool.org.

Rev. Edsel Trouten, veteran minister of wide experience, has been caring for his wife Alice, who recently has gone to be with the Lord. He now is available for revivals, conferences, camp meetings, and ministerials. He is especially interested in helping small churches, addressing such issues as prayer, church growth, and confronting cults. Contact him at edseltrouten@gmail.com, (208) 922-2961 (home), (208) 473-9901 (cell), or address letter to 1162 Owyhee St., Kuna, Idaho 83634. ■



➡ the heartland states of Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Illinois.

SWSE conductor David Hartkopf, member of the faculty, Division of Music, brought capable leadership and passion for anointed and excellent music. Jessica Smith, tour accompanist, GBS alumna and music division faculty member, lent her gifted piano artistry to the tour. The 40-some students who gave of their spring break to travel provided not only a crisp and exhilarating musical sound, but also gave powerful testimonies articulating their dedication to the whole will of God.

Rev. Steve Mills, GBS alumnus and a general evangelist, served as tour bus driver. The six-day event provided crucially needed operating funds and connected GBS with new donors and prospective students along the way.

CAMPUS BLOOD DRIVE SPONSORED BY STUDENT COUNCIL

Sponsored by the GBS Student Council, a campus blood drive was held Monday, March 21. "It was a huge success," according to Diane Wood, student council secretary, who explains that Hoxworth Blood



GBS sophomore David Frederick gives blood.

Center, Cincinnati, who directed the event, "was hoping to get 60 people to sign up for the blood drive, and the total number of people who came was 89! They were able to collect 73 donations of blood, six of which were double-reds, and ten of which were plasma. The organizers from Hoxworth were very pleased with how the drive went and said they enjoyed working with our school to save lives."

Chapel services held that morning were under the direction of the student council and focused on the importance of becoming blood donors. "I want to express how very proud I am of our students, faculty, and staff," comments Wood. "[You] did something to make a difference in the community and in complete strangers' lives." ■

➡(p5) atmosphere like that of family and home. Lots of hugs, smiles, giggles, and prattle generate a certain light and warmth in this otherwise drab room. Again, I find myself thinking this may be the warmest place some of these little ones know.

After a few minutes of gathering, greeting, and giving personal attention to each one, the older girls lead off in a rousing game where all join hands in a circle and expend their energy in clapping, competing, and laughing. Then it turns into singing with more laughter and clapping.

Next comes more serious moments of sharing problems, needs, and cares as they get ready for prayer time. I wish so badly I could understand their mother-tongue. I want to hear what these children of alcoholics, addicts, gypsies, and desperately poor families have to say. How much will they reveal of themselves and the places from which they come (many could not be called "homes"). I can only bow my head with them and join in their corporate prayer, believing that God hears and knows and cares.

Finally they drag out benches to make a semi-circle and Pastor (or Papa) Joseph takes center to share an animated story laced with words of parental admonition and Gospel invitation. I study their faces as they study his. Like any group of youngsters, some look intently at the speaker, some look down at fidgeting hands, some look off or around. But I know every one of them is taking in every word Joseph gives them. They know he loves them. That forms a strong bond.

After another prayer, the benches are pushed over to tables where the soup and sandwiches are spread. The whole "program" has hardly taken 40 minutes. Joseph nods that we will go and the girls will watch the children eat and then close up after the last one leaves. I follow Joseph down the dim hallway and back out to the street.

I come away knowing that I have just seen the kingdom of God at work. Not a lot of food. Not a big crowd of people. Not a lot of props. But lots of smiles, hugs, warmth, affirmation, caring—in a word, lots of love. All of this served up in a place where these are very scarce commodities.

Just a little light in such a dark place shines very brightly, indeed!

God bless you, Joseph and company. *Slava Bogu! Praise God!!* ■

Rev. Rick Hutchison (GBS '77 BRE) is a pastor, speaker, and president of Barnabas Ministries. He and his wife Joan live in Tennessee.

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Dear Phil

1 Thess. 5:23 Exegetically Tenable?: Responding to Reformed Critiques" (<http://apbrown2.net>).

Having reached this conclusion, it is legitimate to ask where else does this or similar expectations occur and what is entailed in such a sanctification of the entirety of our spirit, soul, and body?

In 1 Thess. 4:3-7, Paul applies our initial sanctification to the area of sexual purity. It is not a text that addresses God's will for believers to be sanctified entirely, and it cannot be pressed into such theological service without doing injustice to the context, despite the long history of people doing just that.

