

GOD'S REVIVALIST

March 2018

and Bible Advocate



JESUS CHRIST
DECLARED WITH POWER
TO BE THE
SON OF GOD
BY THE
RESURRECTION
FROM THE DEAD
ROMANS 1:4

Then Came
Easter!
by Glenn D. Black, p.14



about this issue

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

I grew up knowing about God. It was just part of being the son of Elmer and Betty Farmer. When my parents were attending GBS, I was right there with them, preaching at the hallway railing post of our second floor apartment while mother recorded me on our Wallensak reel-to-reel tape recorder. I ended one sermon with the announcement that “the air was going off.”

Into my teen years, every revival saw “little Kenny” getting back to God. I wanted to do right, but follow-through was lacking. As I grew older, trips to the altar lessened. Things went further downhill through my high school and initial college years. However, even during my lowest points when I was in the military, I still had a knowledge of God. One night as I lay on my bed, God spoke to me. I was acutely aware that all I needed to do to turn my life around was to say a simple “yes” to Jesus. But I chose not to.

After discharge I returned home intent on respecting my parents. Two weeks later, my father asked me to go to a revival with him. I am not sure why I agreed, but I did. The evangelist asked those who were interested in getting right with God to raise their hand for prayer. I thought, “That’s the least I can do.” I barely managed to keep my composure.

Several days later, I awakened in the middle of the night thinking I was dying (severe conviction). I made a deal with God—keep me alive until the next service and I would get saved. That day came, but it was a communion service. “Good!” I thought. “No one gets saved during such a service!” The congregation began singing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.” Those words sank deep into my soul. Conviction gripped me. As I struggled to keep things together, my mother looked at me and asked, “Kenny, do you want to go to the altar?” I don’t think I said anything, but I immediately left my seat and made my way to the front.

Now, I know that personal experiences are just that—personal. But let me tell you what happened when my knees touched the floor. I was saved! Immediately I got to my feet, crying and hugging people.

My knowledge of God had been radically changed. Instantly! And so was I. I didn’t just know *about* God, I had begun to know Him in a real and very personal way. I knew that He was now *my* God!

Enjoy the issue!—KF ■

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God’s Revivalist and Bible Advocate (ISSN 0745-0788) is published monthly except for combined issues in January-February and June-July-August for **\$12.00 per year (\$28.00, Canada; \$60.00, other countries)** by the Revivalist Press of God’s Bible School, College and Missionary Training Home, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Periodical postage paid at Cincinnati, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER: send address changes to God’s Revivalist and Bible Advocate, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.**

God’s Revivalist and Bible Advocate, the official organ of God’s Bible School, is a magazine founded by Martin Wells Knapp in July of 1888. We seek to proclaim the good news of salvation; to stir a revival spirit among Christians; to stimulate Christian growth and responsible Christian living; to present the happenings and interests of God’s Bible School.

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COVER: Photo by Kevin Moser of the Garden Tomb (Gordon’s Calvary), Jerusalem, Israel.

the president's page



IMAGE OF GOD

by Rodney Loper, President

Can you know a person without having a mental image of that person? If you think about someone important in your life, what comes to your mind?

The information that we glean from people we see and interact with on a regular basis informs our mental image of them. The more we are around a person, the more accurate is our mental image of that person. For example, a husband and wife, after spending a great deal of time together, can finish each other's sentences or order each other's favorite entrée at a restaurant. For someone less known to us, such as the Queen of England, we have far less information and, therefore, a far less accurate mental image. Does Her Majesty like the color green? Does she enjoy eating shrimp? Does she like horses? What is her favorite breakfast food? Your best friend can answer all of these questions about you, but I venture to guess that very few know the Queen's preferences.

What then about our mental image of God—the One whom we have never seen? We have far less experiential information about God, and, as a result, we have far more room to imagine Him. If this is true, then what we do know about God, or perhaps what we *can* know about God, is of utmost importance!

C.S. Lewis in *A Grief Observed* says unscriptural images of God are idols. If we have wrong ideas about Him, we are in effect worshipping a god made in our own image instead of the true God. I wonder if having a wrong image of God also allows us to think we “control” Him. A.W. Tozer says that too often we have a “well behaved God”—a God who is well managed by our image of Him. He therefore can only work according to our expectations and is relegated to operate as we intend.

To accept a wrong image of God is to commit idolatry. This statement may make you really nervous, but it is an honest assessment of the problem.

Readers, if your concept of God does not line up and harmonize with Scripture, *you are committing idolatry!* As a result, you have a false estimate of what God delights in and what He demands.

If your image of God is that of an easygoing grandfather-in-the-sky who never gets upset, never says no, always gives you what you ask for, never disciplines, and never has a negative admonition, you will likely live a very “loose” Christian life. If your image of God is that of an austere, distant, demanding, overbearing, rigorous disciplinarian who is constantly looking to take His anger out on someone, your Christian walk will likely lack the joy of the Lord. Unfortunately, I have counseled people in both situations.

Friends, it is essential that your mental image of God is that of the God revealed in the Bible. This is why it is paramount that you make Bible study a regular part of your life—so that accurate information guides your knowledge about God.

While doing research for this article, I discovered information about a rare condition known as aphantasia. Persons afflicted with this disorder cannot produce mental pictures. If they are asked to imagine walking on a sandy beach as the sun is setting, they simply can’t do it—they don’t see a thing. One researcher asked an aphantasiac to describe his fiancée. He said, “She has brunette hair in a knot at the base of her neck.” Although he had no ability to picture her in his mind, he had memorized these facts about her appearance after having been with her that morning.

Most of us are not lacking the God-given gift of imagination. We can conjure up all sorts of images in our mind’s eye, some based on reality and some not. When it comes to our understanding of God, however, it is imperative that our image of Him is based on truth. I for one choose to allow the Word of God to control my view of God. ■

GEORGE W. LOPER, Jr., 65, of Franklin, OH, father of GBS President Rodney S. Loper, passed away January 10, 2018, at Miami Valley Hospital. He was born in Dayton, OH, on March 30, 1952, to the late George and Thelma (Setters) Loper.

The home where he grew up was originally designed to be a church, but the congregation ran out of money and the building was never finished. Eventually, a few walls were added to make it into a home. His father, George Sr., worked for General Motors. George Jr. attended Fairborn schools through both elementary and high school. Immediately after his graduation in 1970, he also was hired by General Motors. He and his mother Thelma attended the Wesleyan Holiness Church in Dayton, OH. Although George Sr. was a good man, he wasn’t a Christian and, therefore, did not attend church with them. At that time, the church partici-

