

# GOD'S REVIVALIST

November 2024

*and Bible Advocate*



HAPPY  
THANKSGIVING



# thinking out loud

## TAKE HEART

This year marked an important anniversary for me—I was saved 50 years ago. I give that account in more detail later in this issue (pp.5-7), but I want to focus here on two specific aspects of my conversion story that I think are critical: people and prayers.

**The People.** Regular readers of this column know how much I loved my mother and father. In addition to being great parents, they were fabulous people. Their approach to life, and the joy with which they lived it, had a positive influence on me. Even through difficult times, they always found a way to have an upbeat, cheerful attitude. That was truly who they were. I don't remember my father saying one bad thing about anybody. Never. I don't remember my mother ever being unable to have fun in the day-to-day, mundane tasks. My parents were happy and personable. People liked being around them. That was imprinted upon me as a child and engraved in my memories as I grew older. Even when I was deeply trapped in sinful behaviors, I always longed for a better life of real happiness and contentment. Why? Because I had seen it modeled by my parents.

**The Prayers.** I know that I was ALWAYS in my parents' prayers. I can only imagine how they pled with God to protect me and save me, especially when I was far away from home. Of course that had an impact. I think of all the times while running bars that I lapsed into a "magical mystery tour"—binge drinking and running around, but having no memory of it later. Imagine years of doing that, without negative consequences! I had to have been under the protection of prayer. Even in quiet, sober moments, prayers had a powerful effect. One time, while relaxing in my room and listening to some music, without great emotion, I was brought to a point where I KNEW if I just said a simple "Yes" I would have been saved. I know I arrived at that point by the prayers which had been offered up for me.

I want to encourage the parents of wayward children to live before them in a way that shows them how happy and fulfilled the Christian life is. It will have that winsome, drawing effect that I experienced from my loving parents. And KEEP PRAYING. You never know how prayers offered in Huntington, West Virginia, can have an effect 6,308 miles away in Misawa, Japan. —KF

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# the president's page



## WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

*by Dr. Rodney S. Loper, President*

When looking at the character of Job, it is difficult to focus on the man to the exclusion of the biblical book named for him. I struggled to separate the concepts contained in the book from the actual life of the man. The book of Job gives us a rather abrupt entrance into his world.

We could spend time talking about the description of Job in 1:1—that he was blameless, upright, feared God, and hated evil. These attributes are worthy of our consideration. If, at the end of your life, someone can honestly say those words about you at your memorial service, we would no doubt conclude that you had lived a successful life.

You probably don't remember much about your earliest period of growth. It was during the toddler years that you learned there are consequences to obedience and disobedience. In fact, we all are conditioned to think that if we do good things, we will get good results. If we do things that are bad, we will get bad results. As we mature, the conditioning continues. If we are good enough; if we are righteous enough; if we are holy enough, we will have a life that is devoid of problems, conflicts, pain, loss, and disillusionment.

But then read the book of Job. It provides a small window into Job's life. Yes, he was a successful man of unimpeachable character, but as you continue to read chapter one, you come face to face with one of life's greatest difficulties. Job was a good guy; blameless; the kind of person you would like to have as a neighbor and friend. But all the good things he had been experiencing ended abruptly.

In verses 6-12, and again in chapter 2 (vv.1-9), we come face to face with information that seems to suggest the exact opposite of what we have been conditioned to expect. Satan interjects himself into

the story by arguing that Job is only good because of the good things God has allowed him to have. He contends that if those things are taken away, Job will curse God. God allows Satan to test this proposition by taking away Job's property, his children, and his health. So instead of the good things Job was doing being met with good things in return, Job began experiencing catastrophes and ensuing misfortune, loss, and pain. And by the time you near the end of the book, you can add disillusionment to that list as well. All this happens *precisely* because Job is upright and blameless, fears God, and hates evil.

I will be transparent with you: I don't like this. There is something in my human psyche that makes me want to stand up and say, "It's not fair." It's not the way it should be. This is not the way I train my children. It is not the way that we try to conduct things here at GBS. We try to make sure that everything is equitable, that everything is fair. I want to say, "If you are a good person, everything is going to work out just fine for you." But we are confronted with the reality, backed here by Scripture, that this is not always the case. Sometimes the exact opposite is true.

Could it be, friend, that the reason you have pain, suffering, loss, conflict, or hurt in your life is precisely because God trusts you to walk that pathway, to walk through the difficulties? Again, I don't like that thought. It doesn't provide any balm. The hurts still hurt. The difficulties are still difficult. But it does give us a different context, another look at the longer view of God's plans for us in our circumstances. Yes, maybe it is because you ARE a good person, that God allows you to walk this pathway. He trusts you. There may be things in His plan for you that you cannot see right now; but the reality is that God is using you for His glory as you walk through these difficulties.

If this were a test, Job seems to have passed it. What was Job's response? He "fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'" Through all these difficulties, Job did not sin or charge God with wrong. If Job were my student, I would pull out my red ink pen and circle these verses and give him an A+!

Sometimes I think we put an exclamation point at the end of chapter 1 and we fail to read the rest of the book of Job. We fail to recognize that while Job gave a great testimony, he struggled to comprehend why God has seemingly abandoned him. When three of his friends heard of his predicament, they hurried to him. They argued that Job must have done something sinful, for which he is being punished (2:11–37:24), but this made no sense to Job. He was still confused. He still had questions.

Normally, when struggling doubters doubt, the easiest and best thing to do is to invite them to review their circumstances from every vantage point in order to provide a sound rationale—facts and data—that speaks to their doubt. Make no mistake, God is completely able to remove doubt by this means. God is not in Heaven wringing His hands, perplexed by "difficult" questions. However, this is not how God responds in Job 38. He actually does the opposite. He comes in and He asks the questions.

God seems to be saying to Job and his friends, "You have questions? Well, I have far deeper questions on this same subject that you have not even considered."

What a relief it is to know that we serve a God who not only can answer our feeble questions, but He is so far beyond us that He can also ask questions that we have never pondered! That demonstrates to us that He alone is God! Rather than causing us to be frustrated with Him, it ought to boost our confidence that God is God. He is bigger than we are. We may be going through a difficult circumstance like Job was, but we can have confidence that God is bigger than our questions or doubts.

There is really one question all of humanity must grapple with when considering the book of Job. It is a question that is far reaching in its implications. This question affects the Church, businesses, politics, and ultimately the course of nations. Does God always punish your sin—your bad behavior—with godly punishment and always reward your virtue and righteous living and your moral conduct with heavenly blessings? That is the question of the book of Job.

Do not fall into the trap of saying, "I am going through a difficult time, I must not be good." Or, "I am going through a time of blessing: my finances are good, my career is good, and my relationships are good. I must therefore be right with God." Either interpretation could be wrong. It doesn't take the assessment of a notable theologian or philosopher to recognize the fallacy. The book of Job tells us loud and clear: Bad things DO happen to good people. REALLY bad things happen to good people. Why? That is the great question. Because God is God, and I am not. That really is the best answer.

As best as I can tell, the story of Job ends very abruptly. This much we do know: Job was comfortless before God's speech at the end of the book, and he was comforted after God's speech. And you, too, should be comforted.

Where is God during all of the trials and tribulations of life? He is where He has always been. He is doing what He has always done. It is our task to trust Him as God. Is this difficult? Absolutely! Is there an easy answer? Absolutely not! But can we find a place of rest in difficult circumstances? Yes, we can! ■



The exact date and hour are a bit hazy after the passage of so much time—50 years, in fact; but other aspects of the events that led up to my conversion remain vivid.

It was February 1974, and I had landed at West Virginia’s Huntington Tri-State Airport a bit earlier that morning. I was the only passenger aboard the airport shuttle en route to 2022 10th Avenue, address of the First Wesleyan Church parsonage and home to the Farmer Family, none of whom were aware of my impending arrival. As the van transported me to my destination, I thought back over the many circumstances that had brought me to this juncture.

Born at home on April 3, 1950, in our little house at Blaketown on the outskirts of Oak Hill, West Virginia, I was the second of four children of Elmer and Betty Farmer. My previously unchurched parents had both been saved on Mother’s Day 1948 while attending a service at the invitation of one of mother’s older brothers; so all of my childhood memories are in the context of growing up in a loving, Christian home.

My brother Harry was four and I was two-and-a-half years old when my parents moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. My Daddy had felt a call to preach and decided to attend God’s Bible School to prepare for the ministry (ThB ’56). During that time, Mother also completed high school (1955), as she and Daddy had eloped before she had earned a diploma.

I was always comfortable at home. I had great parents who loved me and worked hard to influence my siblings and me to follow Jesus. Family devotions each evening were the norm at our house. But although I had many “childhood conversions,” I never really had the will to “stick with” my spiritual intentions.

