

GOD'S REVIVALIST

April 2018

and Bible Advocate





about this issue

MY CARS

In 1969, I became the proud owner of a bright red 1965 MG Midget. I didn't get to enjoy it too long. It developed a drinking problem—oil. It was still being worked on when I dropped out of college and joined the Air Force. If my recollection is accurate, I have had 17 cars over the years. Some were good enough to name, like the Maroon Monster (1967 Chevy) purchased from Bruce Johnson, which served as both the “date-mobile” for Paula and me as well as our first family car. It was followed by the Blue Babe—a beautiful 1970 Mercury Marquis.

I bought two brand new vehicles. The first was a 1980 Ford LTD. I was able to make that purchase because I was supplementing my GBS teaching salary by helping to take care of a wealthy elderly man. With his health concerns, I decided to get the new car on a two-year loan. As I recall, the payments were about \$332 per month. Unfortunately, my patient passed away when I had four payments left on the loan.

I will never forget a phone call I received around that time. It was Mother calling from West Virginia. She was just “checking in,” but mothers have that special sense. I remember her asking, “Kenny, what’s happening? Is something going on?” I was hesitant to get into it, but I knew I couldn't keep her from finding out. So, I told her about the loss of my job and the burden of those remaining payments. I was in the process of convincing her that everything was going to be OK. Meanwhile, my father, who was catching most of this conversation, started a not-so-subtle side conversation with Mother. I heard him say, “Betty, just tell him to give me the book.” And that was that. There was nothing else I could do but acquiesce to the demands of Elmer and Betty. I sent them the payment book.

I have often thought about that exchange. It makes me wonder how many times I struggle to take care of things on my own when all my heavenly Father wants to do is help. If I listen in obedience, I can hear Him say, “No problem, son. Just send me that book.”

Over the years, as I approach my car, I often pause and say, “Thank you, Jesus, for this car. I really appreciate it.” And I do. Even those cars that weren't as new or as nice.

Enjoy the issue, especially the two articles on how to redeem the time we spend in cars (pp.13,15). —KF ■

CONTENTS

APRIL 2018
Volume 130 No. 3

FEATURES

- Deeper Life Series: Looking Under The Hood** 5
by Michael Avery
- I Still Love The Local Church** 8
by Ezra Byer
- Car Talk: Make The Most Of Travel Time** 13
by Chuck Peters
- Christian, Seize Your Commute** 15
by David Qaoud
- Dollars From Heaven** 21
by Sean Dietrich

DEPARTMENTS

- The President's Page** 3
- News From The Hilltop** 10
- Revivalist Family** 10
- Letters To The Editor** 14
- Dear Phil** 16
- World Pulse** 17
- Student Focus** 17
- Called Unto Holiness** 18
- Revivalist Pulpit** 19
- Alumni News** 22
- Thoughts For The Quiet Hour** 23

STAFF

Ken Farmer, *managing editor*

Kevin Moser, *art director, assistant editor*

Shane Muir, *assistant graphic designer*

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.

Please obtain permission before reprinting any articles from *God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate*. **Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed, but not returned.**

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

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

Contact us by telephone at (513) 721-7944 (Revivalist Press, ext. 1351); by fax at (513) 763-6649; by email at revivalist@gbs.edu. Visit us online at www.gbs.edu or www.godsrevivalist.com.

COVER: GBS students Denae Belcher, Nathan Miller, Jarod Mahan, and Karen Castro at Irwin M. Krohn Conservatory in Eden Park, a Cincinnati landmark. Photo by Shane Muir.

the president's page



BEING WITH GOD

by Rodney Loper, President

Throughout Scripture, there are many reminders that our soul belongs with God. How many times do we read about the soul seeking after or longing for God? Here is a sampling of verses from just one book—Psalms: “My soul is lifted up to Him” (25:1); “My soul waits for Him” (62:1); “My soul thirsts for Him...” (63:1); “My soul blesses Him” (103:1); and “My soul thirsts for Him in a dry and thirsty land” (143:6).

Our eyes may light up at the sight of things, our mind may be preoccupied with the idols of our day, our will may be hampered by addictions, and our body may be consumed with appetites; but our soul is never satisfied until it finds rest in God! The old timers used to talk about a “God-shaped void” in our heart. The songwriter said, “Only God can fill the longing that is burning in each heart.”

The Garden of Eden was created by a God who wanted to be with the crown of His creation! Trees, flowers, grass, animals, water, and light were all made to form a cradle around God’s most prized possession—mankind. Then He came down in the cool of the day to walk with them. Have you ever wondered what that was like—to have the Creator of the universe step down to walk with man?

The use of the word “walking” here may not be an indication that God actually took a lap around the garden with His creation, but I certainly do believe that His presence was in the garden—not to get exercise, but to commune with people! I wish that we could place a period at that point in the history of mankind, but you know the rest of the story. Adam and Eve did not stay in the garden because they sinned. Just before they were expelled, God had one more interaction with them in that garden. When the time for their walk

came, God's presence stepped into the garden. Instead of finding His creation eagerly awaiting the evening stroll, He found them hiding. It wasn't that God had moved. It wasn't that God had changed the way that He had come in the cool of the day. No, something had changed in the hearts of man. Their soul was no longer at peace in the presence of God.