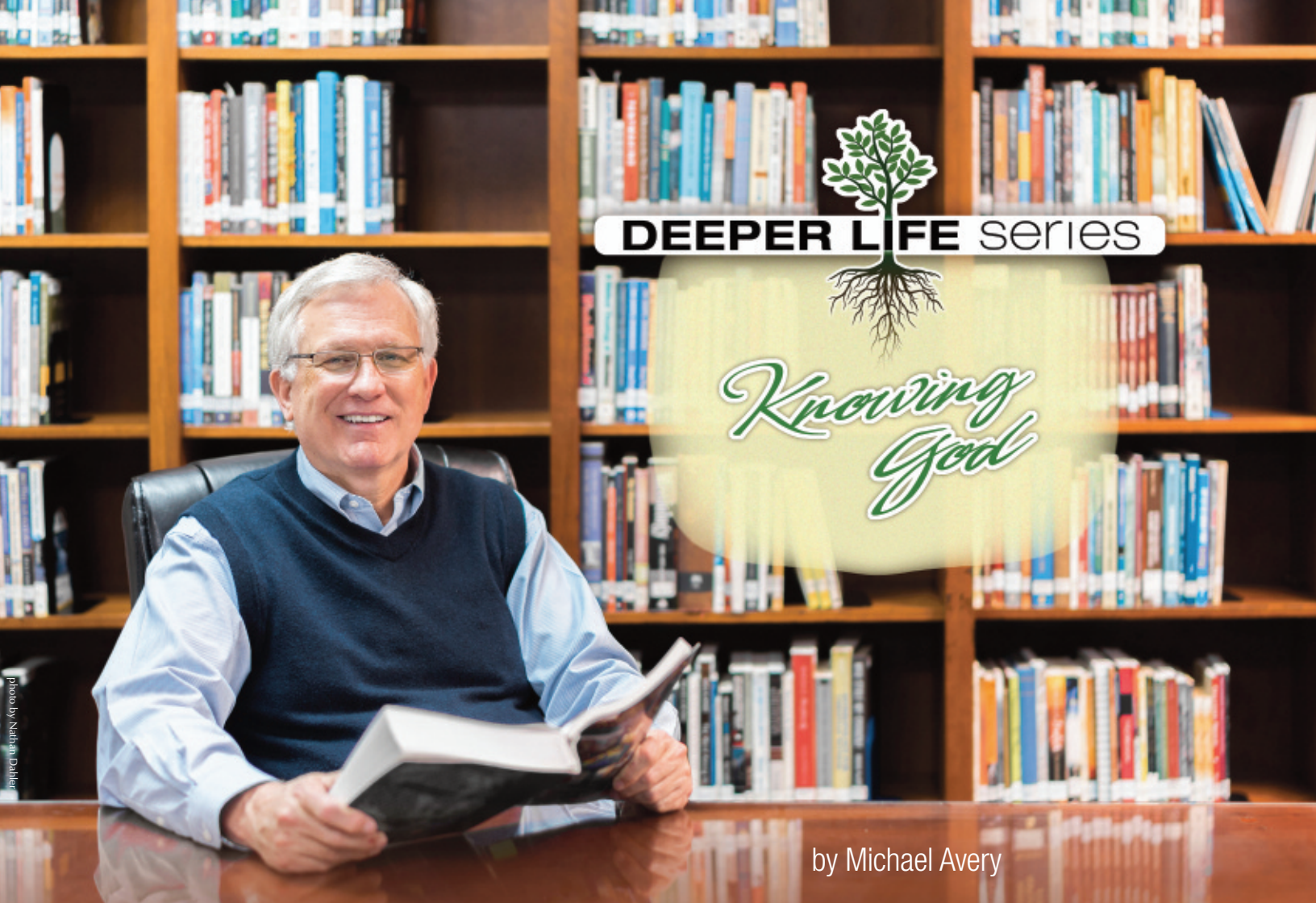


ipated in the youth meetings held by the Wesleyan Holiness Association. Once a month on a Friday night, one of the churches held a special youth rally. Additionally, there was an annual camp meeting at West Milton. It was at these services that George first saw Diana Ayars. They began dating in March 1973 and were married six months later on September 15.

George worked 37 years for the Inland Division of General Motors in Dayton. Eventually becoming a supervisor in Department 310, he was responsible for the manufacturing of weather stripping for automobiles, a tedious job involving hot rubber and molding systems. In this he was following in the footsteps of his father, who had also worked in and supervised the very same department for 33 years. Diana never worked outside the home except for some babysitting. She stayed busy caring for their growing family of three sons and three daughters. Rodney Scott, born in 1978, was their third son.

George was preceded in death by his son Randy Loper and is survived by his wife of 44 years, Diana (Ayers) Loper; two sons, Robert (Martha) Loper, Rodney (Melissa) Loper; three daughters, Suzanne (Scott) Caplinger, Joanne (Solomon) Shaffer, Amy (Byron) Redmond; daughter-in-law, Heather Loper; 22 grandchildren, Kaitlyn, Joshua, Megan, Michael, Scott, Tyler, Josiah, Breanna, Konnor, Brooklyn, Lauren, Kade, Jackson, Eli, Reagan, Madison, Colton, Lincoln, Remington, Owen, Felicity, and Liberty.

Funeral services were held at the Bible Methodist Church, Franklin, OH, Revs. Robert and Rodney Loper and Bennie Durr, Sr., officiating, with interment in North Monroe Cemetery, Monroe, OH. ■



DEEPER LIFE series

Knowing God

by Michael Avery

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. —2 Corinthians 3:18

Knowing God is not an optional part of the Christian life—it *is* the Christian life! So, it should not come as a surprise to anyone that the first step in spiritual formation is to learn how to know God “more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.”¹ J.I. Packer states it well in a series of questions: “What were we made for? To know God. What aim should we set for ourselves in life? To know God. What is the eternal life that Jesus gives? Knowledge of God (John 17:3). What brings more joy, delight, and contentment than anything else? Knowledge of God (Jer. 9:23).”²

Our knowledge of God begins with the opening of our heart and mind to Him. The Bible makes it clear that we live from the heart (Prov. 4:23), and it is in this metaphorical center of our lives that we are called to be made new when we come to God. But, it is also true that we “first turned away from God in our thoughts, and so it is in our thoughts that the first movements toward the renovation of our heart occurs.”³ It is in our mind that the Holy Spirit begins to convince us of our sin and lost condition. It will

also be in our mind that we first respond to God’s overtures of grace. It is in our mind that we begin to think our first thoughts of God and begin to formulate our personal knowledge of Him—a knowledge that desperately needs to be consistent with the God that Jesus revealed! Paul knew that real transformation required the “renewing of the mind” (Rom. 12:2). So growing in the knowledge of God involves making sure we think correctly about Him.

What Does Your God Look Like?

We all have a picture of God in our mind that has been formulated over the course of our lives. It is a narrative, a story that we use to understand and interpret God. It becomes the basis for how we feel about God and how we relate to Him. Sadly, far too many of us have a distorted picture of God in our minds. I have known saintly people whose picture of God was so badly distorted and misinformed that it placed a dark cloud over all their spiritual life. One could honestly say that these

photo by Nathan Dahler

TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 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.

Your recent emphasis on Oswald Chambers has been appreciated—his writings have probably influenced me more than any other holiness writer. God bless.

NATHAN PURDY
Email

Thank you for including the excerpts from my manuscript concerning Oswald Chambers (Nov. GR p.9). I

hope those passages will minister to your audience. I enjoyed the thoughts on thankfulness (p.2). How much better our lives—not to mention our nation—would be if we chose to rejoice in all the ways God has blessed us rather than focusing on our perceived lack. I am in awe of His goodness even when I least deserve it!

SUSAN MEYERS
Email

dear people loved God with all their heart, but they did not like the God they had in their head.

All the great mystics and spiritual formation writers place great importance on building the right narrative—a true biblical narrative—of God in our minds. A.W. Tozer expressed the importance of it in his classic quote, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”⁴ William Temple said, “If your concept of God is wrong, the more religion you get, the more dangerous you become to yourself and to everyone else.”⁵ Dallas Willard adds his word of warning, “To serve God well we must think straight; and crooked thinking, unintentional or not, always favors evil. And when crooked thinking gets evaluated into group orthodoxy, whether religious or secular, there is always quite literally ‘hell to pay.’ That is, hell will take its portion, as it has repeatedly done in the horrors of world history.”⁶

Why Is Knowing God Rightly So Critical?

The picture of God we have in our heads profoundly affects the way we relate to God. If we have a vague, fuzzy, and impersonal picture of God, then our relationship with God usually turns out to be vague, fuzzy, and impersonal. If we picture God to be against us or always out to get us, it will be highly unlikely that we will want to get too intimate with God. If we feel that we have to earn God's love, then we will spend our lives huffing and puffing trying to put ourselves into God's good books. It is only by knowing God correctly that we can understand correctly how we are to live—what He actually expects from us.

It is also true that our picture of God rubs off on us! We become like the God we worship. If we believe God is violent, we will tend toward aggression. If we understand God to be against certain people, we will be opposed to them as well. If we see God as overly serious, we will most likely come across as heavy ourselves. It

would seem that we shape our picture of God, and then that picture of God shapes us.

Those who operate on bad information about God aren't likely to know the reality of God's presence and joy in the decisions that shape their lives. On the contrary, those who think rightly about Him, as He is presented in Scripture, will be moved to love Him passionately and think on Him steadily. They will experience real joy that comes from knowing intimately the most joy-filled Being in the universe—the God of Scripture.

How Is Our Understanding Of God Developed?

The first step in developing a knowledge of God is instructional. Before we are old enough to seek a knowledge of God on our own, we begin to develop an understanding of God from our parents. This comes not only from what they teach us, but also from how they model God before us (particularly the father). As we mature, we begin to learn about God from the teachings of the church through Sunday school, VBS, and the pastor's sermons. We also learn through observing the church interact as a corporate body.

At some point in our growing-up years, we begin our own reading and study of the Bible. In the Bible, God has given us all the information we need to live as we ought. However, the revelation of God is not presented in Scripture as a set of well-organized theological tenets unrelated to the realities of everyday life. Instead, He has chosen to reveal Himself—His character and how He relates to us—not so much in statements of dogma as He has in the context of real life—in relationships with real people. This is why the Old Testament is filled with history and stories. It is God's way of putting flesh on the bare-bones ideas of who He is. It is God's picture book, not only to teach us, but also to show us who He is.

However, simply knowing about God is not adequate enough for life with God. We must know Him personally, experientially, and relationally! We must come alive to God by experiencing a New Birth (1 John 5:12) and a full surrender of ourselves to Him (Rom. 12:1). He wants us to have personal interaction with Him, just as we would have with other acquaintances. He wants those experiences and moments of intimacy to form and shape our knowledge of Him. He wants us to know Him, love Him, and trust Him so much that we want to commit ourselves to His company, His interest, and His concerns. This is what we see in the Bible. He walks with Adam and Eve in the garden, eats with Abraham by his tent, and argues with Moses on the mountaintop. The Gospels give us a front row seat as the eternal Son wraps the garments of human flesh about Himself, steps onto the stage of life, and interacts in loving relationship with those He meets. God wants His people to truly know Him, love Him, and enjoy the blessings of His steadfast love, faithfulness, and righteousness that are only found in intimate relationship.