The most responsible way of explaining what God wants to do in believers' lives after saving them is, I believe, to exegete texts that address post-salvation acts of believing self-yielding (Rom. 6:1-13), full consecration (Rom. 12:1), reception/giving of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18; Acts 2, 8, 19), cleansings by God (Isa. 6:5), prayers for Christ to make himself fully at home in believers' lives (Eph. 3:16-20), and so on.

In this way I avoid imposing my preconceptions about entire sanctification on the text. I also allow the text to speak in its own terms, rather than in my systematic theological terms. And, I demonstrate a responsible commitment to exegeting all Scripture within its immediate context as well as its canonical contexts.

In short, my encouragement to you is don't throw out the building supplies when you discard "Big Box Building Supply."

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.

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION AND THE BIBLE

Dear Phil,

If a preacher doesn't know where entire sanctification is in the Bible, why would he want to preach about it? The question, "What passages do you recommend for preaching entire sanctification?" ["Dear Phil," March 2011] makes it appear that entire sanctification must not be easily discovered by a "natural" reading of the Word.

Please understand, my issue is not with holiness doctrine, it is with the careless license with which it has been "constructed" by far too many preachers in my lifetime. I am a builder by trade. When I build something, I begin with design. I don't go to "Big Box Building Supply" and wander the aisles looking for inspiration. As best I can tell, that is exactly what many preachers are doing with God's Word! They "cruise" the pages of Holy Writ seeking useful verses that require substantial assembly. Some even need to be carefully extracted from their settings to be useful for the purpose at hand.

If I Thessalonians is where the answer lies, so be it! I would recommend that they read it from front to back in one sitting several times over until they feel the flow of the text and the heart of Paul as he wrote it. The text should define the context and reveal its own agenda.

Thanks for listening to a comment from the back pew! —Hal

Dear Hal,

I couldn't agree more that God-honoring preaching must be word-centered, contextually-informed, and exegesis-driven. This is what we advocate in all our Bible and preaching classes.

By word-centered I mean that the preacher must proclaim God's message, not his ideas. By contextually-informed I mean that every text must be understood first within its immediate context and ultimately within the context of Scripture as a whole. By exegesis-

driven I mean that the message we preach must come from a careful consideration of the words, the grammar, and rhetorical structure of the passage.

Having said that, I contend that a word-centered, contextually-informed, exegesis-driven consideration of Paul's doctrine of sanctification leads to the conclusion that Paul expects God to sanctify believers "entirely," i.e., sanctify every part of them—spirit, soul, and body—in this life. Again, I recommend my paper, "Is a Wesleyan Interpretation of



PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES REPORT GAINS

“While mainline Protestant churches in the U.S. continue to experience decades-long decline, the membership of Pentecostal traditions are on the rise,” according to Religious News Service reporter Richard Yeakley, referring to “new figures compiled by the National Council of Churches.” The report, based on figures submitted in 2009, notes that the Roman Catholic Church, the largest denomination in the USA, and the Southern Baptist Convention, the second largest, “are still significantly larger than all other North American denominations.” But Catholics “posted minimal growth of less than 1 percent, and Southern Baptist membership fell for a third straight year....”

The Presbyterian Church (USA) reported a membership loss of 2.6%, the largest drop of those bodies reporting, and other mainline Protestant denominations such as the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Episcopal Church, and the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) also reported losses in membership. “Pentecostal churches make up four of the 25 churches, and both the Assemblies of God and the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) increased in membership.” Jehovah’s Witnesses reported a 4.37% gain.

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TURNS ITS BACK ON THE DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT

Christians of orthodox commitment are deeply disturbed by the Obama Administration’s decision no longer to defend federal law that upholds the traditional understanding of marriage. Passed by Congress in 1996 and signed by President Clinton, the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) defines marriage as a legal union between one man and woman and allows state governments not to recognize same-sex marriages from other states. President Obama has stated that he will no longer defend DOMA’s constitutionality in court.

Conservatives regard this as one of the most bitter blows yet against the Christian understanding of marriage. The advancing homosexual agenda is vigorously promoting gay-marriage as a basic legal right; and if this succeeds, it will be a direct repudiation of the clear teaching of the Bible and the doctrine of the Christian Church from its beginning.