As tragic as this account is, we see beauty arising from these ashes. Even though Adam and Eve had chosen to do something that severed their relationship with God, they learned something new about God: Even in the midst of their failure, He continued to seek after them!

Friends, God isn't easily pushed aside. He isn't easily denied. He keeps seeking. This is the basic message of the Bible. Man sinned. We have all sinned. But God is ever looking, loving, and longing to restore a relationship with us. Why? He wants to be "with us"!

Throughout Scripture we read about those who have been with God. Enoch walked with God, Noah walked with God, Abraham was with God, and God was with Isaac. Down through the pages of the Old Testament we get glimpses of God's presence with His people.

As we turn the page to the New Testament, a glorious picture emerges. God sends His Son, Immanuel, which means "God with us"—the Son sent for the express purpose of being with us. Comforting!

What is it like to be with Him? In John 15, Jesus uses the metaphor of the vine and the branches to describe this relationship. Over and over in this passage He challenges us by saying, "Abide in Me." Do you want to be part of the vine? Do you want to bear fruit? You must be "with God!" That is what it means to abide in Him. That is why we are to live intimately with Jesus every moment of every day!

Being with Christ is not so much about quantity as it is about quality! It isn't about how many years you have

been saved or how many works of grace you have experienced. Tell me where you are at present. Are you living abundantly with Him right now? Our souls don't thrive on accomplishments—they thrive on being with God! This may be counter-cultural, but it is biblical!

You may be thinking that this sounds good, but how can these printed words be expressed in real life and in a world that is filled with technology and high-pressure careers? How can we be with God in the middle of chaos?

Have you ever invited someone to go to lunch? Why do you do this? Because you want to talk. You like being around that person. You want to catch up on what is happening in his or her world. I wonder what our lives would be like if we earnestly prayed this prayer: "Lord, can we do life together today? I want You to be with me, therefore I am going to do everything I know to do to please You and refrain from doing anything I know grieves You, to ensure that You are with me today!"

If we did everything we could to ensure His continued presence, what would life look like? Perhaps answering the following questions can help us live in that state: How many moments of my life can I fill with the awareness of and surrender to God's presence? How can I allow the glory of God to shine through my life? How can I make God look good today?

I believe we should be biblical in how we relate to our world! I wonder how those around us would respond if we started seeing and treating each other as Christ would. That possibility begins and ends with abiding in Him.

Just as He did on that first evening after man's creation, God is still looking for people—for souls that are willing to do what it takes to be with Him. Oh the joy and peace we enjoy as Divinity comes in such a way that even as finite beings we can recognize that God is with us! ■



 GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE
ALUMNI RECEPTION 2018
Wednesday, April 18 | 4:00–5:30
Room 305/306
(Just off the skywalk on the 3rd floor)
Dayton Convention Center, Dayton Ohio

NEW LOCATION!