Getting To Know God Takes Both “Grit” and “Grace”

David said in Psalm 63:8, “My soul followeth hard after thee...” The kind of spiritual formation that helps us to know God intimately and transforms us into the image of Christ does not occur instantaneously or automatically. Rather, it is a partnership of human effort and Divine grace. Paul described it like this, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12-13 ESV). “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me” (1 Cor. 15:10 ESV). As Dallas Willard is so well known for saying, “Grace is not opposed to effort but to earning.”⁷ Clearly we must strive to know God, but our striving to know God is not merely a matter of unaided human willpower. Rather, it is rooted in the deep work of God in our hearts, arousing hunger and desire to know Him. The impulse to pursue God originates with Him, but the outworking of that impulse is our following hard after Him.

COMING NEXT MONTH:

“Looking Under the Hood”

“Almost all problems in the spiritual life stem from a lack of willingness to see ourselves as God sees us.”

Getting Started

Paul challenged the Corinthian Christians to “be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1 ESV). We too can walk in the time-proven ways of knowing God that have been drawn from Scripture and demonstrated over centuries of Church history.

- Worship God faithfully in a church that is sound in its beliefs, spiritually alive, and preaches God’s word.
- Connect with a few like-minded believers and meet regularly to pray and encourage each other in your pursuit of God.
- Read and study the Scriptures daily, asking God to open the eyes of your heart and teach you (Ps. 119:18; 1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 1:16–20). This includes memorizing key verses.
- Pray daily in a quiet, undistracted place. If you have not already done so, learn to pray the Scriptures.
- Stay filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18); seek to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16); and manifest the fruit of His presence in your life (Gal. 5:22–24). It is impossible to know God or to live the Christian life without the Spirit’s help.
- Practice solitude and fasting when you sense the need. A one-day or weekend retreat devoted to seeking God more earnestly about specific concerns can be a source of great blessing. Those who have been closest to God and most fruitful over the centuries have practiced fasting often.
- Find a voice outside yourself for guidance in your spiritual life—an older, spiritually mature man or woman who is well grounded in Scripture, humble, manifests the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23), and is wise and prayerful.
- Read classic books on the Christian life.

I cannot stress enough the importance of knowing God and all the rich blessings that will accompany that knowledge. But in the end, what matters supremely is the larger fact that He knows me! “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his...” (2 Tim. 2:19). ■

Michael Avery is the former president of God’s Bible School and College (1995-2017) and its current chancellor. This is the second article in a series.

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3 WAYS

to keep your

Joy

BY MARK ECKART

The words “joy” and “rejoice” appear over 300 times in the Bible, so it is a theme that God’s Word talks about a lot. One example in the Old Testament is when God the Father tells Judah in Jeremiah that He is going to do a great thing for them. He is going to restore them, and this is how Jeremiah expresses this good news: “Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, And the young men and the old, together; For I will turn their mourning to joy, Will comfort them, And make them rejoice rather than sorrow” (31:13).

Likewise, the New Testament is chuck-full of this idea of joy. The book of Philippians, written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison, has only four chapters; yet sixteen times he uses the word “joy” or “rejoice.” Therefore, this book is at times referred to as the book of joy! Paul was facing dire circumstances, yet he was choosing to be positive and reflect on this joy despite the negativity in his life.



What is the definition of joy? From a biblical perspective, a quick search in Strong's concordance of the original meaning of the Greek word "Chara" (Khar-ah', translated "joy" in the Bible) has the idea of "cheerfulness, calm delight, gladness, and at times can even mean exceedingly joyful." This word is used both by Jesus in his proclamations and Paul when he talks about the fruit of the Spirit.

Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." Apostle Paul in Galatians gives us nine fruits of the Spirit, with one being joy. In 5:22 he starts off by writing, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...etc."

So, from Scripture we know as believers we are to be joyful; but many Christians are not. After hanging around the church for over 50 years, I have seen too many long-faced professed followers of Jesus. He came that our joy may be full, but too many of us are registering empty on the joy gauge. All of us claiming to be Christ followers must guard against being joyless and pray that God will help us be joy-full!

Satan does not want us to be full of joy, because if we are sad, gloomy, and full of despair, he knows no one will want our brand of Christianity. In other words, it blocks evangelism. Who wants a faith that offers no hope of things getting better? As Mother Teresa once said, "Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls."

No doubt about it, Christians have problems—sometimes severe problems—like Paul being in prison while writing to the church at Philippi, but he was joyful by God's grace despite suffering. So, here are at least three things we need to guard against, so that we do not become joyless.

GUARD AGAINST THE COMPARISON GAME

Once I had Pastor Bob Russell, who was then serving as the senior minister of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY, come to speak to our ministers. At that time his church was averaging 20,000 in attendance per weekend. He told me he received a copy of a magazine that keeps track of megachurches in the US and thought that surely his was the largest church in the nation. However, to his surprise, he was sixth on the chart!

That is how it goes when we fall into the comparison trap. There is always someone bigger, better, and more beautiful than we are. To keep our joy, we need to keep giving God praise for what we do have and realize it is unwise to compare ourselves with others. Paul talks about this in 2 Corinthians 10:12b: "But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

GUARD AGAINST LIVING IN THE PAST

Some people always wish for yesteryears. They forget that every generation has both good and bad in the mix. To long for the good ole days spiritually and not recognize that God is alive and well in 2018 is a mistake that will drain

one's joy. One person said it well when he commented, "History should be a guiding post, not a hitching post!"

Living in the past may include dwelling on sins that have been committed, forgetting that, if you have been forgiven, God doesn't remember your sins. So why should you dwell on them? It is the trick of the devil to get us to ruminate and ponder on some issue that, having happened years ago, still daily steals our joy. I remember the wise observation one of my seminary professors made during a counseling class: "Normally the only thing you can change about the past is how you look at it."

GUARD AGAINST NEGATIVE PEOPLE

Let's face it. Some people are "joy suckers," to quote a preacher I once heard talk about this topic. They are unhappy, grumpy, stuck in a rut, and they want you to be as well. They may be saved, but they lack "joy, real joy," as one song puts it. It has been months or years since they have experienced cheerfulness or calm delight. They are uptight about the future and depressed about the past.

Connecting with these sour Christians for too long can be a problem, as you will tend to be like them. I'm not encouraging you to be rude or unkind, but you can choose who your best friends are. So, if you want to be a joy-full Christian like Jesus desires His followers to be, socialize with people who express thanksgiving for today and hope for tomorrow. In other words, keep your joy, and don't sacrifice it at the altar of a friend's negative outlook!

"JOY DOES NOT SIMPLY HAPPEN TO US. WE HAVE TO CHOOSE JOY AND KEEP CHOOSING IT EVERY DAY."

Are you joy-full? Am I joy-full? A one-time experience cannot place us automatically and permanently on the joy track. Joy can leak out. The pressures of life, the battles of Satan, and dealing with "joy suckers" can rob our joyfulness. God can help us get back on track, though, so that we can enjoy the fruit of the Spirit that Paul discusses in Galatians, and that Jesus wants for us as well.

Christian author Henri Nouwen had it right when he wrote, "Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day."* Join with me in daily choosing to be joy-full! ■

Mark S.F. Eckart (BRE '83), District Superintendent of the Indiana South District of The Wesleyan Church, formerly served as a faculty member and Dean of Students at God's Bible School. All Scripture quotations are from the NKJV.

* Nouwen, Henri J.M. *Here and Now: Living in the Spirit*. Crossroad, 1994.



WINTER REVIVAL

The campus family welcomed Harry Plank, former conference president of God's Missionary Church (19 years) and current evangelist, to GBS for the Winter Revival



(January 11-14). While it was indeed cold outside, the warmth of Rev. Plank's messages permeated the chapel, and students enjoyed his humorous anecdotes that drove home very serious truths.

Friday morning's sermon was from Mark 5. Rev. Plank noted that Jesus had cast demons out of a man who was living among the tombs in the country of the Gadarenes. Then He was approached by Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, who asked that Jesus would accompany him to his house to heal his daughter. Jesus consented, but His journey was interrupted by a woman with a hemorrhage. Her touch of His garment resulted in her healing. Meanwhile, word came that Jairus' daughter had died. It appeared that Jesus' delay had cost her life.

Rev. Plank made these three points of application. *First, you are not insignificant to God.* (The unnamed woman who suffered from hemorrhaging was known by God. Jesus met her need.) *Second, you are never an interruption to God.* (While it would appear that the un-

named woman had interrupted Jesus' schedule, it fit into God's timing and purpose). *Third, you are not an impossibility.* (When Jairus was informed that his daughter had died and that he shouldn't bother Jesus any further, what seemed impossible actually was not.)

Walk with God. Don't listen to the devil telling you that you are not worth it; that you will just get in the way. There are no impossibilities with God.