CHRISTIAN RELIEF SUPPLIES SENT TO JAPAN

Samaritan’s Purse, a Christian ministry headed by Franklin Graham, son of famous evangelist Billy Graham, has sent 90 tons of relief materials to Japan. Delivered in a char-

tered Boeing 747, according to Wesley Ernst, *Christian Post* correspondent, the relief supplies “included 1,000 rolls of heavy-duty plastic [for temporary shelters], 16,860 blankets, 14,304 hygiene kits, 21,408 bars of soap, 1,111 buckets, and 18,432 jerry cans.” “As we go to Japan, we go in Jesus’ name,” the article quotes Graham as saying. Other Christian organizations are also raising funds to send emergency supplies to the stricken country.

EUROPEAN COURT ALLOWS CRUCIFIXES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“The European Court of Human Rights ruled Friday that crucifixes are acceptable in public school classrooms,” according to Fox News, reported March 18, “and its decision will be binding in 47 countries.” The decision grew out of a dispute in Italy and set aside an earlier ruling which had declared that crucifixes could be “disturbing to non-Christian or atheist students.” Italy and many other European nations had appealed the earlier ruling, according to Fox, “contending the crucifix is a symbol of the continent’s historic and cultural roots.”

PASTOR REFUSES COMMUNION TO NON-GIVERS

According to Fox News, March 17, members of a small Baptist congregation in Texas were denied communion after they refused to give the pastor their tax refunds, MyFoxHouston.com reports. The pastor, Rev. John Goodman, “has admitted to denying his congregation communion but said he did so because church members overall have failed to support the church—like giving money toward its new parking lot. He said only four or five members of the church actually donate, and he called the rest of his congregation ‘devils.’” Interestingly enough, the name of the congregation is Unity Baptist Church. ■



from the Classics

OUR TENDENCY TOWARD RELIGIOUS LOPSIDEDNESS

by A.W. Tozer

There are areas in our lives where in our effort to be right we may go wrong, so wrong as to lead to spiritual deformity. To be specific let me name a few:

1. When in our determination to be bold we become brazen.

Courage and meekness are compatible qualities: both were found in perfect proportion in Christ and both shone in beauty in His conflict with His enemies. Peter before the Sanhedrin and Paul before Agrippa demonstrated both qualities, though on another occasion when Paul's boldness temporarily lost its charity and became carnal he said to the high priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." It is to the credit of the apostle that when he saw what he had done he immediately apologized (Acts 23:1-5).

2. When in our desire to be frank we become rude.

Candor without rudeness was always found in the man Christ Jesus. The Christian who boasts that he always calls a spade a spade is likely to end by calling everything a spade. Even the fiery Peter learned that love does not blurt out everything it knows (I Pet. 4:8).

3. When in our effort to be watchful we become suspicious.

Because there are many adversaries, the temptation is to see enemies where none exist. Because we are in conflict with error, we tend to develop a spirit of hostility to everyone who disagrees with us on anything. Satan cares little whether we go astray after a false doctrine or merely turn sour. Either way he wins.

4. When we seek to be serious and become somber.

The saints have always been serious, but gloominess is a defect of character and should never be equated with godliness. Religious melancholy may indicate the presence of unbelief or sin and if long continued may lead to serious mental disturbance. Joy is a great therapeutic for the mind. "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4).

5. When we mean to be conscientious and become overscrupulous.

If the devil cannot succeed in destroying the conscience he will settle for making it sick. I know Christians who live in a state of constant distress, fearing that they may displease God. Their world of permitted acts becomes narrower year by year till at last they fear to engage in the common pursuits of life. They believe this self-torture to be a proof of godliness, but how wrong they are. ■

A.W. Tozer (1897-1963) was a well-known pastor, conference speaker, and author. This is adapted from an article he wrote in *The Alliance Witness*.

This involves paying attention to your child's response to singing, prayer, and preaching in church, as well as interest or resistance to family prayers. A lack of spiritual awareness or sensitivity in children may indicate the presence of spiritual strongholds Satan has erected as a result of the sins of their fathers being visited upon them (Eph. 4:26; Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9; Jer. 32:18). These must be torn down through fasting and intercessory prayer.

To develop spiritual desires, surround your child with spiritual music. We used to put our children to bed every night to the music of classical hymns of the church. Avoid the music of the world. Shield them from the powerful influence of television. Because we did not know what propensities toward sin our children inherited from their forefathers, we chose not to have a television. We substituted carefully-chosen character-building audio tapes and exciting Christian literature. Included in these were thrilling missionary stories. We wanted our children to admire missionaries, preachers, and successful Bible-believing Christians rather than admiring actors, actresses, and sports figures. Take note of whom your children admire. Help them to choose heroes of the faith, not heroes of this fallen, sinful world.