I left home for the first time to attend college at West Virginia Institute of Technology in Montgomery, West Virginia. At the start, I studied civil engineering; but after about a year, I changed my major to pursue a degree in printing management. Unfortunately, I wasn’t much of a student then. I rarely made it to class. Partying took precedence. While I had adopted a few bad habits during my senior year of high school, these became more numerous and intensified in the year-and-a-half of college.

During Christmas break, I was visiting my best friend Kenneth Ray Sexton. (Yes, we both have the same first and middle names.) We had been classmates from grades 5 through 11 in Fayetteville and for three

semesters at Tech. While shooting some basketball, he said, "Farmer, I am joining the Air Force; why not join, too?" As I recall, my college GPA was 0.08. (That's not a typo!) So, yes, why not join the Air Force! At the recruiter's office we both signed up under the "Buddy Plan," which ostensibly would allow us to go through basic training together and also be stationed together if we chose the same job.

I called my parents, who then were living and pastoring in Huntington, to let them know that I had enlisted. Shortly thereafter, back at their house, I sat down to a farewell dinner of my choosing—Betty Wallace Farmer's "world-famous" fried chicken wings! A cycle of emotional responses accompanied the meal. I would attempt to eat a chicken wing in peace while Mother would softly cry. I could handle that. After a while, Daddy would start laughing. It was his go-to nervous response in his fight to keep from crying. I couldn't handle that. So, I would get up from the table, hurry into the living room, sit down at the spinet piano, and play for a few minutes. After regaining my composure, I would return to the table. And then the cycle resumed. I am not sure how much chicken was actually eaten.

In the Air Force, that Buddy Plan did not live up to its claims. Sexton and I saw each other only ONCE during our four years of enlistment! Another aspect of my agreement, at least from my understanding, was that I would be trained to become a "missile mechanic." However, during basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, I was invited to a meeting of select recruits and informed about positions so secretive that we couldn't be told much about them. We were assured, however, that they involved spy activities at the field level. I had to sign a waiver in order to take advantage of one of these exciting new possibilities.

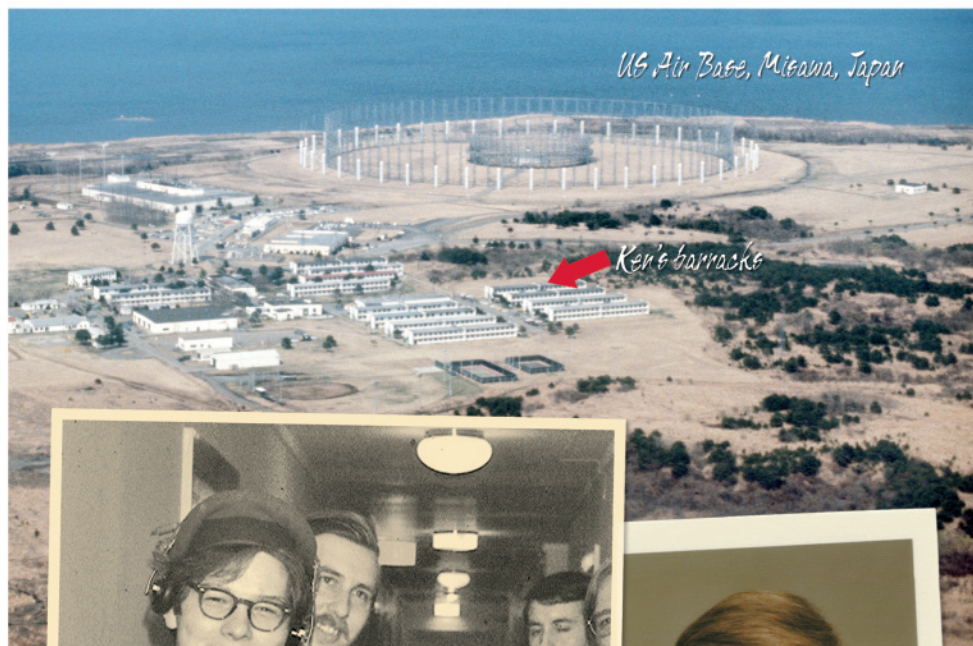
The technical training for my new job took me to Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi. There I learned some basics in electronics and was taught Morse code. After completion of tech school and a short visit home, I found myself headed to Misawa Air Base, Misawa, Japan, for my overseas assignment.

Security Wing sat on the top of a hill some distance from the rest of the base. Part of the configuration there was the "elephant cage"—a huge array of antennas that facilitated snooping on various countries, especially the Soviet Union and China. I worked as a Morse intercept operator out of a large, single-floor building. A system of springs and rollers underneath allowed it to withstand damage from earthquakes. It was a very secure

structure with its perimeter and single entry guarded by Air Police. There were no windows. All of my work took place inside this structure and did not, as I had been led to believe, involve any field work as a spy. I worked there for two tours (a little over three years).

If you were to guess that my bad habits saw another increase during my service years, you would be right. But my activities never assuaged the deep hunger for something that would satisfy for more than the moment. I knew I was in trouble, and, apart from God, there was no remedy. One incident that sticks out in my mind happened while I was relaxing in my room in the barracks, listening to music. Country music artist Kris Kristofferson was singing his hit song, "Why Me, Lord?" As I lay on the bed, I didn't feel particularly troubled or convicted, but I realized that God wanted me to give Him my life. "Now that I know that I've needed you / So help me Jesus, my soul's in Your hand." I became acutely aware that the only thing I had to do was just say "yes." A simple yes would have changed my life!

...But I did not say, "Yes," and now I was returning home a very different man—a broken man. The bad habits were worse than ever. I was troubled by that and had no intention of letting my parents know about any of my ongoing problems. So, on the 12-mile drive from airport to home, I took my pack of Marlboro cigarettes out of my pocket, wadded them up, and dropped them under my seat. I wasn't carrying any luggage because immediately after being discharged at Travis Air Force Base in California, I had taken off my Air Force uniform and dropped it into a trash can. I changed into



Sgt. Ken Farmer, USAF

“civies” for the 65-mile cab ride to San Francisco International Airport, where I caught my flight to West Virginia. The only thing I was carrying now was a package tube containing all my discharge and other important papers. I asked the shuttle driver to let me out a short distance away from my parents’ house.

I walked around the block and up the steps of the large, brick bungalow and rang the doorbell. No one there knew I had been discharged about a week early. I wanted it to be a surprise...and it was. I found out that my family had arranged for a band to greet me at the airport, and I wouldn’t have enjoyed that type of attention, so I was happy to have thwarted their plans. Of course, they were all elated that I was home.

But all too soon my habits became a problem for me. In addition to being a heavy smoker, I also had become an alcoholic—at least according to the results of a Johns Hopkins survey I had taken. I desperately needed to get away from my family, so I decided to take a 100-mile trip to my old stomping grounds in Fayetteville where we had lived while my dad pastored the Wesleyan Church there. It was also where Sexton and I had grown up together. Having married an officer’s daughter while he was in the Air Force, he had been discharged shortly before I was, and the two were now living in Fayetteville on Harvey Street—just across from the old Wesleyan parsonage! It was nice catching up with my buddy. He and his wife Cheri were not Christians as of yet. That would happen a bit later.

Upon my return home, I again lived a “clean” life, but it was difficult. My father noticed my struggle and later told me that he had easily seen that I came home a damaged person. Although I can’t imagine why, I went to church with my parents. Strangely enough, when my father asked me to go with him to a revival at the Church of God (Holiness) on the west side of Huntington, I agreed to go. It was only because I loved my father and liked being around him. I don’t remember the evangelist at Pastor E.W. Roy’s church, and I don’t remember a thing about the sermon; but I do remember what he said at the end of the altar call: “With everyone’s eyes closed, is there is anyone who would like to be remembered in prayer? Please slip up your hand.” I quickly decided that letting the evangelist know that I was interested in his prayers would be good, so I raised my hand. When I did, I felt moved upon by the Spirit, but I resisted.

Several days passed. One night I was awakened by a strong sense that something was wrong. Not understanding the heavy conviction I was experiencing, I actually thought I was dying. Alarmed, I bargained with God: If He would spare me, I would go to the altar the next time I went to church. With that deal made, I was able to get back to sleep.

The next service was Wednesday night prayer meeting, March 20, 1974. As it turned out, a special

communion service was scheduled. Whew! That was close! The deal I had made was definitely off. No one gets saved at a communion service! I politely remained seated as people went to the altar to receive the elements. As they returned to the pews, they began singing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.”

“What a fellowship, what a joy divine”.... I had no joy. “What a peace is mine”.... I had no peace. I did not feel safe and secure, and I had much to dread and fear. I struggled to keep my composure, but I was losing the battle. My mother noticed, and asked, “Kenny, would you like to go to the altar?” With an affirmative nod of my head, I was out of my seat and heading down the aisle—a broken man—just what God was looking for!