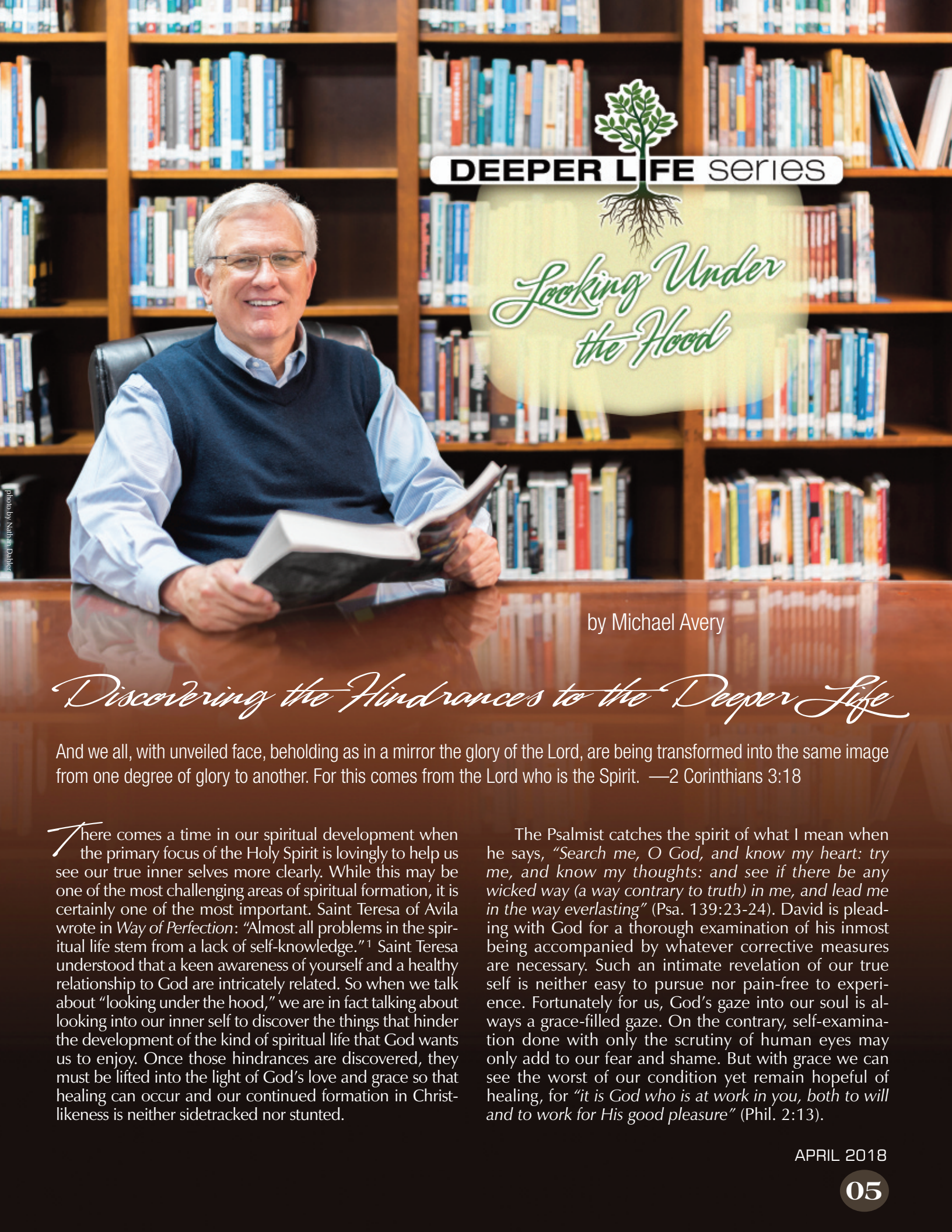


photo by Nathan Dahler

DEEPER LIFE series



Looking Under the Hood

by Michael Avery

Discovering the Hindrances to the Deeper Life

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

There comes a time in our spiritual development when the primary focus of the Holy Spirit is lovingly to help us see our true inner selves more clearly. While this may be one of the most challenging areas of spiritual formation, it is certainly one of the most important. Saint Teresa of Avila wrote in *Way of Perfection*: “Almost all problems in the spiritual life stem from a lack of self-knowledge.”¹ Saint Teresa understood that a keen awareness of yourself and a healthy relationship to God are intricately related. So when we talk about “looking under the hood,” we are in fact talking about looking into our inner self to discover the things that hinder the development of the kind of spiritual life that God wants us to enjoy. Once those hindrances are discovered, they must be lifted into the light of God’s love and grace so that healing can occur and our continued formation in Christlikeness is neither sidetracked nor stunted.

The Psalmist catches the spirit of what I mean when he says, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way (a way contrary to truth) in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psa. 139:23-24). David is pleading with God for a thorough examination of his inmost being accompanied by whatever corrective measures are necessary. Such an intimate revelation of our true self is neither easy to pursue nor pain-free to experience. Fortunately for us, God’s gaze into our soul is always a grace-filled gaze. On the contrary, self-examination done with only the scrutiny of human eyes may only add to our fear and shame. But with grace we can see the worst of our condition yet remain hopeful of healing, for “it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

Looking For What?

This type of Christian self-examination is not a form of navel gazing. We are not to be self-absorbed and looking inward to see how we feel about ourselves or how we compare to other people. It should not turn into a morbid process of introspection where we do nothing but examine ourselves, and where such self-examination becomes the main and chief end in our life. Rather we should embrace a healthy self-examination that looks for anything that might be offensive to God and/or anything that would hinder our growth into spiritual adulthood.

From a biblical perspective, the primary hindrance to spiritual formation in holiness is sin. The Scripture admonishes us to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us” (Heb. 12:1) and “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires” (Eph. 4:22). As fallen creatures needing redemption, not only have we been defiled by sin, but we also have been damaged by fallenness. The answer to sin’s defilement is forgiveness and cleansing. The answer to sin’s damage is correction and healing.

From the beginning of our new life with Christ, the Holy Spirit works with us to teach us how to walk and please God. A part of this is to teach us about sin. He will faithfully enlighten us on any behavior that is not pleasing to God or that holds the potential of harming our relationship to Him. For some Christians, He may need to start with the most obvious sins, such as those in the list Paul gives in Galatians 5:19-21. As we better understand sin, He will reveal those “culturally acceptable sins” that are not acceptable in God’s economy—things like gossip, “white lies,” covetousness, lust, and a lack of gratitude. He will also talk to us about things we may not have known were wrong—things like sins of omission and unintentional sins. He will gently prod us to confess and repent of such things while enabling us, by grace, to rise higher in our level of living. In time, His probing and enlightening will help us to see those moments when we subtly try to manipulate others to get our own way, or maybe a time when we tell part of the truth but not all of it in order to save face! The Spirit will faithfully and ruthlessly seek to root all of these things out of our lives. Much of this happens by means of the Spirit-led process of self-examination.