C. You Must Incorporate *Discipline* into the Training.

Discipline begins with the parent. You must model the attitudes and actions you want your child to follow. Much is "caught" by your children as they observe your attitudes and your actions. If you wish them to be submissive to their authorities, you must demonstrate your submission to your authorities, including your employer, your pastor, and your civil leaders. Consistency in enforcing your word and fairness in your requirements is essential.

Be careful of what you say in front of your children. Do not criticize or talk negatively about professing Christians in their presence. You never know whom God might use to influence your child toward Him. Through unwise comments, you can short-circuit God's plan to use another person to help your child. Granted, you will have to shield your child from some people because of potential negative impact, but do it in such a way that your child does not detect what you are doing.



—sermon by DR. ALLAN P. BROWN

To be continued next issue.

"COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE
IN PREACHING"



CAN GODLY PARENTS REAR GODLY CHILDREN? Part 1

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

Scripture: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

INTRODUCTION

Can you have assurance that your child will go to heaven, or is the decision to bring a child into the world a gamble with a never-dying soul? Is there any guarantee that if you properly train your child, he (or she) will practice the religious values and lifestyle you taught him once he is grown and out of the home?

If we allow statistics to answer the question, the outlook is bleak. Look around you at all the parents with grown children who have abandoned their parents' values and lifestyle. Such children are a grief to godly parents.

Is Proverbs 22:6 a promise to parents? If properly trained, will children embrace that training and never depart from it? Most of the people I talk to and many of the "authorities" I read on parenting say, "No, Proverbs 22:6 is not a promise."

When asked, "Why not?" they usually cite one or more of the following four reasons why godly parents may fail to rear godly children: (1) You cannot guarantee parental success in child-rearing because a child has the God-given ability to reject truth as well as accept it; (2) Too many godly parents have done their best and failed. Take, for example, Adam and Eve and their son Cain, Abraham and his son Ishmael, Isaac and his son Esau, Jacob and most of his sons, Eli and his two sons, and Samuel and his sons. All of these had at least one rebellious, ungodly child; (3) God, as a "parent" to Adam and Eve, and as a "parent" to Israel, did not succeed

with all His “kids”! (4) Proverbs 22:6 is a general truth (a *proverb*, not a *promise*) to which there are notable exceptions. There is no guarantee that your children will serve God faithfully.

Conclusion? Most people believe Proverbs 22:6 is not a “promise” in the normal sense of the word. Besides, if we say that it is a promise, would that not classify most parents as “parental failures” and increase the guilt and pain they already feel?

To compound the problem, let’s take a look at the “raw material” proud parents hold in their arms at birth. Every baby inherits a depraved (fallen) nature at conception (because of Adam’s sin) that begins to express itself in self-centered ways at birth (Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:12). By definition, self-centeredness seeks to get its own way (Isa. 53:6) and continually tries to find methods to accomplish it. Therefore, every child is born with built-in selfishness. Add to this the fact that your baby will find lying as natural as breathing (children go astray from the womb speaking lies—Psa. 58:3). Factor in the startling truth that “foolishness”—that lack of foresight and stubbornness of heart that prompts a child to rebel against authority—“is bound up” in the heart of your baby (Pro. 22:15). If you include the vastly differing range of mental abilities, emotional make-ups, and spiritual proclivities possible, then you have a veritable Pandora’s box of potential havoc. And, in light of all this, God pronounces a blessing upon those who have children! “*Children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward*” (Psa. 127:3).

What response can one make to this? Will it surprise you if I tell you, contrary to the majority view and as foolish as it may seem, that I claimed Proverbs 22:6 as a promise from God! Even though I accept the following five premises, I believe there is biblical hope for rearing godly children.

Five premises underlying my belief:

1. Your child has the God-given ability to accept or reject Jesus as Savior.
2. Nothing predetermines that choice.
3. You can greatly influence the choice your child will make.
4. God wants your child to love and serve Him.
5. Satan will use every means at his disposal to keep your child from serving God.