As my knees hit the carpet at the altar, there was a big YES in my heart. Almost immediately, I leaped back to my feet knowing I had been forgiven! A mixture of relief and exhilaration coursed through my body as the congregation rejoiced with me. They had not even had the opportunity to help me “pray through to victory.” It wasn’t necessary. First, I had tasted what the world had to offer, and it did not satisfy. Second, years of prayers had already been offered for me by family and friends. Those prayers no doubt had not only served as protection for me, but some of them must have been bundled and saved for that specific moment. Third, my upbringing and the lives my parents had lived before me were a testimony of just how good God was and how happy His people were. I knew what I needed to do. I knew the changes required. I knew I just needed to say “yes” to God.

Shortly after my conversion, I wrote a letter to my old Air Force buddies back in Japan. I just wanted them to know I had been gloriously saved and was a changed man. A couple weeks after that, while I was alone at the Huntington parsonage, I heard someone knocking. I opened the front door to a young man I did not know.

He asked, “Are you Ken Farmer?”

When I replied in the affirmative, he explained that he was on leave from the Air Force and was currently stationed in Misawa, Japan. Some there had asked him to stop by this address and see if Ken Farmer was “for real.” Had he really become a Christian? That letter was what had brought this visitor to my door. I was happy to send him back to Japan with the confirmation that I was indeed a changed man. What had happened in me and to me was “real.”

Let me close with a current report: That YES from 50 years ago still remains a YES today! ■

*Dr. Ken Farmer (BRE '74) has been the managing editor of God's Revivalist since 2013. Prior to that he served for 31 years as a Bible college professor and chief academic officer. He and his wife Paula (BA '72) live in Cincinnati, OH.*



## PR REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING AHEAD

GBS is well aware of the ministry impact of its public relations travel. Yes, we get the opportunity to connect with the friends of GBS in various churches and camps, and making new friends for the school is very important. However, those in the pews are also blessed by anointed singing and speaking. One perspec-

tive not often discussed is the effect the ministry has on members of the PR groups. Blake Castle, the baritone in Anchored Quartet, reflects on that experience.

“My journey as a public relations representative for God’s Bible School and College was an incredible exposure to ministry for me. From the people I’ve met, to the places I’ve been, there have been new experiences around every turn.

“Throughout this summer, I’ve been privileged to visit many different places, from the deserts in Arizona and New Mexico, to the mountains of Colorado, the flat plains of Kansas, and the many other states in which we min-

istered. I enjoyed getting to visit these scenic places, be a part of their camp meetings and services, and see the various ministries happening in the western part of the country. It was a pleasure to be able to experience the different cultures of worship in the different churches.

“This opportunity has also taught me much about what Christian ministry really is. Though there were



Anchored Quartet. Blake Castle is second from right.

# 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.

## DEATHS



**Margaret Faith (Rodgers) Robbins**, 88, passed away August 21, 2024, at Piedmont Crossing Retirement Home in Thomasville, NC. She was born June 7, 1936, in Erie County, PA, to Joseph Rodgers and Marvel (Walls) Rodgers.

Margaret was a graduate of God’s Bible School (BA ‘61) and served as a missionary with Evangelistic Faith Missions for thirteen years. After she concluded her work with missions, Margaret faithfully served beside her husband, Rev. Ronald Garfield Robbins, at several churches in the Southeast. After moving to Thomasville, NC, she taught school at Carolina Christian

Academy for many years. Margaret and Rev. Robbins attended and were members of Trinity Holiness Church in Sophia, NC.

Margaret was preceded in death by Robert, her devoted husband of 60 years, and a son, Dennis. She is survived by her son, Timothy Nathan Robbins; her daughter, Rachel Faye (Jason) Shrum; her daughter-in-law, Rebekah Robbins; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. A funeral service was held at the J.C. Green and Sons Funeral Home Chapel, Thomasville, NC, with Rev. Tim Cole and Rev. David Black officiating. Burial followed at Trinity Holiness Church, Sophia, NC.



**Stephanie Nicole (Rose) Finley**, 38, of Louisville, KY, went to Heaven on September 8, 2024, after courageously fighting brain cancer for more than six years. She was born on February 5, 1986, in Covington, KY.





L-R: Quesenberrys, Barnetts, and Glicks

exciting moments of God’s presence, it also taught me what it means to depend fully on Him. Through flat tires, broken equipment, life-changing accidents that called for rebuilding the group, or just feeling sick and tired, there were many times I felt I could not be a ‘good enough’ representative of Christ. But then I would be reminded that His grace is sufficient

for me: for His strength is made perfect in my weakness (2 Cor. 12:9). Whether it was a good day or a bad day, God always had enough grace to enable me to fulfill the calling of ministry. It is not a call to sing and perform or to lift up self. It is a calling to build up the kingdom of Christ and to draw others to Him.”

We thank God for all the safe travel and His help in ministering and representing GBS to all the people we were blessed to meet. Preparations are already underway to do it all again in the 2024-25 school year.

Duane and Valorie Quesenberry met with the PR music advisors on August 20—two very fine, musically gifted, spiritually committed, and young-people-loving couples: Matt

and Joy Barnett and Jonathan and Jalena Glick. They will assist GBS by serving as advisors for the PR groups. We are trusting God for a great year of ministry in GBS Public Relations!

### FALL REVIVAL

The strains of “More of You” filled the Adcock Chapel on Thursday evening, September 5, as President Loper led the congregation in an opening song at the start of the school revival. After prayer and more singing led by Jonathan Glick, a trio of Tim Crater, his daughter Caroline Craig, and her husband Ryan Craig sang a medley of “Use Us, Jesus” and “A Vessel of Honor for God.”

Guest speaker for the series of services was Rev. John Manley, who has pastored the Wesleyan Evangelistic Church in Dayton, OH, since 2003 and has served as a GBS trustee since 2011. As he began his first message, “Come and See,” Rev. Manley ➡



In 2004, Stephanie graduated as salutatorian of Aldersgate Christian Academy. She also took GBS college classes (2004-05 and 2021-22).

As a pianist and vocalist, Stephanie poured her heart into every note she played and every word she sang. Most of all, she poured her heart into every relationship she built, leaving a legacy of love that her family will carry forever. Her quick wit and positivity brought light to every room she entered. Even when life presented its challenges, Stephanie taught others the value of determination and faith in a God bigger than circumstances.

Stephanie’s husband of 17 years, William Edward Finley, stood steadfastly by her side. Together, they built a family that was the center of Stephanie’s world. Their children, William Walker Finley (12), and Madelynne Macy Finley (10), will carry forward her legacy of faith and love.

In addition to her husband and two children, Stephanie is survived by her devoted parents, Steve and

Elaine Rose; brother, Jonathan (Stephanie) Rose; sister, Lindsay (Keni) Kilburn; and grandparents, Jerry and Shelvia Rose. She was deeply loved by her in-laws, Bill and Sue Finley; brothers-in-law, Micah (Amanda) Finley and Russell (Abigail) Finley; sister-in-law Charla Finley; and nine cherished nieces and nephews. A celebration of Stephanie’s life and faith was held at the Taylor Mill Pentecostal Church, Taylor Mill, KY.



**David Thomas**, 80, of Findlay, OH, went to be with the Lord September 19, 2024. He was born May 5, 1944, in Findlay, to Dean and Doris (Riter) Thomas. David graduated from Vanlue High School in 1962. He worked with area farmers in his teenage years and was working for Remington Arms in Findlay before going into the U.S. Army. He was stationed in Germany for 18 months, close to Mannheim from where both sides of his family had emigrated. David made rank E-5. After returning ➡

➡ announced that he was speaking specifically to students, but that others could listen. Focusing on Jesus' interaction with individuals, he noted that Jesus doesn't drive; He doesn't de-



Rev. John Manley

mand as much as He invites. His way of operating is to draw people into a relationship with Himself.

Working through various events in the book of John, he showed how Jesus invited the spiritually inquisitive into journeys of discovery. The stories of these encounters give us insight into our own circumstances and show how Jesus is perfectly able to address all of our questions and solve all of our problems.

Consider the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-12). When the best plans of those charged with the supplies fail, come and see what Jesus does: He turns water into wine.



A man is lying at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15) hoping that someone will get him into the water when it is "stirred" so that he can be healed of the infirmities by which he has suffered for 38 years. Come and see! Amid brokenness, dysfunction, and hopelessness, Jesus gives

# REVIVALIST FAMILY continued

➡ from Germany, David worked at Whirlpool until his retirement in 2004.

David was a member of Findlay Bible Methodist Church where he served as a trustee, member of the building committee, Sunday school superintendent, Sunday school teacher, and maintenance person. David also led services for 38 years at Judson Palmer Home (assisted living).

David was preceded in death by his first wife, Patricia. He is survived by his wife, Ruth; two sons, Duane (Regina) and Daniel (Tina); two daughters, Teresa (Jerry) Case and Sarah (Richard) Hutchison; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandson arriving in January 2025; two brothers, Mark (Ruth) and Orlan (Sheila); sister, Carolyn (Tim) Balty; and numerous nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Findlay Bible Methodist Church with Pastor Travis Johnson and Dr. Richard Hutchison officiating. Burial followed at Lee Cemetery, Vanlue, OH, with full military rites performed by Hancock County Veterans Memorial Squad.