The journey that we are now on will take us to deeper levels of openness and surrender. We will grow in our understanding of what God requires, while at the same time being strengthened by grace to live a life that is “obedient from the heart” and that presents its “members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification” (Rom. 6:17-18). Sanctification is God’s answer to the defilement of sin and our conformity to Christ in true holiness. As sanctification progresses, the Holy Spirit will bring us to a place where we not only see, but also are forced to deal with a deep-seated attitude—an inner orientation of our being out of which our behavior patterns flow. This “sinful self” is what

causes us to keep our hands on the control levers of our life rather than abandoning them to God and His control. It will be here that the Spirit points us to our own cross! Here, at this juncture of self-will, self-centeredness, self-love, and self-control, lies the real crux of deep inner formation in holiness. It is here that we must die to our old self. This requires a total consecration to God in love—a surrender so radical it’s like a death—to which God responds with a thorough cleansing of the heart by the inhabitation of His Spirit. From this point forward, rather than my being in charge of my relationship with God, God is given absolute control of the relationship.

God’s remedy for sin’s defilement is thorough. However, there is still much more work to be done. It does not solve all of the problems related to our fallenness and to the consequences of living in a broken body in a broken world. Sin has damaged the world we live in (it groans to be delivered) and sin has damaged us. As much as we would like for God to touch us into complete wholeness (body and mind), He has not chosen to work that way. The lives of the New Testament characters, the saints of the Church, and my own experience prove that there are no exceptions. He works *with* us and *in* us over time through the various means of grace to correct and heal the damage of sin. Hence the work of “looking inside” must go on.

Looking More Deeply!

Once we have allowed God to deal with the defilement of sin in our lives, we are more open and willing for Him to begin to work on the *damage* sin has caused. We have been born into a fallen world where sin’s impact on our culture, our community, our church, our family, and our individual lives is significant. Living in such a world has consequences. I sometimes call it “sin’s collateral damage.” These problems are real, and sometimes hard to describe, but are often referred to as weaknesses or infirmities. They include things like: painful hurts, brokenness, the fallout of misguided parenting, fear, fragility, perfectionism, deep inferiorities, quirks, baggage and scars from various forms of victimization and abuse. These may rightly be called emotional or behavioral damage, but they so clearly impact

COMING NEXT MONTH:

“The Essential Relationship in Spiritual Formation”

“Having the Holy Spirit *inside* you is better than having Jesus *beside* you.”

our spiritual life and are so closely tied to our spiritual development that allowing the Holy Spirit to bring as much healing as possible to them is essential in the ongoing process of becoming spiritually whole.

Opening up our inner world in this area may be the most challenging element in the whole spiritual formation process. It is certainly one from which far too many shrink. I have met many such people who have closed their lives to this kind of honest introspection, yet who desperately need a deeper level of emotional healing. As a matter of fact, it seems that some have embraced certain misguided Christian teachings that only serve to deny or deaden their humanity instead of setting it free to develop in all of its capacities under the influence of grace. Others avoid this path of self-knowledge because “they are afraid of being swallowed up in their own abysses. But Christians have confidence that Christ has lived through all the abysses of human life and that he goes with us when we dare to engage in sincere confrontation of ourselves. Because God loves us unconditionally—along with our dark sides—we don’t need to dodge ourselves. In the light of this love, the pain of self-knowledge can be at the same time the beginning of our healing.”²

Starting The Process

The process of change begins at the point of honest transparency—with ourselves and with God. Nothing keeps people away from Christ more than their inability to see their need of Him or their unwillingness to admit it. The same is true with the kind of self-knowledge that brings about spiritual and emotional maturity. Deny the problem, and nothing can be done about it. Admit the problem, and at once there is the possibility of a solution. The kind of honesty I am talking about can be seen in the following steps used in systematic healthy self-examination:

1. Open the door. Invite God to show you any area of need or weakness. The opportunity to experience His correction is also an opportunity to experience His love (Heb. 12:5-11).

2. Refuse to excuse. Face the issue squarely, refusing to make excuses for whatever it might be or entail. No one gets up in the morning, looks in the mirror, and blames their mattress for what they see. They just accept it and work to beautify what can be beautified.

3. Partner with God. We have a responsibility to do what we can do. However, we need God’s power and grace to make lasting change. Paul portrays this partnership when he admonishes us to “*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).

4. Confess. If God points out any behavior that is contrary to truth, agree with Him quickly, acknowledge it, and seek forgiveness.

5. Keep an attitude of gratitude. Continually voice to God your gratitude for all He is showing you and for what He is doing in you.

6. Welcome an outside voice. God uses community to form and shape us. He also uses individuals in that community. Develop deep spiritual friendships with those with whom you can share what you are discovering about yourself and who will be able to help you see things about yourself you couldn’t otherwise see. You will need not only their insight but also their affirmation and encouragement as well.

7. Establish Scripture as a baseline for your behavior. Accept nothing but biblical behavior in your life. Old patterns of established behavior and thought die hard. Even the Apostle Peter had to be confronted with behavior that was unbiblical when he refused to eat with the Gentiles at Antioch. Even though he had experienced the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh at Pentecost, had received a vision to correct his views of clean and unclean at Joppa, and had witnessed the Gentile Pentecost firsthand, he still reverted to his old prejudices and fears and refused to eat with the Gentile Christians when he was under the scrutiny of leaders from Jerusalem. Yet, with the help of Paul, he was able to re-orient to Scripture in his behavior.

Enjoy The Journey!