In light of these five premises, I still believe it is possible to surround your children with earnest prayer and to provide a happy and holy home environment so as to rear godly children. I see within

Proverbs 22:6 three important truths one must follow: (1) There is the mandated training; (2) The timing of the training is crucial. (3) There is a promised triumph.

I. THE MANDATED TRAINING: “Train up a child in the way he should go...”

The command “train up” indicates the seriousness of the parental assignment. The Hebrew literally reads “*train a child according to his way when he is old, he will not depart from it.*” Are we to understand “his way” to mean (1) allow a child to have his own way, and when he is old he will not depart from it; or (2) to tailor the training to fit the child’s unique temperament and abilities, and when he is old he will not depart from it; or (3) train a child according to God’s way and when he is old he will not depart from it? Although the first translation is possible, a combination of the second and third viewpoints is more likely. I understand this Scripture to mean: “Train up a child according to God’s way, taking into consideration the child’s unique temperament and abilities; and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

By its very nature, training involves many things. Some of the most important of these are *dedication, desire, discipline and drill.*

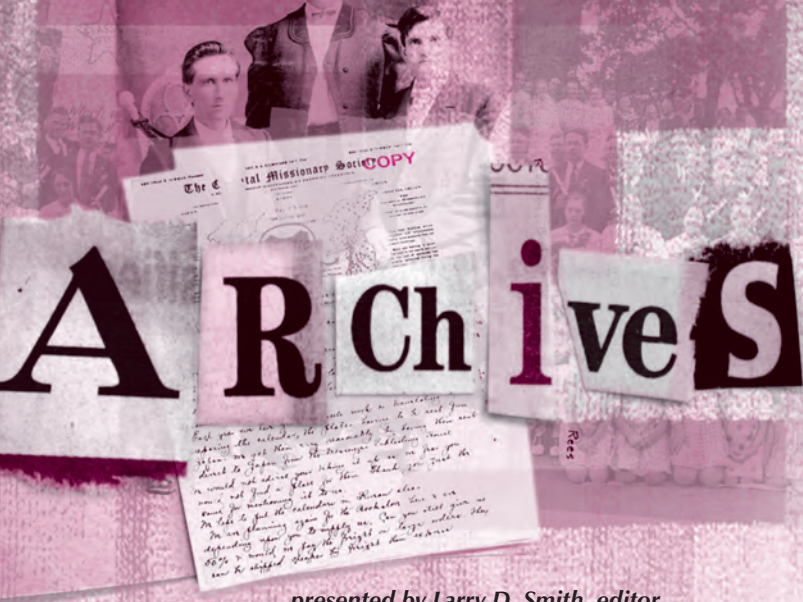
A. Be Sure to Dedicate Your Child to the Lord.

It comes as no surprise to a Christian that everything he has belongs to the Lord, including himself (1 Cor. 10:26; 6:19). Therefore, like Hannah with Samuel, we should view our child as “on-loan” to us by the Lord.

Dedication involves more than a special service at church. It should demonstrate itself by our ongoing carefulness to stay in tune with God about the training of our children. Much prayer should be offered on their behalf from their earliest days, not waiting until rebellion begins to show itself. Since children are God’s gift to us, we should ask God to give us special discernment and wisdom to train them according to His will.

B. Be Sure You Cultivate Spiritual Desires in Your Child.

Each child is born with different gifts, abilities, potentials, and weaknesses. Some children will give early evidence of spiritual interest and sensitivity. Others will display a lack of interest, and some, a resistance to spiritual things. Parents must be alert to detect the presence or lack of spiritual desires in their child.



presented by Larry D. Smith, editor

SMALL BOAT, BIG GOD!

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

According to her son, Dr. Wingrove Taylor, well-known evangelist, church administrator, and veteran GBS board member, Irene was brought to Christ by "a GBS team [who] conducted the first gospel campaign known" on her native Saba, "my mother's native island," which is "five square miles of mostly rock that juts up about 1,700 feet above sea level." As he adds, the "first night she heard the message of personal salvation, she responded and experienced the new birth. The team saw great prospects in her, and thus arranged for her to enroll in God's Bible School."

Moulton's 1907 *Revivalist* report informs readers that Irene had come to the United States with him and his family two years before, "and when the Bible School opened in the fall, she became a student, working her way through. She soon won the hearts of all the students." It was at GBS that she met another student from the Caribbean, Richard Taylor from St. Kitts, who, as Wingrove tells us, felt that "he ought to go to GBS to prepare for the ministry."