We pray that the victories gained during these services will be maintained with God's continuing help.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Professional Studies students in the Division of Education and Professional Students selected Debby Byer (second from right), Director of Food Services, as the recipient of the spring 2018 student-awarded Certificate of Appreciation for non-faculty staff. For her thirteen years of dedicated service to GBS, and in recognition of her commitment to insuring that meals are well-balanced and scrumptious, student

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



Lisa Lynn Rice, 56, of Warren, OH, passed away Saturday afternoon, January 6, 2018, at her residence. She was born in 1961 in Youngstown, a daughter of Jack C. and Alice J. (Davis) Brocius. Lisa was a 1979 graduate of Hubbard High School. She married Jeffrey C. Rice in 1980 and spent her adult life as a homemaker as well as the secretary for her fam-

ily's business, Rice Construction. She also enjoyed home schooling all of her children through high school, two of whom enrolled in college at GBS—Jonathan (current student) and Christina (2014-15 ADEP). Lisa attended the West Mecca Bible Methodist Church. Her greatest joy was the time she spent with her husband, children, and grandchildren. She is survived by her husband; her parents; seven daughters: Andrea, Valerie, Elizabeth, Susanna, Christina, Lydia, and Sarah; four sons: Andrew, Timothy, Jonathan, and Stephen; nine grandchildren; and a sister, Wendy. Funeral services were held at North-Mar Church of the Christian Missionary Alliance in Warren, OH, with interment at the Evergreen Cemetery in Bristol Township.



Danette Teed presented her with a framed certificate, a selection of her favorite snacks, and two dozen donuts to share with those who dropped by to congratulate her. Also in the photo are assistant cook Sherry Scott and two student workers.

SPRING 2018 ENROLLMENT

College undergraduate enrollment for spring 2018 is 276 (fulltime equivalency 213.04), which includes 99 (FTE 49.71) enrolled in the Aldersgate Distance Education Program, and 12 Aldersgate Christian Academy high school students taking courses for college credit. Additionally, there are 22 students taking graduate courses this semester, 11 who are matriculated into a graduate degree program. Aldersgate Christian Academy enrollment stands at 132, which brings our total enrollment to 410 students. Pray with us that God will make this a successful semester, both academically and spiritually. ■



Other recent deaths noted elsewhere are **George Loper**, 65, father of GBS President Rodney Loper, who died January 10, 2018 (see p.4), and **Wingrove Taylor**, 94, longtime GBS camp meeting speaker and board member, who died December 26, 2017 (see p.12).

HITHER AND THITHER AMONG US

New Christian Camp. Renewation introduced Manderley Camp—a new Christian camp and conference center in Pikeville, TN. It began about two years ago with just 800 acres of woods. Now there is a one-mile road, 13 large cabins that sleep 182, and two lodges that provide eating and meeting space. There are several major

biblical worldview training events being held there in 2018. If interested, contact judy@renewation.org for more information.

Evangelistic Faith Missions Names New President.

Steven Hight was first placed under appointment with Evangelistic Faith Missions (EFM) in May, 1972. Within weeks, he and his wife Kathy embarked on their first deputation tour, quickly followed by Spanish-language study in Costa Rica and many years of faithful service on the field. For the last five years, Hight has been president of EFM. His planned retirement from the missionary organization took place at the end of December (2017). Following him in the top leadership position is Stephen Gibson, who had been serving as vice president since 2016.

Gibson has the right credentials: degrees from Union Bible College (ThB '88), Wesley Biblical Seminary (MA in Biblical Studies '93, MA in Theology '94), and Grace Theological Seminary (DMin '98). He has the right experience:



teaching at Union Bible College and God's Bible School; leading and teaching at a Bible institute in Haiti and Ukraine; pastoring an inner-city church; overseeing Holiness Pilgrim Missions; and serving as vice president of EFM.

Gibson shares the same basic missions philosophy that drives EFM. His goals include the formation of indigenous churches that depend largely upon God and local resources for their support. He aims to train local pastors and Christian workers to shepherd those indigenous churches and evangelize surrounding areas. "Our mission is not to evangelize the world," he says. "It is to plant churches and train workers who then become responsible for evangelizing their cities and nations."

Steven Hight has noted "the chuckles as people have said that EFM has become 'Steve's Mission.' We've moved from J. Stevan Manley to Steven E. Hight to Stephen K. Gibson [as president]. Our formal names are spelled differently, but the effect is still the same." What really unites the three, however, and gives continuance to EFM is "our love and appreciation for this century-old missionary organization coupled with our desire to see EFM continue to have a viable and effective outreach as a conservative holiness mission." ■

A man of high moral values, integrity, and religious fervor, Dr. A. Wingrove Taylor touched the lives of thousands of people through his ministry. He will be greatly missed.

God's Bible School's "Favorite Son" Crosses Finish Line

Alarick Wingrove Taylor, 94, passed away peacefully at St. Vincent Carmel Hospital in Carmel, IN, December 26, 2017, surrounded by family and friends. He was born in 1923 in Nevis, British West Indies, to Richard Alfred and Irene (Blyden) Taylor, both God's Bible School alumni, ministers, and pioneer missionaries of the then Pilgrim Holiness Church. He was the third of four children. In 1948, Wingrove also entered God's Bible School to train for the ministry where he received a BA and a ThB degree as well as two music certificates.

In 1953, he married Doreen Patricia Harper and set out for Trinidad and Tobago to pastor the Belmont Pilgrim Holiness Church, later becoming District Superintendent of Trinidad and Tobago (1962-1964). In 1964, he moved with his family to Barbados to become president of the Caribbean Pilgrim College (1964-1974). It was renamed the Caribbean Wesleyan College after the merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church. During this period, he also pastored the Kew Wesleyan Church. He traveled extensively, ministering in 49 different countries. In 1981, he received an MA in Ministerial Education from Indiana Wesleyan University and, over the course of his career, he was awarded four Doctorates of Divinity (honoris causa). It was his recognized leadership qualities that catapulted him into various positions of prominence in The Wesleyan Church and other religious schools and organizations. In 1974, he was elected General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Holiness Church (Caribbean Provisional General Conference of The Wesleyan Church), a position he held until 1994.

On January 6, a Celebration of Life Service was held at Trinity Church in Indianapolis, IN. Those in attendance were treated to excellent music, including prelude and postlude by pianist Martha Miller; special singing by Larry and Trisha Jewett; and inspiring congregational hymns, "Amazing Grace" and "O Jesus, I Have

Promised to Serve Thee to the End." However, the most impactful and touching musical moment came as the entire Taylor family took the platform and sang Richard Smallwood's "Total Praise."

Several people participated in eulogies. Joel Cumberbatch of Barbados, General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church of the Caribbean, told of Wingrove's early ministry. Michael Avery, former president and current chancellor of GBS, spoke of Taylor's close ties to the Bible college, both as a student and as a long-term board member and camp meeting speaker. He explained how this special relationship, including decades of school governance and spiritual guidance, had earned Taylor the epithet "GBS's favorite son." Two of Wingrove's grandsons, Samuel Parchment and Michael-Andrew Spalding, described his personal impact on their lives. JoAnne Lyon, Ambassador and General Superintendent Emerita of The Wesleyan Church, spoke of his worldwide influence. A final speaker, Duane Thompson, Jr., recounted memories of the close relationship between the Thompson family and Wingrove.

At the end of the service, all clergy were invited to line either side of the center aisle as the casket and family filed out and Larry Jewett led the congregation in singing "To God be the Glory."

A. Wingrove Taylor is survived by his beloved wife, Doreen; son Brainerd Blyden-Taylor; three daughters, Paula Taylor, Phoebe Taylor, and MaryGrace Taylor Spalding; grandchildren Adrian Nash, Saba Blyden-Taylor, Meadow Taylor, Samuel Parchment, Jonathan Parchment, Michael-Andrew Spalding, and Taylor-Marie Spalding; brother Ira Taylor; and sisters Katherine Taylor and Marie Wayner. ■

The Taylor family had suggested prior to the memorial service that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Wingrove Taylor Scholarship at GBS. Contributions are still being accepted. Call 513.721.7944. Current Wingrove Taylor Scholarship recipients are pictured below.



DOING THE RIGHT THING

(even when it is very hard)

by Scott Blackmon

If you have never heard how O'Hare International Airport received its name, this will be worth your read.

During the Prohibition Era in the 1920s, Al Capone had risen to the top of the criminal enterprises in Chicago. The network he created helped him to avoid the law and to get very rich. His organization was responsible for many horrific tragedies, one of the more famous being the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre, which led to the death of seven men in a hail of submachine-gun fire.