David was a *God's Revivalist* subscriber. Several of his descendants attended GBS: daughter Sarah (BA '97)

and her husband R.G. Hutchison (BA '98); daughter Teresa (BA '93) and her husband Jerry Case (BA '93); son Duane (1991-92) and his wife Regina (McIntosh) (BA '15); grandchildren Kaitlyn (Case) Taylor (BA '20), Caleb Case (BA '20) [and spouse Kaitlyn (Fourman) (AA '19)], Seth Thomas (2016-17), Samuel Thomas (2022), Callasandra Thomas (2022, 2024), Lauren Thomas (AA '21), Ashlynn Thomas (AA '23), Bradley Thomas (AA '24 and current student), Joshua Thomas (current student), and Josiah Thomas (current student).



**Leta Mae (Durkee) Witt**, 75, of Burlington, KY, passed away on September 20, 2024, after suffering from Alzheimer's for more than a decade. Leta was born to Ivan Daniel and Ida Ellen (Gates) Durkee on September 10, 1949, in Ft. Scott, KS. She graduated from Overland Christian High School in 1967 and continued there (Overland Park, KS) to study English at Kansas City College and Bible School (now Kansas Christian College). While in college, she worked for Hallmark Cards; she also met

the order, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." Yes, Jesus can handle longstanding problems.

A young boy has a lunch of five barley loaves and two fish while the rest of the crowd who have come to see Jesus are without any food (John 6). Come and see what Jesus does with that boy's meager lunch. Whatever you have, if you give it to Him, He can make something of it.

Rev. Manley concluded by saying to those with questions, doubts, and confusions, "Come and see!" You will have to check your pride. Nothing is too important to miss an audience with God. Bring your hard questions. Observe those who are serving Jesus—how happy and blessed they are. Don't stop until you see His face! "Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus."

We are very thankful for all the spiritual help received during the revival. These sermons are available for viewing on the school's Facebook page and are posted by date.

### OPEN AIR CAMPAIGN

For a quarter of a century, GBS has hosted an annual week of evangelism with the help of Eric Briscoe and his fellow Open Air Campaign trainers. The outreach took place from September 30 to October 3. This year we trained eight students to present adult and/or children's messages on a sketch board using watercolor

paints. The messages were "What Comes Next?" (a series of "riddles" that end with the question, "What Comes After death?") and "Who Will Be in Heaven?" (a children's message about the rich young ruler). The outreach events, in which about 40 ➡



GBS student Gray Mason helps children solve a word puzzle.

fellow student Lonnie Witt. They were married on December 19, 1970. After graduating in 1972, Leta continued working at Hallmark Cards and Lonnie finished his requirements for his BA in Missions in 1973, after which they began their missionary service in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands, where Leta taught first grade part-time.

Lucas was born in 1973. In November 1975, the family moved to Anguilla, British West Indies, where Lyle was born in 1976. They then moved to Overland Park, KS, for furlough and preparation to work in Eagle Pass. Lisa was born in 1980. The Witts returned to St. Thomas in 1986, and Leta taught in the school that her three children attended.

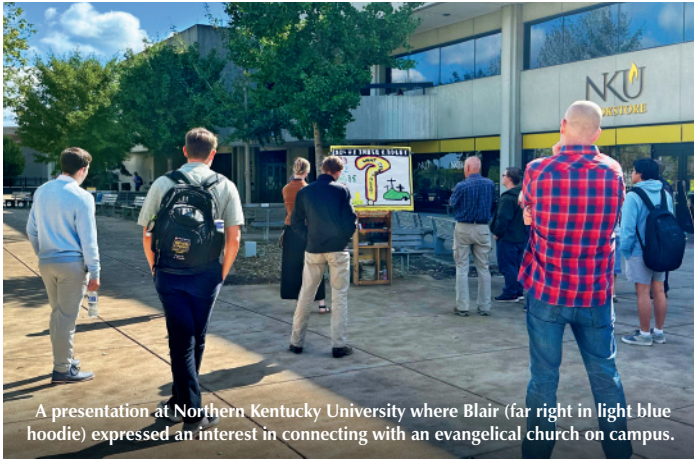
In 1989, the Witts returned from the mission field and did deputation until they moved to Fordland, MO, where Lonnie pastored. Leta accepted a teaching position at Mt. Zion Bible School and taught junior high for eight years. After leaving Fordland, the Witts moved to Overland Park, KS. Both were employed at Kansas City College and Bible School and Overland Christian

School, where Leta was the librarian. From there, they moved to Gravette, AR, where Lonnie pastored and Leta was employed by Gravette Public Schools teaching English as a second language until her retirement. The Witts moved to Burlington, KY, in 2018.

Leta was loved by her family, students, members of the congregation and community, and those whose lives she touched as a missionary.

Leta is survived by her husband, Lonnie; children, Lucas (Dorothy); Lyle (Michelle); Lisa (Aaron) Profitt; eleven grandchildren; two brothers, Dale (Eva) and Alan (Betty); as well as nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends. A memorial service was held at Burlington Bible Church, Burlington, KY.

Leta subscribed to *God's Revivalist*. Her son, Dr. Lyle Witt, chairs the Division of Professional Studies at GBS, and his wife Michelle is an adjunct professor. Leta's daughter Lisa has worked in various capacities at GBS and is currently the assistant to the Division of Professional Studies. Lisa's husband, Dr. Aaron Profitt, is Vice President for Academic Affairs. ■



A presentation at Northern Kentucky University where Blair (far right in light blue hoodie) expressed an interest in connecting with an evangelical church on campus.



GBS student Lucas Welch shares a gospel message with kids.



Children in a downtown park respond enthusiastically to student Darrell Stetler III.

➡ GBS students participated, included two trips to the University of Cincinnati, two trips to Northern Kentucky University, and several trips to downtown neighborhoods where we gathered kids together to sing, play games, and share the gospel using the sketch board.

During this time, we were able to recommend university students to solid Christian ministries on their campuses. For example, Blair, a new NKU student from

the Philippines, has a Roman Catholic background. He heard a clear presentation of the gospel and seemed very interested in connecting with an evangelical church that meets on the campus of NKU. We partner with this church to do our outreach to the campus.

GBS student Hannah Williams tells about an experience she had at UC during the week of open air ministry: "I shared the 'Basic Message of the Bible' presentation at UC. The girl I talked to had stopped to look at the riddle, so I asked her what she thought the answer was, and we talked a bit about that. Then I asked her about her thoughts on what comes after death, and from there led into sharing the diagram with her. She was interested, but not enough to have me pray with her. I found out toward the end of the presentation that she is Hindu. I gave her the presentation I drew out, and she accepted a tract, too. So I planted a seed and hope and pray that God reaches her and she responds to that."

GBS student Aaron Estes shares, "Doing the open air campaign was truly a remarkable experience and put a perspective on evangelizing that I have never seen before. I realized how many people really had no idea what the gospel message is, and it was sad to see. During the university outreach, I asked some college students what they thought happens to them after they pass away and it broke my heart to hear what they believe. But I was able to share the gospel with them, encouraging them to establish a personal relationship with Jesus. Another time I went to a children's open air service, and I had an opportunity to pray with a teenager on the sidelines and help him give his life to Christ. I want to do more open air ministry in the future."

Brian Harmon is the national field director of the Open Air Campaigners. He has been helping with our annual outreaches for about 10 years. He comments: "Praise the Lord for the hearts of the GBS students who have done the work to prepare sketches and present the gospel at UC, NKU, and the kids clubs. I've enjoyed watching the GBS students go from nervousness to joy as they present the gospel. Seeing the faces of the children smiling and looking up at you as you share the good news of Jesus makes your heart tender for these little eternal souls. The kids listen so intently to the gospel message and enjoy the one-on-one time afterwards. What a joy! Observing the interactions that GBS students are willing to engage in at the universities has also been a joy to me. Evangelism is so good for us as believers. It results in spiritual growth and intimacy with the Lord. For the lost, the message we share is the power of God for salvation to those who believe. May we all have His heart toward the lost! God has really positioned this school in the middle of the harvest fields of Cincinnati." —*Dr. Mark Bird*

## NEW COFFEE SHOP

The greatly anticipated coffee shop, dubbed “1810 Coffee,” opened on October 3, 2024. Mr. Isaac Owens was hired for the full-time position to build and begin running the coffee shop. In contrast to previous coffee shops and startups on campus, 1810 Coffee has a new location in The Commons (the resource and popular hangout/study location), as well as more options and new equipment. The idea is to create a service that provides a satisfying experience in specialty coffees to the staff, students, and visitors on campus.