"Although Saba and St. Kitts are only about thirty miles apart, there was little travel in those days. Besides, under the colonial system, Saba was a Dutch colony, while St. Kitts was under England. Mother and Father therefore met at God's Bible School. Her work student service was in the kitchen. At one meal she was filling glasses with water. Father asked for a few drops. In the

Caribbean, 'three' and a 'few' may be synonymous. Irene put exactly three drops of water in his glass.

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

In the accompanying photograph, Irene stands with Mrs. Minnie Knapp, wife of GBS's founder. Published in *God's Clock Keeps Perfect Time*, the college's pictorial centenary book issued in 2000, the caption notes, "In March of 1916, Irene Blyden scheduled a series of 'farewell meetings' to raise money and awareness for missionary endeavors before returning to the West Indies. Mrs. Knapp accompanied her during the month of traveling, which began in Kentucky and proceeded through Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, ending in New York." ■





A Message to GBS Alumni

Alumni of God's Bible School and College are more than just a group of people who share the location of their high school and/or college education. GBS Alumni are a vast family that love their alma mater and share a bond with other classmates who have become their lifelong friends. Today, it is still true that "the sun never sets on the alumni" of GBS. More importantly, the kingdom of God is being built and the world impacted by the former students of this great institution.

It is a great honor and privilege to serve as president of the Alumni Association. Let me take this opportunity to share with you some items of interest.

First, this page is USUALLY dedicated to highlighting the lives and labors of GBS alumni. I am thrilled when you send emails or mail letters telling what God is doing in your life. I know that for every email or article, there are hundreds of stories that have gone untold. If you are a former student, please take the time to write an email or mail a letter telling the story of what is happening in your life or in your area of service. I would also appreciate pictures to go along with your correspondence. Please email me at jhooker@gbs.edu or mail a letter to the college address, attention Alumni News.

Second, hopefully you have already noticed the ads in the *Revivalist* for Homecoming 2011. The Alumni Executive Council is planning a weekend called "A GBS Family Reunion." A number of exciting and fun events are planned for every member of your family. In the summer issue of *God's Revivalist* you will see a detailed description of this special alumni weekend. Please reserve the dates October 7 and 8 and join us on the Hilltop for a great time of reunion and fellowship.

Third, in the September issue of *God's Revivalist* you will see a ballot for officers of the Alumni Executive Council. I would appreciate your participation in this important annual election. This year included on the ballot is a proposed new Alumni Association constitution. Over the last number of years, the GBS Alumni Association has gone through a transition. Many of you will remember that for many years the Alumni Association served as the "owner of the corporation" of the school. The alumni annually elected the members of the Board of Trustees. Several years ago the Alumni Association approved a new constitution for God's Bible School and College that gave back the governance of the school to the Board of Trustees.

Other changes have happened over the last several years. We no longer require or collect dues. We no longer produce a separate newsletter but communicate through *God's Revivalist*. These changes and others have made the old Alumni Association constitution outdated and impractical. The Executive Council has worked to produce a new constitution that mirrors present practices and is relevant to our mission today. I encourage you to review the new proposed constitution on our website www.gbs.edu/alumni. Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this document. Thank you again for your faithful support and prayers for our alma mater, God's Bible School and College.

Jack Hooker,



National Alumni Association President





WILD GAME DINNER

by Doug Damon

Our message cannot change, but some of our methods must change! This was the consensus of the Fredonia Holiness Church located in rural Marshall, Michigan. The congregation is located in Calhoun County, which has the largest deer population in the state. Of course, that leads to many deer hunters in the area. In late 2006 the Fredonia Church decided to have a wild game dinner, which, of course, is primarily for men.

This dinner has become a great outreach for the church, as well as a time for the community to come together. The men of the church put on the meal, which consists of anything from moose to muskrat and turtle soup. We also have many door prizes and a guest speaker. There are those who give donations to help defray the expense, for there is no charge to attend. Remember this is an outreach!

The speaker we choose is always a hunter with hunting stories to share and a great passion for hunters to have a personal relationship with the Creator. No, the speaker doesn't come to preach at the people or even to them, but to share the camaraderie of hunting. Then he stays to speak at our church the following day. Randy Staley was our speaker this year. He talked about how we go out to get the trophy buck. If you bagged a ten-pointer last year, your trophy is for a twelve-pointer or greater this year. At the end, he emphasized that we are all trophies in God's eyes. When our life is over, it won't really matter how many trophy bucks we've bagged, or even if people pass by our casket and say what a good hunter we were. What will matter is that we have prepared to meet God. I want to tell you of two couples who are in our church family today because of the game dinner.