Edward J. O'Hare, aka "Easy Eddie," was the bookkeeper for Al Capone. Easy Eddie had it all—a house with a pool and a skating rink. Easy Eddie also had a son, Edward Henry "Butch" O'Hare. He realized that he could buy his son anything he wanted, but it all came as the result of bad choices—tax evasion, gambling at dog races, etc. He realized he wanted his son to have a stable future, but that meant he himself would have to reset his moral compass and start living differently. He did. Eventually, Eddie began cooperating with police and shared Capone's financial statements with them. When Capone ended up in court, he "fixed" the jury, but Eddie tipped off the police. Ultimately, Capone was sent to prison.

However, in 1939, after only five years of incarceration, Al Capone got an early release. Shortly thereafter, Eddie was shot in the street by two gunmen assumed to be under orders to do so by Al Capone.

BUT THAT IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY.

What of Easy Eddie's son—Butch O'Hare? Butch's life and career path led him to fame. He became a lieutenant commander in the United States Navy and the Navy's first flying ace. His biggest act of heroism came on February 20, 1942, when he single-handedly protected his aircraft carrier from nine Japanese bombers. All of the other pilots

in Butch's squad were too far away to be of assistance, and even his own copilot's gun was jammed. Butch was the only pilot standing between the nine intruders and their ship. Even with a limited amount of ammunition, he attacked the Japanese formation. Butch continued the assault until all of his ammunition was expended. When he returned to the ship, his plane's on-board camera verified that he had downed six of the nine bombers. At one point, three bombers were going down at the same time! For these exploits, Butch became the first naval recipient of the Medal of Honor in World War II.

In November of the following year, while leading the Navy's first-ever nighttime fighter attack launched from an aircraft carrier, his Grumman F6F Hellcat was shot down and never found.

Back to Easy Eddie. Some may question his decision to make those radical changes in his life and get on the right side of the law. That did involve hard choices, with one of the consequences being the loss of his life. However, a case can be made that Easy Eddie's choice to do the right thing positively impacted the life of his son. On September 19, 1949, Chicago's Orchard Depot Airport was renamed O'Hare International Airport to honor the bravery of Easy Eddie's son, Edward Henry "Butch" O'Hare. The airport displays a Grumman F4F-3 museum aircraft replicating the one flown by Butch O'Hare during his Medal of Honor flight.

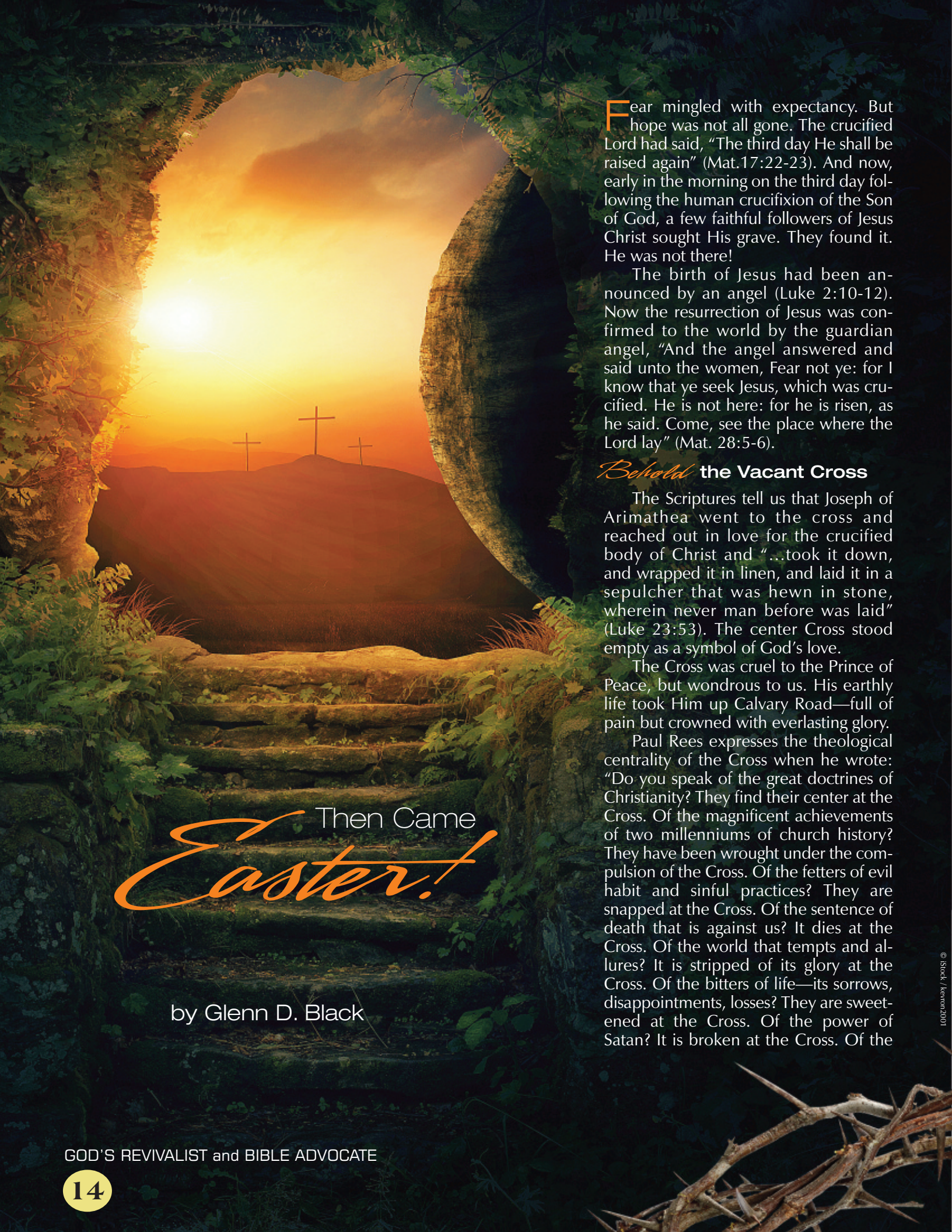
And now you know why the main airport in Chicago is called "O'Hare." ■

Scott Blackmon teaches junior high at Hobe Sound Christian Academy, Hobe Sound, FL, where he lives with his wife Ashley, their three sons, and a daughter.



Butch O'Hare





Then Came
Easter!

by Glenn D. Black

Fear mingled with expectancy. But hope was not all gone. The crucified Lord had said, "The third day He shall be raised again" (Mat.17:22-23). And now, early in the morning on the third day following the human crucifixion of the Son of God, a few faithful followers of Jesus Christ sought His grave. They found it. He was not there!

The birth of Jesus had been announced by an angel (Luke 2:10-12). Now the resurrection of Jesus was confirmed to the world by the guardian angel, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Mat. 28:5-6).

Behold the Vacant Cross

The Scriptures tell us that Joseph of Arimathea went to the cross and reached out in love for the crucified body of Christ and "...took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid" (Luke 23:53). The center Cross stood empty as a symbol of God's love.

The Cross was cruel to the Prince of Peace, but wondrous to us. His earthly life took Him up Calvary Road—full of pain but crowned with everlasting glory.

Paul Rees expresses the theological centrality of the Cross when he wrote: "Do you speak of the great doctrines of Christianity? They find their center at the Cross. Of the magnificent achievements of two millenniums of church history? They have been wrought under the compulsion of the Cross. Of the fetters of evil habit and sinful practices? They are snapped at the Cross. Of the sentence of death that is against us? It dies at the Cross. Of the world that tempts and allures? It is stripped of its glory at the Cross. Of the bitters of life—its sorrows, disappointments, losses? They are sweetened at the Cross. Of the power of Satan? It is broken at the Cross. Of the

fear of judgment? It is destroyed at the Cross. Of the hope of life everlasting? It is founded on the Cross. Of the ineffable glory of the heaven of the redeemed? It is borrowed from the Cross. For to all, eternity will be true of the City, that 'the Lamb is the Light thereof!' The Cross is central!"

Behold the Empty Tomb

The disciples were suffering the tragedy of ruined expectations and blasted dreams. This little group of huddled men was afraid, perhaps listening for footsteps coming to take them to prison. Another group, though, hurried to tell them that Jesus was alive. The tomb was empty!

With the risen Lord rose hope, and despair disappeared. With Him rose courage, and fear died. With Him rose joy, and the sad plight of being lost faded. With Him rose faith, and unbelief dissipated. With Him rose life, and power over death was clinched, defeating death with a fatal blow. With the Son came spiritual light, and spiritual darkness was dispelled.

Christianity is the glory and gospel of the empty tomb. Jesus is not buried there. The tomb was needed for only one weekend. It is now the symbol of the risen Lord and the miracle of the Resurrection. The empty tomb is full of hope. The empty tomb is evidence of our Lord's victory over sin, Satan, and death itself. Oh, the beauty of resurrection morning!

Behold a Needy World

Easter is a call for sinful mankind to accept God's redemptive love. Jesus, the Lamb of God, manifests uttermost love as He bears the sin of the world to the Cross, taking our place. As Ivan Beals wrote, our Lord's "dying sacrifice cancels sin's penalty and brings divine forgiveness and cleansing to those who receive it by faith."