Mr. Owens has more than a decade of experience at Cincinnati’s Coffee Emporium, beginning as a barista and working his way up to management in training and quality control. He really enjoys interacting with the people on campus, getting to know the student body as well as the culture of GBS. The most common drinks that have



been ordered so far are the classic vanilla latte and a variety of frappes. For non-coffee drinkers, there is a chai option and an upcoming possibility of an additional tea assortment. Staff and faculty are supplied with a complimentary pot of coffee to keep them caffeinated and calm!

—*Isaac England, college sophomore, Revivalist Press assistant*

## NEW EMPLOYEES

### Staff



**Jonathan and Jalena Glick**, Chapel Music / Media Director and PR group advisors. Jonathan’s parents, Jerald (BA ’83) and Rebecca (Burruss) (1979-83) Glick, are both GBS alumni. From



his childhood, Jonathan was in song evangelism with his family. He was also involved in construction for many years, including with Midwest Property Logistics, Fishers, IN, from 2014 to 2024. Jonathan and Jalena (Arnett) both graduated from Union Bible College in 2011, each with a BA in Sacred Music. They were married in December 2011 and were involved in song evangelism together. They were church music ministers for eight-and-a-half years (2011-20) at the Pilgrim Holiness Church, New Castle, IN, and, most recently, they are music directors of Wesleyan Evangelistic Church, Dayton, OH. The Glicks have three sons: Judson (9), Johnston (6), and Janson (20 months). They moved to GBS from Anderson, IN.



**Arlette Makcen**, High School Administrative Assistant. Arlette (BA ’05) moved from part-time to full time in this position. She is

married to Tim (BA ’06) who worked at GBS in student recruitment (2006-10) before moving to Aldersgate Christian Academy, first as a teacher (2010-17) and then as principal (2017-present). The Makcens have four children: Aliyah Estelle (10), Abella Kate (8), Alivia Hope (6), and Tristan Alexander-Gregory (4).



**Katie Marsh**, Dean of Women. Katie graduated from Allegheny Wesleyan College in 2015 with a BA in pastoral ministries. She remained at AWC, working in several capacities: PR secretary and recruiter (2015-23), faculty (2020-24), and dean of students (2023-24). She also completed an MA in Christian Ministry from Liberty University (Lynchburg, VA) in 2020. She came to GBS from Salem, OH.



**Isaac Owens**, Coffee Shop Manager. Isaac attended GBS 2007-11 and 2017. Isaac worked as a barista and then as a barista training manager at Cincinnati’s Coffee Emporium for over 10 years. He then spent several years working in remodeling and trim carpentry with two local carpentry businesses, most recently with Steve Miller Construction. In 2018 he married Stephanie Hoffpaur (BA ’15) who has worked for GBS in several capacities since graduating, currently as the director of library services (since 2017). The Owenses have a son, Hudson (3). Isaac’s mother, Dawn (Schenck) Owens is a GBS graduate (BA, ’75) who also was Music Director and faculty member in 1975-76. His two siblings also attended GBS: Seth (2007-09) and Rachel (2011-13).



**Shannon Rose**, Assistant Cook. Since her graduation from Union Bible College (AA ’92), Shannon has held various positions: Director

of Food Services at both Hobe Sound Bible College and Union Bible College; camp cook, caterer, and operations assistant at UBC. She brings this wealth of kitchen experience and a deep love for young people to GBS where she will be working closely with Katrina Rehfeldt, Director of Cafeteria Services. Shannon and her husband Greg have four adult children: Luke, Levi, Lincoln, and Lauren.



**Grant Sackett**, IT Help Desk.

Grant is a 2023 graduate of Aldersgate Christian Academy. He has recently worked for Dollar General as cashier, customer assistant, stock boy, etc.

Both of his parents attended GBS: His dad, Nathan Sackett in 2000-01; and his mother, Angie (McIntyre) Sackett from 1999-01. She worked as the GBS receptionist in the Standley Administration Building and later as high school secretary for the academy.



**Nate Witt**, Music Office Manager.

Nate graduated in 2024 from Union Bible College with two bachelor degrees: BA in Sacred Music and BA in Youth Ministry. He is from Westfield, IN. Nate is the nephew of Dr. Lyle Witt,

chair of the Division of Professional Studies, and Lisa (Witt) Profitt. Nate comes to us from Westfield, IN.

**Academy Faculty**



**Alyssa Davis**, third grade teacher.

Alyssa (Butler) Davis, originally from West Terre Haute, IN, came to GBS and received her BA in Elementary Education in 2024. Alyssa married Connor Davis (AA '22) in 2023. Con-

nor worked on GBS Security (2019-21) and has been a Facility Maintenance Technician since 2021.



**Lisa Robison**, fifth grade teacher.

Lisa had recently served as part-time secondary administrative assistant (afternoon). She graduated from GBS in 2005 with a BA in Music Education.

Lisa is married to Jeremy Robison (AA '05; BA '09) and they have three children: Ava (13), Jay (12), and Kyle (10).



**Dasha Sobie**, first grade teacher.

Although Dasha was born in Ohio, she moved to Ukraine with her missionary family when she was very young, so she also counts Ukraine as home. She returned to the U.S. to enroll at GBS and graduated with a BA in Early Elementary Education in 2024. ■



## EXCITING NEWS FOR OUR ESTEEMED INVESTORS!

Dear Fellow Investors in the Heavenly Kingdom,

We are thrilled to introduce our new giving website: [giving.gbs.edu](http://giving.gbs.edu)!

Our new platform is designed to be visually appealing and user-friendly, providing quick and pertinent information on our current projects. Whether you wish to become a business sponsor for a tax write-off or prefer to give as an individual, we have made the process easy and straightforward.

While you can still send in a check or call us with your information, our new online giving option offers convenience and efficiency. The system will automatically generate an immediate receipt for your gift, ensuring you have proof of your donation right away. Additionally, it will create a personal account for you, allowing you to print an annual giving report for tax purposes at the end of the year.

If you see a campaign on the landing page that you would like to support, simply click on it, and you will be taken directly to the giving option.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support.

Happy Giving!

Michael Yancey, Jr.  
Director of Donor Development





# GOD SENT THREE RESCUERS TO MY WORKPLACE

by David Wilson

The Root Beer Stand on Reading Road in Sharonville, OH, a suburb of Cincinnati, as it appears today, across the street from what used to be the General Motors parts warehouse.

Life was considerably different in the late 1960s. Gas was around 20 cents a gallon, the minimum wage was \$1.60 per hour, and a large root beer was 15 cents at the Root Beer Stand where I had been working for two-and-a-half years. That was where I was introduced to Valerie by a mutual friend, Nancy, one of the carhops. We began dating, and our relationship grew. Meanwhile, as our high school year progressed into late spring, my parents went through a major crisis, and my father chose to leave our home, devastating my mother. It was also around this time that Valerie became pregnant. Can anyone say, “Complicated”?

On Friday, July 18, 1969, we stood in front of a preacher with my best man, Rick, and Valerie’s bridesmaid, Nancy, next to us, and our families behind us. A grand total of 13 people were present as Valerie and I nervously repeated our vows and were pronounced husband and wife. She was 17 and I was 18 years old. Valerie and I moved in with my mom and sister for the next 18 months.

I was still working at the Root Beer Stand in the evenings and was now looking for a full-time job, but with no success. Just across the street from the stand was the General Motors Parts Division. Each evening at 8:00 p.m. the second shift workers took their “lunch” break. I knew a few of the guys from high school. When they told me that GM was hiring full time, I went for an interview and was hired. On August 12, 1969, I began working for \$3.92 an hour, with full benefits—including maternity after 90 days!

Shortly thereafter, I was informed that I would be moved to second shift. I was also warned about three

crazy “preachers” on that shift who would try to get me “saved.” I wasn’t in the least bit worried and actually looked forward to debating them. They were all students at God’s Bible School. Jim Barton, a “calculated thinker,” would frequently bring textbooks to work. He would usually—and annoyingly—discuss rather than debate. Phil Delamarter was the bright, perky “people person.” Fair-haired, with bright blue eyes and a beaming smile, he was always lively and positive. And then there was Dale Chisenhall. With slicked-back brown hair and piercing blue eyes, he walked with a confident swagger. On occasion, when I would see him approaching, I would say, “Hey, Dale...how’s it going?” He would reply, “Bless God, brother Dave, if I were doing any better, there’d have to be two of me!”

All three of them were newly married and, through the providence of God, ended up at the General Motors Parts Division where they began praying they would have the joy of seeing a hard, crusty sinner named David Wilson come to know Christ.

They were “different” for sure, but approachable. A few of my buddies and I would occasionally get into spirited discussions with them. According to Phil, I loved to throw my shoulders back while talking loudly, citing this author and that one, this philosopher and that one. My friends would come out of the aisles to listen, laugh at them, and express their support for me.

Over the next eighteen months, life became “interesting.” Our son was born in March of 1970. Valerie, who had been “kicked out” of high school, completed her

education at night school and graduated with her class. She was an excellent mother, cheerfully and lovingly caring for our son. I, on the other hand, commenced on a downward spiral of selfishness and some very stupid decisions. Several buddies had me convinced that “fulfillment” could only be found outside of my marriage and home. It was the same lie my father had chosen to follow.