Marty and Cindy—what a change in their lives! A combination of things caused them to start coming to our church. Because of the game dinner, Marty felt comfortable coming that first Sunday morning. They also came on Sunday night, then on Wednesday; and the only services they have missed in the past three years is when they were on vacation. The best part is that they have accepted Jesus as their Savior.

Beau and Vicki are another couple who are a direct product of the game dinner. Beau says that there were men from the church who came and swept his barn and helped in different areas, and yet "these guys didn't even know me." Then, "I went to the game dinner and saw the fellows from the church. I said that there was something different about these guys and that I would have to go to church tomorrow morning." Beau and Vicki were there over the next few months. One Sunday, when Beau was away, Vicki came to the altar and prayed. Beau

states that it was seven months and three days from the time that he first walked into this little church that he walked up front and gave his heart to God.

Is the expense worth it? One soul is worth more than the wealth of the whole world. Just look down the road! Yes, there are more who are on their way to Father's house! ■

Doug Damon is the young adult Sunday school teacher at the Fredonia Holiness Church and also serves on the church's board of trustees. He is the founder of Athens Youth Camp, which he continues to serve as its president. Doug firmly believes that "each Christian has a mission field in his or her own community.... God not only appreciates it, but He demands it."



➡(p2) those who charge Constantine with being a greedy opportunist who used Christianity merely to prop up his own ambitions.

Whatever that ruler's sins and shortcomings, he was a true believer, as Leithart declares, determined to "baptize" the Empire as Christ's "earthly city" and also to exalt His Church as His "ecclesial city." Thus, the state was to be Christ's dominion temporal, the Church His dominion spiritual; and the first was to embrace the second, while the second was to model righteousness before the first.

We may find this difficult to understand; but to our ancestors, it was as basic to their social order as it was to their souls' comfort. For, as Leithart reminds us, "This is the story of the medieval world"—and as we add, this is also the story of Christian Europe and later the story of Christian America—"as Christian civilization grew from the seed of Constantine's" ending of paganism "and his acknowledgement of the Church and its King." In doing this, "he and his successors had to accept the consequences: they were to be taught the politics of Jesus." In actual practice this ideal was sadly betrayed, but in concept it remained the bedrock of what was called "Christendom" until the legions of modern secularism set out to demolish it.

But the retelling of our past finds ultimate value not in our pleasure but in our instruction. So the perceptive historian becomes the faithful prophet as he applies the lessons of what lies behind us to the realities of what lies before us. Thankfully Leithart is no member of the "Chicken Little" brigade—one of those well-meaning but dismal folks who only make matters worse by their continual clucking, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!"

For this pastor/historian believes that with God's help we still can save the derelict and degraded West, however post-Christian and even anti-Christian it has become. Indeed, he robustly challenges another scholar who believes the opposite—"that the project of Christianizing the state is doomed. The time when that could happen has long ago passed away." As Leithart says, "If he is right, we are facing nothing short of Apocalypse."

So again we're confronted by that frightening word *apocalypse*—in this case, the apparent collapse of the basic framework that has supported and bound our civilization together since the days of Constantine. This threat is not imaginary, and it would be naive—even fatal—to ignore it. We have brought this threat upon ourselves, of course, by ruthlessly attacking those deep foundations of Christian social order laid so long ago. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3). Sin always brings its penalty unless it is renounced and absolved, and since our societal sins have not been renounced, they have not been absolved.

Yet in wrath God remembers mercy, and so He often delays His judgments, offering Christians opportunity to rally their forces to escape impending devastation. We Wesleyans, after all, had our origin in such a time when in response to earnest prayer and heroic witness, a nation was spared the bloodbath of revolution.

Obviously, Leithart believes that heaven still extends such gracious opportunity, though, as he insists, hope for recovery depends on what we do with that opportunity. In response to the writer who asserts that it is too late to redeem the social order, he declares emphatically, "I believe...[he] is wrong, and we can escape Apocalypse."

Yes, in God's mercy, "we can escape Apocalypse!" But as he adds, "this can only happen on certain conditions: only through re-evangelization, only through the revival of a *purified* Constantinianism, only by the formation of Christically-centered politics, only through fresh public confession that Jesus' city is the model city, his blood the only expiating blood, his sacrifice that ends

We have brought this threat upon ourselves by ruthlessly attacking the deep foundations of Christian social order.

sacrifice. An apocalypse can be averted only if modern civilization, like Rome, humbles itself and is willing to come forward to be baptized."