The journey into self-knowledge is not only an encounter with your true self, it is also an encounter with the living God. It is coming to see something about yourself; but even more, it is coming to see something about God—His sufficiency for your need. Both Jacob and Isaiah found this to be true. In Isaiah’s experience, he not only saw that he was a “man of unclean lips,” but He also saw “*the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up*” (Isa. 6:1, 5). Jacob’s bitter encounter with his true self became a momentous life-changing encounter with the living God—“*surely the Lord is in this place*” (Gen. 28:16). Self-examination will force us to recognize that we are not what we ought to be, but it will also help us to see that God is something far more than we thought!

Such encounters with ourselves and with God serve as an open door to a whole new dynamic of being. We may at first wrestle with what we see or turn away in horror or disbelief, but if we will choose to step across the threshold of the open door, it will place us in a new open place of growth, joy, and blessing. It will ultimately be a journey of joy! ■

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

1. Teresa of Avila. *Way of Perfection*. Image Classics, 1991.

2. Rohr, Richard. Quoted in Ruth Haley Barton’s *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*. IVP Books, 2006, p.91.

I *Still* Love the

by Ezra Byer

One of the most encouraging people in our church congregation in Toronto is a man named Peter Walleri. Peter has been with our Discovery Pointe Church family almost since the very beginning. When he first arrived, we were still meeting at a local Boys and Girls Club at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons. Peter happened to see a sign for our church and decided to attend. In his words, the moment he stepped into our small congregation of 10 people, he felt at home.

Unfortunately, the local church has received its share of knocks the past several years. Gone are the days when attending a church on Sunday was the norm. It has been noted that only 5-to-15 percent of Canadians regularly attend a church on Sundays. In Canada and the United States, church is fading from being the popular gathering place where people connect.

As Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg states, church was once a strong connecting point in local communities. He goes on to point out, "It's so striking that for decades, membership in all kinds of groups has declined as much as one-quarter. That's a lot of people who now need to find a sense of purpose and support somewhere else."

It is likely that Zuckerberg's perception of the local church reflects that of the vast majority of North Americans today. The local church to many people is no different than a social gathering or a glorified little league assembly for adults. And, hey, if that is all a local church is, sign me

up to join in the decline of Sunday morning attendance!

There are believers like Christian author Donald Miller who are done with the local church. They might refer to themselves as "Big C" Church people. Because they are part of the universal Church of Christ that exists throughout all time and eternity, they see no need to be a part of a local body of believers.

"Many who are disillusioned with the church today romanticize the early church, not realizing how broken things were then as well."

They make statements like, "We just need to get back to what the early New Testament church looked like," but author Scott Sauls makes a marvelous point when he writes:

Many who are disillusioned with the church today romanticize the

early church, not realizing how broken things were then as well. Take Corinth, for example. As the most prominently represented New Testament church, Corinth was also a dysfunctional mess. Factions, harshness, divisions, adultery, lawsuits, divorce, elitism, classism, and neglect of the poor were just some of their issues. The famous "love chapter" in 1 Corinthians 13 was written less as an inspiration and more as a rebuke, because each love attribute was something that the Corinthians were not. They had trampled on the ideal of what Jesus' Church should be—an infectious community of prayer, truth, love, justice, and mission (Acts 2:42-47).¹

Local churches have never been perfect. They have always been messy. And honestly, the last thing non-church attending Christians want to hear from pastors is a cutting guilt trip that would shame them back into attendance.

I think of the local church a bit like I view a local fitness gym. Great athletes recognize the importance of working out with others. They invest thousands of dollars in trainers. Hypothetically, they could physically perform almost all of the exercises they might do in a gym at home. Yet,

Local Church



they recognize the power of community, encouragement, and strength that comes from being closely connected to others who have similar ambitions. If they work out on their own, it's going to be tough to be a well-rounded athlete.

It is the same way with the local church. Sure, we can hang out at home with our Bibles and check out the latest sermon podcasts on our iPhones. And for a period of time, we might not notice much difference. But just as having the right habits in exercise are life changing physically, having good habits spiritually are life changing as well.

HERE ARE FIVE REASONS I LOVE THE LOCAL CHURCH A LOT:

1. Christ Established It.

Having a local church wasn't my idea. It wasn't an American or Canadian tradition I can choose to reject or dismiss. It was Christ's idea. It was His means of bringing the gospel to the world. When I look back on the history of God's interactions with humanity, I am constantly amazed at the people and means by which He accomplishes His purposes. Now a lot of my friends would look on and say things like, "Well the church is so messed up these days!" I can't disagree. But God likes to work in the mess.

2. It Reminds Me Whose I Am.

Engaging in a local church and attending Sunday worship reminds me of the powerful reality that I am not my own. I was bought with a price by God. Life is not about me. And I need that reminder! North American culture screams at me six days a week to make life all about myself. Sunday worship is so meaningful to me because, as I look around at others who are worshipping along with me, I remember that I am a PART of the body of Christ. I am not the entire body.

3. It Confronts Me with the Joys and Pains of Others.

Isaiah 58:10-11(ESV) states: "If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail."