Easter is a call to backsliders—all the spineless Peters who, allured by the present world, are called back to the vacated Cross and empty tomb and are offered limitless love and measureless mercies through the grace of God.

Resurrection Sunday is the dawn of a new day—a day of God's grace and goodness, beckoning mankind to repentance, confession, faith, righteousness, and holiness.

All of this, because "...God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). ■

Glenn D. Black (HS '60, BRE '74) is a long-term pastor and retired district superintendent of The Wesleyan Church (Kentucky district). He was editor of God's Revivalist (1976-85) and now resides with his wife Sharon (Jackman) (BA '70) in Westport, IN.



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Dear Phil



Second, coming “into temptation.” In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus advises His disciples “pray...that you enter not into temptation” (Matt. 26:41). This can’t mean, “Pray that you won’t be tempted.” Jesus had already predicted the scattering of the disciples and told Peter that Satan had requested permission to sift him like wheat (Luke 22:31; Matt. 26:31-35). Temptation was coming. They needed to pray so that they wouldn’t sin when it came. They didn’t pray. They fell into sin. To be lead “into temptation” is to be brought into a situation where we will commit sin. Jesus led the disciples to the garden. But Jesus also warned them they needed to pray. God’s grace was available, but they didn’t make use of the means of receiving that grace. “Lead us not into temptation” is implicitly asking God to guard us from sin. He often does this by alerting us when we need to seek more grace than usual.

Third, God teaches us to ask Him for what He has promised. God promised to provide obedient Israel with the “rain in its season” (Lev. 26:4; Deut. 11:14). Yet, He commands obedient Israel to ask for the rain (Zech. 10:1). In 1 Corinthians 10:13, God promises that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond our capacity to resist. “Lead us not into temptation” is requesting God to do what He has promised to do.

Blessings,
Phil ■

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

TIME TO CHANGE THE LORD’S PRAYER?

Pope Francis recently suggested we should not pray, “Lead us not into temptation”; but rather, “Do not let us fall into temptation,” because God does not tempt us. Is the Pope right? —Ken

Dear Ken,

James says, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does he tempt anyone” (Jam. 1:13). So, I appreciate the Pope’s concern. However, as multiple Catholic and Protestant scholars have pointed out, the Greek text can only be read “lead/bring us not.” “Let us not fall” isn’t an option.

Further, Jesus’ prayer reflects a pattern that we already see in the Old Testament. Consider the following four verses:

Psalms 119:36: Incline my heart... not to dishonest gain.

Psalms 119:133: ...Do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.

Psalms 141:4: Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice deeds of wickedness....

Isaiah 63:17: Why, O LORD, do You cause us to stray from Your ways....

All these verses ask God not to do something that we wouldn’t expect

God to do in the first place. Does God incline people’s hearts to dishonest gain or evil things? Does God cause people to stray from His ways? The answer involves understanding (1) inherited depravity and grace, (2) what it means to come “into temptation,” and (3) praying for what God has promised.

First, inherited depravity and grace. According to Romans 3:10-18, the natural state of fallen men is one wholly inclined to evil. Apart from God’s gracious restraint of our evil and His drawing of us, there would be none that does good, none that seeks after God. Our hearts are already inclined to evil naturally. The only thing keeping them Godward is grace. If God withdraws His grace, we immediately revert to depraved thinking and behaving. So, the prayers from the Psalms and Isaiah are all essentially prayers that God would not withdraw His gracious working in our hearts by His Spirit, or in the case of Isaiah asking why God had withdrawn His grace. “Lead us not into temptation” is praying, “Don’t withdraw your grace that keeps us from being inclined to sin.”



student focus

NEW BIBLE MUSEUM OPENS

The six-floor, 430,000-square-foot nonprofit Museum of the Bible opened on November 17, 2017, in Washington, D.C., just three blocks from the U.S. Capitol. The museum, which is free to the public, contains more than 15,000 artifacts. It would require 72 hours to see every exhibit. The museum is the brainchild of Hobby Lobby president Steve Green who now chairs its board. The evangelical Green family has largely funded the \$500 million museum.

PRESIDENT TRUMP NAMED 'PRO-LIFE PERSON OF THE YEAR'

At the end of December, the pro-life activist group Operation Rescue announced that U.S. President Donald Trump had won its 2017 Pro-Life Person of the Year Malachi Award for his work in "protecting the pre-born." President Troy Newman commented, "Operation Rescue is grateful to President Trump for having the courage to keep promises made during the campaign that provide greater protections for the pre-born and deny federal funds from those who commit abortions." The press release went on to list eight of his main pro-life accomplishments, which include his appointment of conservative, pro-life Justice Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court, filling his adminis-

tration with pro-life people and putting them in places where they can do the most good, and denying public money to those who commit and promote abortions around the world.

MORE CHRISTIAN REFUGEES

Over the past year under the current administration, the majority of refugees admitted into the U.S. have been Christian (60%) and a minority have been Muslim (13%). This is a reversal from the religious affiliations of refugees admitted into the U.S. under the previous administration when the majority of refugees were Muslim.

COURT RULES ABORTION IS NOT A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

Ever since it was passed in 2014, pro-abortion groups have been fighting against Amendment One of the Tennessee Constitution which states, "Nothing in this Constitution secures or protects a right to abortion or requires the funding of an abortion." Voters opposed to the amendment filed a lawsuit against it within days of its approval. When that failed, they took the matter to the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. A pro-life victory was recently won when the federal appeals court affirmed the constitutionality of this amendment that denies abortion as a fundamental right. ■

GEORGE BLAMOH was 12 years old when his parents' divorce shattered his sense of identity and security. He only felt self-worth when he was playing on the soccer field. But, while winning in sports, he was losing in life. Painful bitterness and hatred for his father distorted his perspective about God. Then he received Jesus as his true Father, and broken relationships were restored—between him and his father, and between his father and mother.

He is married, and he and his wife Nudeh have three children. Although very active in various ministries in West Africa, George sensed a need for further training and felt GBS was the perfect choice for enhancing his ministry. He is pursuing a BA in Integrated Studies with a specialization in counseling and education, and he plans to follow that with graduate studies. Upon his return to Liberia, he dreams of founding a home for orphans and abandoned kids and serving as a college/seminary professor. ■

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— Called Unto Holiness —

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

GROWING IN GRACE

by Dale Yocum

Peter wrote to those of pure minds and exhorted them against falling from their own steadfastness. Instead they should “Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18).

Purity may come in a moment of radical cleansing. Maturity, however, is by a process that is coextensive with life itself. While it is impossible to grow sin out of the soul, it is possible after sin is removed to grow always in stature of Christlikeness. We are to come “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). Perfection in this instance is by a process of growth...

A baby Christian may be a perfect Christian up to his level of age and light. He may be free from all disease and harmful impediment. Yet he is a babe and must grow to maturity. A thing is perfect, we may recall, when it is just what it was designed to be. A green apple may be immature and yet be a perfect apple. It is just what it should be at the particular stage it has reached. Only growth is required to bring it to a perfection of maturity...

God has made ample provision for our continued growth. His Word is given to us for this as well as other purposes. Referring again to Peter’s instructions, we find these words: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). In Colossians 3:16 St. Paul says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” ...[T]he fullness of the Spirit is similar in effect to having the Word of Christ dwelling richly within us. The first must be accompanied by the second. We must strongly emphasize that the Spirit’s fullness cannot be maintained without application to the means of growth, and the Word of God is primary among them. Human life could not survive beyond a few moments if it were isolated from all sustaining resources, such as air, water, and food. Likewise the life we have in the Spirit must

have resources if it is to continue. Many young Christians fail right at this point. They feel that a sensational crisis experience must have the capacity for maintaining itself apart from diligent application to God’s Word and other resources. Alas, in every instance such misguided people are tragically mistaken. If life is to continue, growth must continue also.... It is not enough to have a pure heart; if we are to maintain a pure walk we must have the Word of God hidden in our hearts and applied to our actions....

God often permits trials to beset us that we may grow. In themselves they have no power to produce growth; but they may be instrumental in stimulating faith, prayer, and discipline. So the Hebrew writer could say, “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. 12:11). The fruit does not automatically appear; it depends on the exercise produced by the chastening....

We need to recognize that every difficult place which God allows His obedient children to enter into can become a means of growth if they are thereby exercised unto prayer and faith. There are no exceptions to this rule; there is no occasion when they should fight their problems as dreadful enemies. St. Paul once asked God to take away a “thorn in his flesh.” The answer was this: “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” So Paul asserted, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor. 12:9). The Apostle grew in patience and strength, not because of the thorn alone, but because in the experience he drew closer to his Lord and received enabling from Him. May we do likewise. ■

Dr. Dale M. Yocum (1919-1987), educator/administrator, missionary, pastor/evangelist, and prolific author, was very prominent in the Church of God (Holiness). This excerpt is from *The Holy Way* (Schmul Publishing, 1984, pp.134-136).