In the fall of 1970, thanks to the generosity of General Motors in paying half of the tuition, I enrolled at the University of Cincinnati. Shortly after that, my wife, son, and I moved into our own apartment. Juggling a family and full-time job while attending college and engaging in “other pursuits” required me to learn the “art” of time management.

Meanwhile, back at the warehouse in the spring of 1971, I was promoted to the packing department. After a few weeks of training, I would gradually be on my own with better pay and a private workstation. As my supervisor escorted me to meet my trainer, I heard a familiar voice: “Well, hello, brother Dave!” It was “Bless-God Dale.” It took me a few minutes to recover. But as we worked together, I began to learn more about Dale’s past. His father, an alcoholic, would frequently beat him. Dale grew into a brawling, heavy-drinking womanizer.

I was absolutely stunned and asked, “So why are you like you are now?”

As he stooped down to attach a label to a brake drum, he said, “Well...I was born again. I surrendered my heart to Christ, and it totally changed me.”

I will never forget that moment as long as I live. It was as if God had lifted blinders from my eyes. All the desire I had for debating ceased, and all I wanted was to discover what changed Dale.

I had decided to go to a weekend rock concert with my best man Rick and his girlfriend. It was Mother’s Day weekend, and I left my wife and son to travel two hours to the concert to seek “fulfillment.” As I later learned, there were three young preachers who were back at home “praying their hearts out” for me.

Inventory week was around that time and you might guess who I was teamed with to count parts in the same aisle for most of the week: Jim, Phil, and Dale! As

we counted parts, we also talked. God was using them to work on my heart.

One day when the reliability of the Bible came up, Phil asked, “David, have you ever read the Bible?”

I gagged and said that I had no time for fables and fiction.

Phil countered with, “It surprises me that a man of your intelligence, an avid reader, has never read the Bible, the top seller for the last five centuries.”

I scoffed again. Phil then challenged me to read the Bible, and if I still believed there was nothing to it, he would no longer argue with me. When I refused, Phil challenged me to read just the New Testament. I refused each of his challenges, including reading just the Gospel of John; then just one chapter, John 3.

Phil climbed down from the bins where he was counting, looked me in the eyes and said, “When you get home tonight, find a Bible and turn to John chapter three and read verse 16. Before you read it, I want you to say these words: ‘O God, if there is a God, help me to understand what I am about to read.’ Then read the verse as many times as you wish. Wait five minutes and then pray, ‘O God, if there is a God, please help me understand what I just read.’”

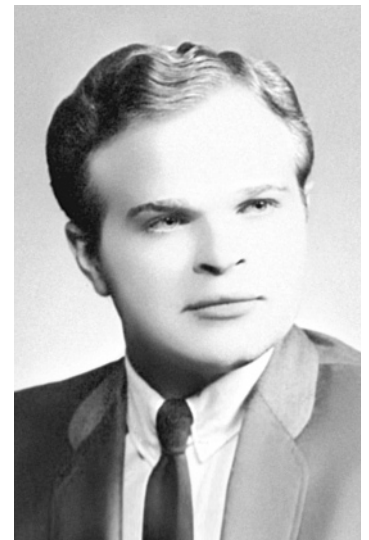
I finally agreed to the last challenge. The truth of the matter was that, notwithstanding my seeming belligerence, for some time I had considered praying and asking God to “save me.” A few times while driving home from work I had prayed expecting to hear a “voice” or have some feeling, but nothing happened. I had tried to read Valerie’s Bible on several occasions, but found it “dry” and boring. However, I was not surrendering my heart to Christ. It was as if I were walking around a swimming pool just dipping my toes in the water, but not actually jumping in. I was about to learn the difference between praying and total surrender.

The next day when I arrived at work, I was full of questions. The previous night I had lost track of time and read several books from the Bible. This continued for a period of days. Near the end of one shift, I walked up to Phil and told him, “I don’t think I can live like you guys.”

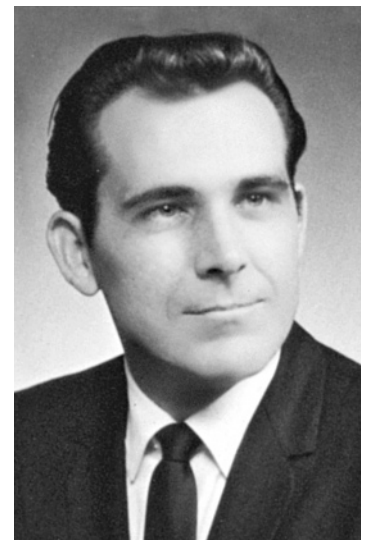
Phil replied, “Davey, I promise you that when you trust Christ as your Savior



JIM BARTON, BRE '73



PHILIP DELAMARTER, ThB '71



DALE CHISENHALL, BRE '73



you will be able to do anything you want because God will give you new desires.”

I thought for a few seconds and then said, “I’m also concerned about what my friends will think.”

He replied, “I also promise you that for every friend you lose—and you will lose some—you will gain ten who will be as close or closer to you than family.”

At the end of the shift, we all clocked out and walked to my car. As I got in, Phil asked if they could pray for me. I said, “Yes,” and bowed my head. As Phil prayed, I peeked up at Dale as he leaned over my open car door with his head bowed. I watched as tears ran down his face and dripped from his nose to the ground. I was amazed at the love and concern they had for me.

I pulled into my mother’s driveway (we were visiting her that weekend), turned off the engine and lights, and just sat there deep in thought. I bowed my head. This time I was determined and ready to “take the plunge” and surrender everything.

I prayed, “I don’t even know who You are. I don’t know if You even exist. But these preachers say You do, and I want whatever it is that they have. I will do anything You want me to do. I will stop doing anything You want me to stop. I will also stay married to Valerie.”

I continued praying in complete surrender for several minutes, until I was startled by the porch light coming on and hearing my mother’s familiar voice calling out, “Dave, are you OK?”

Assuring her that I was fine, I got out of the car, shut the door and just stood there for a few seconds, feeling no different and hearing no heavenly voice. I assumed I had failed again. I took a shower and went down to the family room to be alone. I fumbled through the bookshelves, searching until I found the small Bible that my Grandma Wilson had given me for my tenth birthday. I started to read—but this time the book “came alive.” The more I read, the more amazed and excited I became. With my heart pounding in my throat, I paced the floor. As I read, I would also whisper an excited shout, “It’s true! What these preachers have been telling me is true!”

I could have read all night, but I decided to go to bed around 4:30 in the morning. I did the same thing on Saturday and Sunday. As I drove to work on Monday, I had more joy and peace within me than I knew was possible. However, I still did not think I had been “born-again,” as Dale had once described salvation to me.

Toward the end of the shift, I worked up the courage to talk to Jim. “I’ve been asking the Lord to save me, and He won’t do it.”

Trying his best to keep from laughing, Jim asked, “Did you mean it?”

“Well, I sure did Friday night,” I replied.

He took a few steps back to his workbench and picked up one of the textbooks he had brought to work. He opened it and pointed to a Bible verse he wanted me

to read. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

He asked, “Would ‘whosoever’ include you?”

I said, “Well, yes, I suppose so.”

“So what did you do when you prayed?”

I said, “I guess I called upon the name of the Lord.”

Jim then asked, “And what does it say will happen to you when you do that.”

“Well, I suppose I shall be saved.”

He continued, “Can God lie?”

I said, “No, I suppose He can’t.”

Jim said, “You just need to trust what God promises.”

After considering that for a few seconds, I turned to one of my good buddies named Tony, who had been pretending not to listen, and I said, “Tony, as of this moment, I consider myself to be a born-again Christian.”

A few days later, when I walked in the back door of the Parts Division and clocked in, Dale and Phil were there waiting. The afternoon sun was shining through the door, as I went toward them.

I said, “I have something really important to tell you guys!”

They replied, “We already know what it is. Christ now lives in you!”

I asked, “How do you know that?”

They said it was because the shine on my face told them that I was a totally different man.

My preacher friends gave me a new Bible. I began to take a deep and loving interest in both my wife and son, and I began to share my new-birth experience with Valerie. As spring turned to summer, I would find myself on my knees in my study, begging God to save Valerie like He had saved me. I began to attend church, and Valerie would occasionally go with me. Finally, in September, after seeing that the change in me was real, I had the privilege and joy to pray with her as she also received Christ as her Savior. Since that time, Christ has been the center of our marriage and home. We have also been wonderfully blessed to see our children trust Christ as their Savior as well.