I love this and need this reminder. Being a part of a local church confronts me with the joys and pains of my fellow warriors of the faith. As Isaiah 58 points out, contrary to what I used to believe, there is a special strength that comes when we pour ourselves out to others. I have witnessed this personally. I cannot tell you how many times Janan and I have been discouraged, but then we heard someone's story—often a painful one. As we sat and listened and cried with them, it was amazing how our spirits were lifted. Perhaps God wants to heal some of the deepest pains in our lives through shared moments of openness and vulnerability with others rather than through longer times of individualistic prayers.

4. It Helps Me Not Be Quite So Wacky.

There are few things more humorously painful than listening to a person expound on subjects in which they have had no training. I shake my head at the man who has a cure for everything but has never read a medical textbook in his life. I take with a grain of salt the advice the overweight couch potato has for coaching Lebron James. I moan for the life coach who wants to help others get their lives in order, while his own personal life is in shambles. While going to church will not ensure you do not develop wacky beliefs, I believe that not attending a local church will ensure you pick up some. When I am healthily engaged in the lives of other believers, I am able to bounce my ideas off of others and see what they think. One of the greatest lessons that one of my favorite professors, Dr. Allan Brown, taught me was that while everyone might have an opinion, everyone's opinion is not equally valid. Many times I have thought something sounded great in my head. Then I shared it with another fellow believer. Almost before I finished sharing I wanted to pull that sentence back into my mouth and ask for a retake! Getting around other believers has helped me get over a great number of wacky ideas because it forces me to talk through what I believe.

5. It Is the Key Reason All My Siblings Serve God Today.

I cannot thank my mom enough for her tenacity in getting each of my siblings into church. She did whatever it took to get us around great Bible teaching. Many times this meant driving 15-18 hours to take us to (p12)➡



ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL CLASSIC

The 2018 high school volleyball/basketball tournament was held February 8-9. This event brought approximately 200 students and their parents and chaperones to our campus from various schools: Bird Lake Bible School (MI), Daystar Christian Academy (MI), Heartland Christian School (IN), Stone City Christian Academy (IN), Nazarene Christian School (IN), Frankfort Covenant Academy (IN), Mt. Zion Bible School (MO), and our own Aldersgate Christian Academy. Between

rousing games of basketball and volleyball, guests attended a chapel service in which President Rodney Loper delivered a challenging message. Congratulations to the Heartland Saints for sweeping the tournament this year and bringing home the first place trophies for volleyball and basketball! We thank the Lord for safety, fun, and a spiritual emphasis!

ACADEMY REVIVAL

Aldersgate Christian Academy held its annual revival services February 26–March 2. Students from grades 5-12 met together in a time set aside as a week of spiritual emphasis. GBS/ACA faculty member Mr. David Hartkopf presented practical truth about walking in the light. Students commented positively about messages being relative to their lives. One set of middle school parents reported that the

services had an impact on their son and opened up productive conversations between them. We are thankful for God's presence with us and are praying He continues to work in our academy as we finish this school year!

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT DAY

Student Development Day, an annual event held most recently on February 26, focuses on significant issues facing our society. Two topics addressed this year by two sets of staff/faculty panelists were gun con-



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



Marilyn J. (Turner) Parks, 60, of Fort Payne, AL, passed away January 9, 2018, at Dekalb Regional Medical Center in Fort Payne. She was born in 1957 to Beryl and Althene (Phelps) Turner of Shelbyville, IN. In 1974 she went to GBS where she completed high school (1975) and started college (1975-77). While there she met Paul Timothy Parks (GBS 1975-78). They married in July 1977. She enjoyed sewing, cooking, and spending time with her grandchildren. Marilyn was a member of the Bible Holiness Church, Marion, IN. She is

survived by her husband; two sons, Paul Jr. and Jonathan; daughter, Kimberly; grandchildren, Jordan, Clarissa, Michael, Zoie, Riley, and Randy; brothers, Gerald and Michael; sisters, Joyce, Mary, Marsha, Rebecca, and Teresa. Funeral services were held at Who-So-Ever-Will Community Church in Edinburgh, IN, Rev. Mark Dodrill officiating, with burial following at Rest Haven Cemetery.



Patsy Mae Southerland, 75, of Shirley, IN, peacefully went home to be with her Lord on January 21 at Reid Hospital in Richmond, IN, surrounded by her loving family. She was born in 1942 to John and Edith (Applegate) McNutt of Maysville, KY. Patsy grew up in Maysville and attended the Pilgrim Holiness Church, giving her heart to the Lord at the age of six at the Ruggles Methodist Campground. Patsy attended Asbury University in Wilmore, KY. On

trol and sexual harassment. Students observed these topics presented in a manner that was both biblically centered and logically coherent, and they were given an opportunity to question the panelists.

1810 SUSTAINING DONOR BANQUET

We were delighted to welcome over 130 alumni and friends to our first annual 1810 Sustaining Donor Banquet, February 17, in the GBS Dining Room. This event provided a tangible way for monthly donors to see how their giving impacts campus on a daily basis, and it gave us the opportunity to thank those who regularly give. Guests enjoyed a catered meal, a time of fellowship, live music, and a special presentation from President Loper.