So the assignment to us now is joyful and absolute commitment to re-introduce our culture to Jesus Christ and to win that culture again to His allegiance. "Re-evangelization...Christically-centered politics...public confession that Jesus' city is the model city, his blood the only expiating blood." This commitment will take unswerving devotion, disciplined discipleship, unceasing prayer, bold assertion, and probably abuse and suffering.

But others have paved the way before us. Braving mockery and persecution, Christians in the first four centuries persevered to raise the cross in splendor and bring the Roman eagles to bow before it. Confronting superstition and corruption, Christians in the 16th century covenanted to reform the church and reshape Europe in evangelical faith. Denouncing apathy and infidelity, Christians in the 18th-century rallied "to reform the continent" and "spread scriptural holiness" on both sides of the Atlantic. Now the privilege and the possibility are handed on to us.



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THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

THE GOD WHO WARNS

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Stand in the court of the Lord’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship in the Lord’s house all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not omit a word! Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.’”

—Jeremiah 26:2-3 NASB

Do you hear it in His words? Can you feel God’s longing, His yearning for His people to turn back to Him? Do you sense His reluctance to punish, His desire that it would not be necessary? This warning is one of many. His prophets have been sent “again and again” (v.5). He calls. He pleads. But they will not listen. They persist in their rebellion, and destruction comes.

What hope this is for those who live in fear! The God who sent Jeremiah to warn a rebellious Judah has not changed. Our God calls. He warns “again and again.” We will not easily or accidentally be lost. He clearly shows us our sin; and our job is to listen, to repent, to obey. Conversely, how sobering this is for those who toy with truth, who fill their ears with more pleasant sounds, who learn not to listen. His patience will not last forever. If we persist in rebellion, destruction will come; and we will have no excuse. Oh, my friends, today let us listen to His voice! Let us heed this gracious God who calls, before it is too late! ■

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Granted, we are weary of the ugly cultural confrontations that seem to have put Christian values on the defensive where once they were embraced. Granted, we are dismayed by the militant attacks by abortionists, pornographers, secularists, hedonists, homosexual activists, and unprincipled politicians who in the name of “inclusivism” and “tolerance” pander to wickedness and infidelity. Granted, we are tempted to escape the public forum and hide behind the cloistered walls of imagined safety. But if we succumb to discouragement and despair, we will surrender the field to Jesus’ enemies and betray the charge that He gives us faithfully to keep.

So is Leithart right? Can we yet escape apocalypse? Only God knows our future, and so we rest it trustfully with Him. Other Christians, as we know, have suffered the pain of collapsing culture. Europe and America—indeed, all the world, is under His surveillance and subject to His judgment. As our forefathers said, “His mills grind slowly, but they grind exceeding fine.”

Yet “His property always is to have mercy,” as the old prayer book reminds us. While He offers us time and grace to bear witness to that mercy, we are cheered by the hope it offers even to those Western nations which have strayed so far from the righteousness of His law and the glory of His gospel.

Therefore we shall live as He has called us: *faithfully*, devoted to Our Lord Jesus in both vibrant personal relationship and unashamed public witness; *reflectively*, aware of the movements of our time but neither captivated nor obsessed by them; *graciously*, loving both our enemies and our friends and serving the needs of both their bodies and their souls; *purposefully*, determined never to surrender either the doctrine or the discipline of the apostolic faith “once and for all delivered to the saints”; *prayerfully*, knowing that Christ has promised that he who asks shall receive; he who seeks shall find, and to him who knocks, even the most forbidding doors shall be opened; *confidently*, rejoicing that He will make all things beautiful in His time and whatever our reverses, will bring us at last to His eternal glory.

Apocalypse. This isn’t a word we often hear—certainly not in family chatter over chicken and dumplings at the dinner table. For its implications are terrifying—especially when we’re told by a respected Christian scholar that we are threatened by apocalypse. But Peter J. Leithart believes—as we believe—that we may yet escape that tragedy—but “only if modern civilization, like Rome, humbles itself and is willing to come forward to be baptized.” So the assignment to us now is absolute and joyful commitment to re-introduce our culture to Jesus Christ and to win that culture again to His allegiance. ■

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