I will be forever grateful for those three young preachers who God sent into my life to bring me to Him! ■

*David Wilson has been in sales for most of his life, from Dannon Yogurt to business telephone systems. He and his wife Valerie are active in their church in Milan, IN, and they reside in Versailles, IN. The Wilsons have 4 children and 13 grandchildren, all of whom are following Christ.*

*Epilogue: After sharing my testimony at a family gathering about six years ago, my daughters began trying to locate the men who had led me to the Lord. It took a few months, but they found all three! Our family Christmas gathering that year was at the home of my oldest daughter. Imagine my surprise, as I entered the house, to find Dale Chisenhall there! After the initial shock, I learned that we would also be visiting with Phil and Jim via computer! After our remote online visit, our children and their spouses enjoyed a meal with Dale. What a wonderful gift and a heartfelt reunion that I will never forget! —DW*

## Dear Phil

### IS IT WRONG TO ELOPE?

*I was discussing marriage with a fellow Christian, and we began delving into the subject of getting married via eloping. I have believed that eloping is non-biblical; but, when reading the Bible, I was unable to uncover why we get married within the church and not in courthouses. And if a couple elopes in a courthouse, would they still be married in the eyes of God? —Daniel*

Dear Daniel,

When I checked the Merriam-Webster Dictionary online, it said, “Elope’s meaning is shifting towards [to have] ‘a small destination wedding’ whereas it used to mean ‘to run away and secretly get married,’ and before that ‘for a married woman to run away with a new lover,’ and even before that it just meant ‘to escape or run away’ without the romantic context” (<https://tinyurl.com/eelope>). I assume you meant “to get married secretly, especially without parental consent.”

Honoring our parents matters to God (Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:1-3). It is unclear how excluding parents from such a key life decision could honor them. Admittedly, I just read of a Muslim father who planned to murder his daughter since she had become a Christian. She escaped and married a Christian without her parents’ knowledge or consent. But, outside of contexts like that, eloping to circumvent one’s parents is nearly always dishonoring. I would urge couples to marry only with their parents’ blessing.

God created and sanctified the first marriage (Gen. 2:22-25)—the

union of one man and one woman for life (Rom. 7:1-3; Matt. 19:4-6). Marriage is profoundly significant. Socially, it forms the core of the family, one of three structures ordained by God to govern society. No society survives long if its marriages don’t survive. Theologically, marriage prefigures the Church’s relationship to Christ. It models the loving relationship God wants with each believer. Practically, it provides partnership in fulfilling God’s purposes. It is His plan for humanity’s growth and development.

According to Scripture, after Adam and Eve, marriages were instituted by parents (e.g., Isaac & Rebekah; Jacob & Leah) or by the couple (e.g., Ruth & Boaz; David & Abigail). Scripture also teaches that God is a party to the marriage covenant. Proverbs 2:17 describes the adulterous woman as someone “who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God.” Thus, marriage appears to be a three-member covenant, with God as both witness and member. When that covenant is broken by wrongful divorce, He is an offended party (Mal. 2:14-17).

From these biblical accounts we learn that marriage predates civil government. Marriage, therefore, is not inherently dependent upon the state or civil authority. That is, one does not need state approval or sanction to get married. Don’t hear what I’m not saying. Where the government requires a license to be married, we must get a marriage license because we obey every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake (1 Pet. 2:13). But we should be clear. The state’s recognition of marriage for governmental purposes is distinct from the basis for marriage. Marriage neither depends on nor is defined by the state.

If marriage is older than the state, it is certainly older than the Church. It came before the first sacrifice, before the first priest, before the tabernacle or the Temple. In other words, neither the church nor the state is necessary for marriage. Don’t misunderstand me. I’m not at all suggesting that Christians should dispense with church-blessed weddings. God forbid! I certainly oppose hasty or ill-considered marriages! Paul couldn’t be clearer when he says that believers should marry only “in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39). As a “picture prophecy” of Christ’s ultimate relationship with the Church, celebrating this sacred covenant with and before the church is especially appropriate.

Nonetheless, at its core a marriage is a man and a woman committing before God to live in an exclusive relationship of love, respect, and trust with one another. Getting married is really a profound act of worship. It doesn’t have to be big, expensive, or formal. However, pleasing God, worshiping Christ, and honoring parents should drive how one chooses to be married.

Blessings,  
Phil ■

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

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## student focus

### TURMOIL AND DEATH IN HAITI

Haiti has been in turmoil for a number of years, intensified by the assassination of President Moïse in July 2021. This led to armed gangs running rampant and cooperating with each other to capitalize on the political unrest. They now control 90% of the capital and have blocked access to Port-au-Prince and the city's main port of entry for receiving goods into the country. The catastrophic gang violence led the UN to initiate new elections and bring in a peacekeeping mission led mainly by Kenyan police officers.

Christian missionaries working in Haiti have been targeted by the gangs who rely on kidnappings to make money through ransoms. In May, missionaries Natalie and Davy Lloyd, who had been working for Missions in Haiti since 2022, were ambushed and fatally shot by gang members. Pray for the violence and instability to subside in Haiti.

### CHRISTIAN TEACHER WINS COURT BATTLE

After Vivian Geraghty was hired to be a full-time English teacher in the Jackson Local School District of northern Ohio, she was ordered by the district to use a student's "preferred pronouns." As a Christian she felt she could not do that as that "would force her to embrace the concept of gender identity against her religious belief that God created two unchanging sexes,

male and female." Therefore, she resigned and sued the district. The federal court subsequently ruled that the school district had violated the First Amendment rights of this Christian teacher. This is considered both a victory for free speech and for religious liberty.

### GEN Z IS PRAYING

The Barna Group reported that members of Gen Z may be open to some spiritual traditions. Studies show that 64% of this group, born between 1997 and 2012 (age range of 12 to 27 years old), report having prayed to God within the last seven days. However, only 37% say that they read from the Bible in the last week and only 36% report having attended a church service in that same period.

### GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

The new conservative Global Methodist Church, emerging from the United Methodist Church split, has shared its vision and mission. *Vision Statement:* "Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the Global Methodist Church envisions multiplying disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the earth who flourish in scriptural holiness as we worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly." *Mission Statement:* "The Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe." ■

**KATHRYN BROWN** came to GBS from Alabama. She became a Christ-follower when she was four years old and since then has "always wanted to love and serve God." She was homeschooled, using the Classical Conversations curriculum. She loves to hike; spend time with her family and her miniature Schnauzer, Zelda; ice skate; and write poetry and fiction.

In addition to helping her grow in her relationship with God, GBS has made it possible for her to make new friends. One of her favorite things about GBS is that she is "getting to meet so many people who have a heart for Christ." Kathryn's ministry dream is to "use my gift of creative writing to impact people for Christ." She is working toward a BA in Integrative Studies. Since GBS is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Collegiate Connection, she is able to take classes at other GC3 institutions at no extra cost. After graduation, Kathryn is committed to do "whatever God wants me to do." ■

*Seventy-five percent of our students receive some form of financial aid which enables them to attend GBS. If you would like to support students with financial needs, you may send a gift to:*

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

*or give online anytime at*  
**[www.gbs.edu/givenow](http://www.gbs.edu/givenow)**



## — Called Unto Holiness —

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

### WHY SOME PEOPLE FAIL TO SEE AND OBTAIN THE GREAT BLESSING

*by Beverly Carradine*

One cause [of why people fail to see and obtain the great blessing] is the lack of a clear, definite preaching on the subject. It is remarkable, when this doctrine is properly presented, what a flame of holy fire begins to burn at once in many hearts, and how many enter into the gracious experience. On the other hand, the work declines when the pulpit becomes silent. So it blazed in the time of Wesley and Asbury, who constantly pressed it, and so it declined for forty or fifty years because the preachers were silent; and so it swelled again and rolled on in the time of such men as Finney and Inskip, who enjoyed and urged it on the people.

In a large Southern city two persons possessed the blessing of sanctification for twenty-five years or more, but they did not proclaim it, and the pulpits were silent at the same time, and there was not a single additional sanctification. But a few years ago, a preacher conducted a revival meeting at that place, presented the doctrine, and some forty people at once swept into the blessing. This remarkable revival or languishing of the experience conditional upon the faithful preaching and witnessing of God's servants is not to be used as an argument against the strength or divinity of the doctrine. The fact is that the same thing prevails in regard to every doctrine. The knowledge of justification by faith died out in the Church because not preached; and there are many doubters today in regard to the doctrine of hell, because we lack the tender, tearful, solemn, and awful preaching that brings conviction.

Two facts have forcibly impressed us. One is that a general kind of preaching on sanctification—or when it is presented as a far-away attainment, as being a vague, endlessly progressive work—that such preaching never awakens opposition, never seems to move the people, and never results in a case of sanctifica-

tion. The explanation of the last fact is evident. What is the use of struggling for a thing that is not to be obtained? A remarkable proof of the truth of the second work is seen in the fact that it invariably infuriates the devil, is opposed by worldly church members, awakens a great antagonism on one side and as great a hope and pursuit on the other, and results in every case in a number obtaining the blessing. The second fact is that a preacher who has not the blessing of sanctification may preach on the subject as often as he will, and two curious results will be observable. First, no one will become offended; and second, no one will obtain the blessed experience.