You too can become part of this dedicated group, either by signing up on the GBS website or by calling the school directly. At www.gbs.edu click on "Give Now" at the top of

the screen. On the next screen, just below the picture of the students, click on "1810 Sustaining Donors" and complete the form. Or simply call 513.721.7944, ask for the Administrative Assistant for Constituent Relations/Advancement, and someone will do the work for you!

CHOIR TOUR

The College Choir, directed by Tim Crater and accompanied by Martha Miller, ministered in 14 services in 7 states, as well as an impromptu concert to an enthusiastic audience of travelers and rest area workers at the Tennessee Welcome Center en route to Alabama. Vice President Marc Sankey joined the tour as the GBS representative. Mr. Tim Crater remarked that the tour "was marked by the presence of the Lord both in the services and in special times of worship on the bus. Our hearts were blessed by the reoccurring

theme of trusting our Father enough to fully surrender and obey! We were privileged to reconnect with old friends and make new ones." During the many prayer times together, the choir and faculty prayed for specific requests—including all of the unsaved loved ones that were represented by students on the bus.



We thank the Lord for working through the choir's ministry and for the eagerness of the students to give of themselves as a unified body. God truly brought revival to the choir this year, and we can't thank Him enough for His goodness to us. ■

December 23, 1962, she married Rev. James A. Southerland, Sr., in a ceremony officiated by Rev. J. Wesley Adcock. Patsy and Jim traveled over 14,000 miles in evangelistic work during their first few years of marriage. They began their first pastoral work in Decatur, IL, and were there until Jim was elected president of the Pilgrim Holiness Conference, an office he held for 29 years. They traveled to Russia as missionaries for several years and helped establish a Christian center which is still in operation. At the time of her passing, Patsy and Jim were pastoring the New Hope Church (PHC) in Muncie, IN.

Patsy is survived by her husband James, Sr.; four children, J. Allen, Renee, Deborah, and Yvonne; 19 grandchildren; 6 great-grandchildren; a brother; and two sisters. Funeral services were held at First Church of the Nazarene, Indianapolis, IN, Rev. Don Nichols offici-

ating, with burial following at South Mound Cemetery West Lawn Addition in New Castle.



Doreen Patricia (Harper) Taylor, 89, passed away peacefully January 22 at St. Francis Hospice, Indianapolis, IN. Born in 1928 in St. Kitts, West Indies, to Mary Eglantine McDowell and Reginald Sydney Swindal Harper, Doreen was eldest of five siblings. Although she took courses in secretarial support following high school, she put aside her own career aspirations in support of her siblings' opportunities for advancement. In 1953, Doreen married A. Wingrove Taylor, who had just graduated from God's Bible School, and embarked on an incredible journey in support of her husband's ministry, first in Trinidad and Tobago as pastor of the Belmont Pilgrim Holiness Church, and later as the district superintendent of Trinidad and Tobago. In



commissioning weekend

MAY 17-20

at God's Bible School & College

guest speaker

Dr. James B. Keaton

commencement

Saturday, May 19, 10:00 a.m.

1964, she moved with her family to Barbados during her husband's presidency of the Caribbean Wesleyan College. During this period, she also supported her husband's ministry as pastor of the Kew Wesleyan Holiness Church, undertaking, among other things, the role of Sunday school teacher to a group of young women. When Wingrove became the first indigenous general superintendent of The Wesleyan Holiness Church in the Caribbean, Doreen was by his side supporting him while rearing four children and seeing them safely embarked on their own careers in Barbados, Canada, and the United States.

Doreen is survived by her son Brainerd Blyden-Taylor; three daughters, Paula Taylor, Phoebe Taylor, and MaryGrace Taylor Spalding; seven grandchildren; and two sisters. A Celebration of Life Service was held at Trinity Church, Indianapolis, IN.



Paul Edwin "Eddie" Robbins, 77, of Canaan, IN, passed away February 16 surrounded by his loving family. He was born in 1940 to the late Rev. Stanley Thomas and Frances Lucille Hoadley Robbins of Zanesville, OH. In 1959, Eddie married Edna Marie Brock. He worked for General Motors in Norwood, OH, for 30 years, retiring as a relief specialist in the Trim Department. He then worked as a driver for Bullock Oil Company. He was a longtime member of Bantam Wesleyan Holiness Church, Amelia, OH, and then Trimble Wesleyan Holiness Church, Milton, KY. He was a charter member of Ebenezer Wesleyan Holiness Church, Moorefield, IN. His calling and lifelong commitment was to help people. Three of his sons are ministers, and his daughter, Anna O'Donnell, is coordinator of the Aldersgate Distance Education Program (ADEP) at God's Bible School.

Eddie is survived by his wife of nearly 59 years, Edna Marie Brock Robbins; four sons, Paul Jr., Rodney, Stephen, and Daniel; daughter Anna; 11 grandchildren; 13 great grandchildren; 3 brothers and a sister. Funeral services were held at the Morgan and Nay Funeral Centre in Madison, IN, officiated by Revs. David Dicken, Rodney Robbins, Stephen Robbins, Daniel Robbins, and J. Stevan Manley, followed by interment in the Grandview Memorial Gardens. ■

I STILL LOVE...CHURCH cont.