COMMITTED
TO EXCELLENCE
IN PREACHING

THE GOSPEL HAS THE POWER TO BREAK THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF SIN

(part 2 of 2)

by *Allan P. Brown, Chair*

GBS Division of Ministerial Education

Scripture—Romans 1:16-32

In this message, we return to Romans 1:16-17 and learn that the gospel of God has the power not only to break the downward spiral of sin, but also to set the sinner free from the bondage of sin.

1. In Romans 1:16, God reveals His power in the gospel to save all people.

In Romans 1:16 Paul says, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Paul is unashamed of the gospel because he had met the One who died in the most shameful way on a cross. It was through Jesus’ death, followed by His resurrection, that God has chosen to display His mighty power to deliver from sin. This powerful gospel is available for everyone who believes. No one is excluded!

The terms *“believe”* (pisteuo) and *“faith”* (pistis) are key words in Romans. To *“believe”* is to put full trust in the God who *“justifies the ungodly”* (Rom. 4:5) by means of the cross and resurrection of Christ.

Larry is an example of the power of the gospel. His mother was a Christian who took him to church. His father wasn’t a Christian. Sadly, Larry walked in his father’s footsteps. He grew up, got married, and lived the party life. As he traveled the downward spiral of sin, he became a hard-drinking, fast-lane kind of guy.

That kind of life has consequences, and it wasn’t long before his wife took their children and divorced him. Larry remarried, but he wasn’t the kind of guy to

be faithful to anyone. His life became a mix of drugs, alcohol, pot, cigarettes, and “hard-running.” It wasn’t long before he found himself in trouble with the law. Drunk-driving, illegal possession—the rap sheet started to build up.

In August 1985, Larry found himself in court—again. The judge, who had seen Larry in his courtroom many times before, placed him under psychiatric care for 30 days before beginning a five-year prison sentence.

Larry decided to run. He heard about a guy in Port St. Lucie, Florida, who would give him a job laying carpet if he could get there. So, he borrowed his girlfriend’s car, and drove to Port St. Lucie. On the way he turned on the radio to get some rock music. Over the airwaves came a man’s voice: *“Have you ever wondered if Jesus Christ is alive and real?”* There was a pause. The question got Larry’s attention. The speaker continued, *“Why is the Bible the best seller of all time? Why do people give their hard-earned money for the cause of Christ? Why are people willing to die for Jesus? Is it possible that He is indeed alive and real?”* Then the speaker said, *“Why don’t you ask Him if He is alive and real?”*

At that moment the car broke down. Frustrated and angry, Larry got out, walked out into a field next to the road and hollered up into Heaven: *“God if you’re real, I’d like to know it before I end my life!”*

Before I tell you what happened to Larry, let’s return to our passage in Romans.

2. In Romans 1:17, God reveals the righteousness of God—an act of grace and mercy to provide forgiveness of sin by faith.

Paul writes in Romans 1:17, *“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”*

The phrase, *“the righteousness of God,”* which is *“revealed from faith to faith,”* is God’s act of declaring those who believe in Christ to be accepted and *“in the right”* with Him. Paul uses this phrase again in Romans 3:21-22, and in Romans 10:3 with this sense.

The phrase *“the just shall live by faith,”* from Habakkuk 2:4, confirms the truth that justification (right standing before God), is to be attained only on the basis of faith, and that it is also retained by faith (*“from faith to faith”*). As Paul explains later in Romans 4, when a person chooses to believe God, his faith is *“counted unto him as righteousness”* (Rom. 4:3-13). At the moment he exercises saving faith, the sinner is freely forgiven, the penalty for sin removed, and he is declared, *“Not guilty.”* Paul tells us that we are *“justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ”* (Rom. 3:24). Faith is the only means of obtaining or retaining the favor of God.

On what basis does God make us right with Him (justify us)? God declares a sinner forgiven and right in the sight of His law because of the union with Christ that occurs the moment a sinner repents of his sin and put his faith in Jesus Christ.

The union a repentant sinner experiences with Jesus Christ is explained by Paul in Romans 7:4. He tells us that believers in Jesus Christ become *“dead to the law by [through] the body of Christ that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”* Marriage to Christ, occurring at the moment of saving faith, establishes our union with Christ. From that moment forward, believers are said to be *“in Christ.”*

God’s wrath against sin has been placated by the shed blood of Jesus. On the cross, Jesus Himself bore the wrath of God the sinner rightly deserved. Faith receives the message of God’s love and Jesus’ atoning sacrifice and believes that Christ’s death is the basis on which God, for Christ’s sake, forgives sin and unites the believer with Jesus.

Every phase and aspect of the Christian’s life involves the gospel’s message of union with Christ. Growth in the Christian life comes through union with Christ (John 15:2). The blessings that the believer enjoys are *“in Christ”* (Eph. 1:3). The righteous life of the believer is possible only because he is sharing Christ’s resurrection life (Rom. 6:4). Union with Christ is the key concept that helps us to think biblically about the Christian life. We receive *“the righteousness of God”* because we are incorporated into the Son of God Himself. All that Jesus died and rose again to provide is ours *“in Him.”*

Included in our union with Christ is freedom from the power and chains of sin. Paul asks, *“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?”* (Rom. 6:1). His response is, *“By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?”* (Rom. 6:2). Paul further explains that because of our union with Christ, *“our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin”* (Rom. 6:6-7).

Conclusion

Twenty-one days after Larry ran from the law, he was working in a trailer laying carpet. While he was working, he heard someone say, *“I love you.”* There wasn’t anybody in the trailer, so he figured it must be somebody at the door. He hollered: *“Come on in!”* Nobody came in. Then the voice spoke again: *“I love you.”* He wondered if he was losing his mind.

Then he thought, *“God, is that you? What do you want?”* The voice said *“Love me.”*

“But I can’t, God. You know me. I’m a drug addict, partier, alcoholic. I can’t love you.”

The voice said, *“Give it to me.”* Larry was standing in the trailer’s small kitchen by the sink. *“How can I give it to you?”*

The voice said, *“Lay it down.”*

So he took his cigarettes and laid them down. Took out his pot and laid it down. When he got to his cocaine, he argued with God. *“I can’t do this, God. I’ve got to have this stuff.”* The voice said, *“Trust me.”* So he laid down the cocaine, too.

Again the voice said, *“Lay it down.”* He checked all his pockets but there wasn’t anything else. Then he remembered his alcohol. *“But God I don’t have it with me.”* The voice replied, *“Say it.”* So he said, *“OK God, you can have the alcohol too! What do I do now?”* The voice said, *“Go serve me.”* *“Go serve you? How?”* *“Go tell them!”*

Right then and there he knew he was free from his drug-addiction, his alcohol, pot, tobacco. He could hardly believe what just happened. On the way out of the trailer park, he saw a group of guys and God said, *“Go tell them.”* *“What do I say, God?”* And God replied, *“I’ll tell you.”*

Larry walked up to them and said, *“Hey guys, I’ve got a new lighter in my pocket here. I’ll sell it to you for a dollar.”* *“We don’t need your lighter. If you need some money, we’ll give you some.”* Larry responded, *“No, I’ve just quit my smoking.”* Then he told them what had happened to him *“I’ve just met Jesus. You can have the same freedom he’s just given me. God told me to tell you ‘I love you.’”*

Larry drove home. He called his mother and said, *“I think I’m going crazy. I just met Jesus.”*

His mother didn’t know what to think or do, so she called me, her pastor. I went to Larry and listened to Larry’s story. I explained that he was not crazy but had gotten saved.

Larry started attending my church and, in the process of time, I and another member of the church, a police officer, testified on Larry’s behalf at his parole hearing. The Florida board heard his testimony and pardoned him totally. Today he is ministering to homeless people with the gospel.

The downward spiral of sin so graphically described in Romans 1:18-32 finds its total cure in the good news of the gospel of God. Every sinner, caught in the chains of his own sin, can be set free through the powerful cure found in the gospel message of union with Christ. Where sin did abound, through the grace provided lavishly in Christ, we can experience the joy of victory over sin and a continually clear conscience. *“Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 15:57). ■

ALUMNI news

REJECTING THE AMERICAN DREAM

"Your Wants or God's Way"

by Eric Kuhns

When Hannah and I first went to Honduras as missionaries, I was fully expecting to go through culture shock. Obviously there was the language barrier to overcome; it was so frustrating not being able to communicate. I remember walking up to the counter at a Wendy's and mixing up the Spanish word for onions (cebolla) with the word for horse (caballo); I asked the lady to please hold the horses on my hamburger. Needless to say, I never got the two words mixed up again! Then there was the mistake of using the word pregnant (embarazada) instead of the word for embarrassed (avergonzado). I announced that I was so pregnant! That definitely was embarrassing! Oh, the joys of culture shock!