It is the confession of the experience that so arouses Satan. He is willing for people to declare the fact of the experience, if they will not say that they have it. This accounts for the first result in the above case. As for the second, the failure of the people to enter into the blessing under such preaching is accounted for by a fact that has always been manifest in the spiritual life, and that is that a man cannot lead or lift people higher in the divine life than he has gone himself. Let the reader look where he will, and at whom he will, and tell us what preacher who denies the doctrine of sanctification by faith can show us souls rejoicing in purity of heart and perfect love as the result of the preaching of gradual sanctification. While on the other hand there are hundreds of ministers in the land who “press the instantaneous blessing” (Wesley) who can point to two and three hundred witnesses every year. ■

***Beverly Carradine** (1848-1931) was an American Methodist minister and a leading evangelist for the holiness movement. He was a productive author, writing primarily on the subject of sanctification. This excerpt is taken from his book, *The Old Man* (Kentucky Methodist Publishing Company, 1896, pp.254-255).*

# GOD and

# Global Warming

by Garland R. Wallace

**W**e are living in changing—and sometimes frightening—days in America. Secularism continues to run rampant, invading large segments of our culture. Traditional values that used to be accepted by consensus now seem to be on a fast-track course of change. Things can get really confusing. We will not kill an endangered species, yet too many in America will kill babies in the womb. At the risk of being an alarmist, I can foresee a system that determines who is and is not allowed to live. Assisted suicide is now legal in 11 states. The day may come when elderly Alzheimer's patients are euthanized because their quality of life has diminished. Some would consider that keeping them alive is a waste of resources. Secularism is molding our culture in other areas. Let me discuss one: global warming.

The conclusion of most scientists is that the earth is getting hotter. As a Christian, I desire to respect the beautiful planet God created. But I believe the ultimate future of the earth is in the hands of God, not humans. While I realize what humans have done and are doing is affecting our planet, I know that when the God of the Bible is left out of a culture, the result is a fast track to deterioration in every area.

Here is how I see the issue: Humans are not ultimately in charge of earth. Almighty God still reigns! I do not claim to understand all that is involved in the future of our planet. Only God knows what He has planned and how human actions that affect earth's environment fit into his ultimate objective. We do know that in His

plan, the earth will be destroyed by fire, and then God will bring about a glorious re-creation.

As far as global warming is concerned, it will not end with the fulfillment of the predictions of secular minds. I know this because of what God said in Genesis after the flood of Noah's day: "I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease" (Gen. 8:21-22 NASB).

The earth will not be destroyed by man! I do not understand, nor will I attempt to predict, how all this will work out. All I know is that God is in charge, not man. As the old song says, "He's got the whole world in His hands." I do know that God will one day remake the earth in a grandeur that we cannot now imagine. In the meantime, I plan to be a good environmental steward and do what I can to take care of God's world. How can I do otherwise? Think about the Swiss Alps, the Grand Canyon, prairies of lush green, and fields of golden wheat blowing in the wind... What a beautiful earth!

Our God reigns—always has, always will. The future of the earth is in His hands. Global warming will not be the end. I will leave it to God to work out the details. ■

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

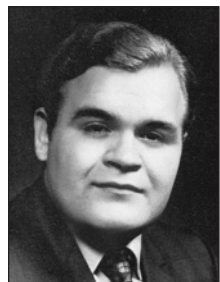


GBS alumni are encouraged to submit updates on their lives and current ministries. —KF

## JOE AND JENNY EMERT Alumni of the Year

by Jack Hooker, GBS trustee,  
Alumni Relations Committee Chair

The Rev. William Emert, a GBS alumnus, completed the Christian Workers Course in 1949. He went on to have a very successful career in Christian radio. He owned two radio stations in Pennsylvania and received the National Religious Broadcasters Milestone Award in 1998. His son, Joe Emert, followed in his father's footsteps. He began his own radio career while in high school. Expressing an interest in the technology of the day, at a young age Joe began learning what radio was all about—"spinning records," "on-air hosting," and discovering the "tricks" of the trade. After high school, Joe also came to GBS for college. During his time on campus,



Joe served as Director of Broadcasting (1972-75) and produced the school's weekly radio program, which was heard on numerous radio stations across the U.S.

During this time, Joe noticed, and began dating, Jenny Ogg (1970-72), another GBS student, a farm girl from northwestern Ohio. After their marriage in 1972, Jenny served

as Assistant Secretary to the President (1972-73) and as Assistant Dean of Women (1973-74). Meanwhile, Joe graduated with a Bachelor of Religious Education in 1974, and then he took graduate classes in communications at the University of Cincinnati. Joe became the News and Program Director at WDBA in DuBois, PA, in 1975. Then he moved



FAR LEFT: GBS Yearbook photos of Joe Emert and Jenny Ogg.

TOP: The Emerts in Papua New Guinea with former prime minister, Sam Abal.

LEFT: Receiving the "Milestone Award" at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention, Dallas, TX, June 2021, for 50 years of Christian radio broadcasting.

ABOVE: Joe Emert "at home" in his radio studio.

on to WTLR in State College, PA, where he advanced to serve as General Manager. Continuing to grow in experience, he and Jenny moved back to Cincinnati in 1985, where Joe became the General Manager of WAKW. During this time, he also served as President of the GBS Alumni Association and a member of the Board of Trustees.

In the summer of 1989, having been recruited by Moody Broadcasting (Moody Bible Institute), Joe moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to become the General Manager of WAFS. During this season of his life, he also assisted Dr. Michael Youssef as Executive Director of the new, nationwide, "Leading The Way" radio ministry. In 1993 he and Jenny founded Life Radio Ministries, Inc. to assist Christian radio stations around the world. In 1997, Joe began serving full-time as president of Life Radio Ministries, and Jenny served as business manager.

As a result of his passion for local radio, they applied for and received the FCC construction permit to build radio station WMVV and put NewLife Radio on the air, April 16, 1995. A second FM station was constructed in Georgia 12 years later. During this time, Joe also co-founded Wantok Radio Light in Papua New Guinea. Over numerous trips he assisted in the construction of nine FM radio stations in that country. The network has now grown to 26 radio stations. After serving as president for 25 years, Joe recently stepped into the chairman's role for Life Radio Ministries, where he continues to provide both counsel and leadership advice.

The National Religious Broadcasters recognizes members of the broadcasting community with the "Milestone Award" for 50 years of broadcasting in Christian radio. Multi-generational awardees are rare, and both Joe and his father are GBS alumni. The Milestone Award was presented to Joe at the organization's convention in Dallas, TX, June 2021.

Joe and Jenny have been married for 52 years and have four sons, four daughters-in-law, and 15 grandchildren. For more than 50 Years of broadcasting the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world, along with the NRB and Life Radio Ministries, God's Bible School and College says to its alumni, "THANK YOU, JOE AND JENNY for your faithful leadership and dedication to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is fitting that the Alumni Relations Committee of the GBS Board of Trustees presents the 2024 Alumni of the Year Award to Joe and Jenny Emert!" ■

*The presentation of the alumni-of-the-year award was made during the keynote service of Homecoming, Friday, October 11, 2024. Full coverage of that event will be featured in the next issue of God's Revivalist.*



by Sonja Vernon

## TREASURES

***"And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'" —Mt. 13:52 (ESV)***

Recently, I've been revisiting books from my childhood. The stories are like old friends, but I've observed that reading them as an adult allows me to notice things I didn't see as a child. The books that made me weep with laughter as a youngster still bring me joy today, but sometimes for different reasons. It's as if the authors realized these books would be read aloud, and both parents and children were part of their audience. When we read, we bring ourselves to the text. We filter things through the lens of our life experiences and current beliefs. As we grow and change, so does our lens.

When reading God's Word, it is important to note that, while it is God's unchanging truth, our ability to absorb that truth is directly affected by the lens through which we view it. However, two other wonderful things are also true. First, the Word is enlivened to us by the Holy Spirit. We don't read alone! Second, reading Scripture transforms us, honing our lens so we notice new and deeper riches as we dive into its depths. Jesus said that Kingdom disciples possess both old and precious truth as well as new and valuable insight. The Bible is a bottomless storehouse of priceless treasure, and the more we mine, the greater our passion for what it holds. This Thanksgiving season, would you join me in praising our self-giving God for the gift of His Word? ■

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

# Good News

A MUSICAL DRAMA

PRESENTED BY

God's Bible School & College AND Aldersgate Christian Academy

Dec. 6 AT 7:30 PM

Dec. 8 AT 6:00 PM

Adcock Chapel

GBSC CAMPUS  
FREE TICKETS REQUIRED

PRE-SHOW MUSIC BEGINS  
1 HOUR BEFORE PROGRAM

FREE CHILDCARE AND  
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

Dec. 7 AT 6:30 PM

The Answers Center

THE ARK ENCOUNTER  
NO TICKETS REQUIRED  
DOORS OPEN AT 6:00 PM

FREE ADMISSION TO PARK  
AT 4:00 PM

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