But for me, the re-entry shock when we returned to the United States for a visit after two years was worse than the culture shock of adapting to Honduras! I received a jolt when I got out of the airport. Everything had changed. Life was driven by technology and entertainment. People were consumed by debt and running a rat race trying to make enough money to pay all of their bills. It seemed that everybody had their kids in organized sports. People were spending unheard of amounts of money for phones, computers, the latest gizmos and gadgets, cruises, new boats, hi-tech cars, and on and on.



Village of Fuheis celebrates Palm Sunday



Graduation '96



Jarasat Family



Skyline of Amman



Petra



Now, like never before, I was staring in the face of an ugly monster called the American Dream. It was ruining the lives of young people who were called to the mission field; they were being sucked down the drain of pleasure, convenience, and the love of money—never to be seen again.

My wife, Hannah Jarasat, learned the hard way the importance of dying to the American Dream. Her story starts in Cincinnati, Ohio, where her father had arrived one summer from Jordan to help his cousins run Moonlight Chili, a start-up restaurant. One of the waitresses there caught his eye.

Despite a cultural and language barrier, they fell in love and eventually were married. Hannah was born, and when she was six months old, her parents decided to move to Jordan. For sixteen years, Hannah grew up in a male-dominated society. From the age of five, it was her dream to become a famous doctor, make lots of money, travel the world, drive a red Corvette convertible, and live in the United States! It was a dream that would make every one of her male cousins seethe with envy. It would be her way of getting back at the repressive society in which she had grown up, a society that she hated.

Every few years, she and her sisters got to spend a few months visiting family in America. Those visits only emboldened her desire to live the American Dream. The freedoms, the technology, and the luxuries that many Americans enjoyed seemed like heaven on earth.

During one of her summer visits to her grandparents' home in Cincinnati, Hannah attended a camp meeting. As a ten-year-old girl, she began to realize her need of salvation. Kneeling at the altar, she tenderly asked Jesus to forgive her of her sins and to be her Savior. She returned to Jordan much more sensitive to spiritual things but still resolved to become famous, wealthy, and the owner of a red Corvette convertible.

Though Jordan is repressive and hostile to Christianity, there remains to this day a small Christian village to the northwest of Amman. Fuheis is a village free of Muslim mosques and home to six Catholic churches, testaments to the resilience of the Christian families who have lived here for many centuries. It was in this village that Hannah's father was born and

where Hannah would later be raised. Having a little more freedom of religion than most Jordanians, Hannah's family decided to start a small evangelical church. They transformed an old chicken coop into a sanctuary. They bought carpet and chairs and remodeled the little building into a presentable meeting place. Some close friends and a few cousins started attending the services but were quickly met with resistance from the Catholic Church. The Catholics threatened to take away financial discounts at their schools for the attendees' children if they continued to support the evangelical church. It was enough pressure to discourage the fledgling group and close down the meetings.

Even in a Christian village, life was tough. After the church closed, Hannah's mother continued having services with her family in their home, teaching her three girls the importance of faith in God.

One afternoon, at the age of thirteen, Hannah had a dispute with her mother and showed a bad attitude. Hannah was told to sweep the floor, but she did not want to do it. She mumbled and grumbled under her breath as she grabbed the broom, storming off to do her chore. That was when she heard the tender voice of the Holy Spirit chide her, "Hannah, you need something more in your spiritual life."

The truth hit her like a truck. She knew that she needed her sinful nature cleansed from her heart. She saw a glimpse of what she really was on the inside—prideful and self-centered—things that could not continue existing where a holy God wanted to reign. She walked to the couch, knelt down, and began to pray, "Oh, God, I need you to purify my heart. Take these things out of my life, and make me like Jesus." The Lord answered her prayer that day and changed her life.

It opened the door for God to begin leading Hannah gently away from her personal ambitions and toward a life of commitment and surrender to God's will.

By the age of sixteen, Hannah was anxious to get out of Jordan. She convinced her dad to do something contrary to their culture. He agreed to allow Hannah and her sister Sarah to move to Cincinnati and live with their maternal grandparents while they finished up their last years of high school at God's Bible School where



Eric and Hannah (Jarasat) Kuhns are church planters with Hope International Missions. They and their two boys have been missionaries in Honduras for the past 11 years. Eric is currently enrolled in GBS's online graduate program working on an MA in ministry, and Hannah is a GBS alumna (HS '96). This excerpt is adapted from Eric's book *Focused—Avoiding Divisions on the Road to the Mission Field* (FEA Press, 2017) and is available at feaministries.org/focused.

their mother had attended. Arab fathers never let their daughters out of their sight, let alone move away to study in such a “morally loose” country. This was the big moment that Hannah had looked forward to for many years.

The summer before Hannah’s senior year of high school, she heard a missionary speak during a camp meeting. It was a powerful service. Several students felt called to ministry. As the congregation moved forward to pray, God spoke to Hannah and asked, “Would you be willing to be a missionary?” A wave of dread fell over her. She had just escaped Jordan. The American Dream was in her grasp, but now it seemed to be fading like the luxurious Titanic beneath the waves. If she said “yes” to God, Hannah knew that she would probably have to say “goodbye” to her dream of a red Corvette, a big salary, and world travels. It would mean a boring life, an obscure name, and a small bank account.

She struggled with God’s will: “God, I just got to America, and now you want to send me to a third-world country?”

She quietly left the service and walked to her room, unwilling to say “yes” to God and reluctant to allow her ambitions to die at Jesus’ feet.

Hannah’s senior year of high school was marked by an internal struggle. The joy that Hannah had found kneeling at her couch in Jordan was quickly slipping away. Her hesitancy to answer God’s call was grieving the Holy Spirit. During one particular service in the revival held at GBS during the last part of the school year, there was a mighty move of God. The students were praising the Lord. Some were answering calls to ministry; others were testifying to victory over sin. Conviction was heavy, and God was speaking.

Again the Holy Spirit began to whisper to Hannah, “If you don’t give me your all, you will lose everything.”

The line in the sand was drawn. She could no longer waver between two masters. This would be the defining moment.

She was tired of the fight and weary of the struggle. She realized that neither a single Corvette convertible nor all of the money in the world was worth losing Heaven. Kneeling at the altar that night, Hannah began to die to self. Piece by piece, she laid her ambitions at Jesus’ feet.

She told God, “If you want me to pack my bags and go to the mission field tomorrow, I am willing to go.”

It was sweet surrender. The battle was over, the joy returned, and the victory was won. There was no turning back. As Hannah began to learn that day, the American Dream can never compare to the sheer excitement and the deep satisfaction of living God’s way and according to His will!

Do not let your dreams, ambitions, and desires keep you from God’s perfect plan. Keep focused on His call. Nothing else matters! ■



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THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

WHO IS MY MASTER?

“Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?” —Rom. 6:16 ESV

You are slaves of the one whom you obey.” Have you ever been reading and suddenly a phrase grabbed your attention? That happened to me recently when, all at once, I came face to face with this truth during my daily Bible study. *I am a slave to someone.* We’d like to believe we are autonomous, free spirits who are the masters of our own destiny, but even that wish points to our slavery. And self is a tyrannical master, one who seems to have our best interests at heart only to leave us empty and unfulfilled, always reaching for one more thing to satisfy. Since I will be ruled by someone, it behooves me to choose carefully to whom I become an “obedient slave.” Who already has my allegiance? Every decision I make reveals the true identity of my master. What does my daily life say about my priorities and my loves? If someone looked at my calendar or my checkbook, who would they find my master to be? Jesus came to set us free from the tyranny of self and sin. He came as a loving Master who respects our right to choose, but Romans 6 also reminds us that our choices will bear fruit. There will be consequences. “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). Life or death. The choice is ours. ■

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

MARCH 2018

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SWSE SPRING TOUR

Friday, March 23, 7:00 PM
Bible Methodist Church
1647 N Ellsworth Ave
Salem, OH
David Crosley, pastor
(812) 675-1549

Saturday, March 24, 2:00 PM
Evangelical Methodist Church
148 Leonard Rd
Oakland Mills, PA 17076
Brent Lenhart, pastor
(570) 966-7877

Sunday, March 25, 10:00 AM
Evangelical Brethren Church
927 Broadway
Hanover, PA 17331
Philip Nell, contact
(603) 903-9719

Sunday, March 25, 6:30 PM
God's Missionary Church
2127 Hill St
Lebanon, PA 17046
Alan Walter, pastor
(570) 756-0232

Monday, March 26, 7:00 PM
Blue Mountain Brethren in Christ
215 Tabor Rd
Newberg, PA 17240
Luke Holtry, pastor
(717) 532-4892

Tuesday, March 27, 7:00 PM
God's Missionary Church
195 Creek Rd
Beavertown, PA
James Plank, pastor
(570) 765-0578

Wednesday, March 28, 7:00 PM
Emmanuel Wesleyan Church
135 Emmanuel Church Rd
Gratz, PA 17030
David Bubb, pastor
(315) 271-7800

SYMPHONIC WIND AND STRING ENSEMBLE

2018
TOUR