➡(p9) Christian camps or weekly conventions. Today, all five of my siblings love God. I watch as all of their kids are so tender to the voice of God in their lives. Without the local church in our lives, I have little doubt that this would not be the case. Mom was serious about church. We went Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, and every special service our church hosted. Admittedly, I did not always appreciate this! I slept through some and dreamed about being at the hockey rink through others. But through all of this my mom taught me one important truth—being in God's house mattered. It was at the top of our priority list each week. When company came to town, we went to church. If sporting events collided, we went to church. I have little doubt that if the Prime Minister himself wanted to visit our house on a Sunday morning, Mom would have consented...but only after we had taken him to church!

Now, am I suggesting that to skip church a week and go on vacation will suddenly throw your spiritual walk with God into utter confusion? Of course not. But long-term patterns ultimately define who we are and who we become. In his book, *The Compound Effect*, Darren Hardy convincingly demonstrates the power of good small choices over time. Skipping church a week does not destroy you in the same way that attending church one week does not save you. As a child, I saw what my parents valued through their actions. My guess is my children will follow that pattern.

Our habits ultimately reveal who we are. For me, the joy and long-term benefits of engaging in a local church are so great for my life and family that I cannot help but be passionate about this topic! ■

Ezra Byer is lead pastor at Discovery Pointe Church, which he founded in Toronto, ON, in 2014. After graduating from GBS (BA '11), he was associate pastor of East Lake Community Church, Moneta, VA. This article appeared on Ezra's blog, themondaychristian.com, and is used here with permission. Ezra and his wife Janan live in Toronto.

* Sauls, Scott. "5 Reasons to Not Give Up on the Church." Accessed at relevantmagazine.com.



CAR TALK

by CHUCK PETERS

Make the Most of Travel Time

As parents of four busy children ranging in age from kindergarten to high school, my wife and I find that we spend a lot of time in the car shuttling our active crew from soccer practice to rehearsal to baseball to the library, school activities, and church functions—just like the parents of the kids in your ministry.

The great command in Deuteronomy 6 instructs us to teach God's words to our kids when we sit in our houses and when we walk along the road, when we lie down and when we get up. I believe the principle here is for parents to talk to their kids about the Lord as they interact along their way throughout the day. While few of us spend time walking along the road anymore, most of us find ourselves in close proximity with our kids for

hours each week driving along the highways and byways of our lives.

As we seek to have meaningful interactions with our kids, I am aware that this travel time is prime time for spiritual conversations, but they don't happen automatically. We need to be intentional to redeem our car time. Here are some tips you can use with your kids and share with the parents of the kids in your ministry to help them connect with their children along the road.

1. Disconnect to Connect

The first key to achieving meaningful car talk is to disconnect everyone in the vehicle from their own bubbles of isolation. This may mean instituting some road rules

that set the expectation of communication. Instead of tuning each other out by getting involved in a video, hiding inside headphones, or disappearing into devices, encourage interaction. If you are accustomed to vehicular “device-olation,” this may be a hard habit to break, so take it slowly at first. Don’t expect instant change; it will take time to build a new pattern of interaction. Choose a short trip across town and begin the practice of connecting by disconnecting.

2. Get the Ball Rolling

Don’t put pressure on yourself to have deep spiritual conversations right away. Start by talking about anything. This may be harder than you think, so it’s wise to come prepared with a few questions you can ask to break the ice and get things going. Ask your kids questions that encourage them to talk. Avoid anything that can be answered with “yes” or “no.” Good conversation starters include open-ended questions like, “What do you think about...?” “What do you like/dislike about...?” and “Would you rather...?”

3. Listen First

Great conversations with your kids involve a lot of listening on your part. The goal isn’t for you to preach a sermon, or impart great wisdom in every conversation, but to begin to have regular, natural, meaningful conversations with your kids. The best way to engage your kids in meaningful conversation is to show them that you are truly interested in what they have to say.

4. Point to God

As conversations begin to be a regular part of your routine, teachable moments will surely present themselves. Look for natural ways to connect your conversations and the events of your kids’ lives to the timeless truths found in God’s Word, and to point your kids to the Lord. Help your kids look for God’s presence and action in their days.

Don’t be discouraged if your first attempts at engaging your kids in car talk fall flat. Keep trying, and don’t give up. It may be hard to get them started, but once they start talking, your kids may not stop. Take active steps to begin to engage your kids in conversation as you are on your way throughout your day. ■

Chuck Peters is Director of Operations for LifeWay Kids. A graduate of Columbia Bible College, Chuck has served vocationally and voluntarily in student and children’s ministry for many years. This article from Kids Ministry 101 (www.lifeway.com/kidsministry) is used here with permission.

GOD’S REVIVALIST and BIBLE ADVOCATE

Letters

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.

The Jan/Feb special issue of *God’s Revivalist* on holiness has much good soul food. May we have permission to make up to five copies of several articles for distribution? We would also like to share the editor’s comments (p.2) with several young mothers for their domestic and spiritual encouragement.

JIM & FAITH BRINKMAN
Liberty, KY

Is it possible for me to get extra copies of the Jan/Feb issue of *God’s Revivalist*? We have some new folk coming to our church who have never heard of holiness! I thought this magazine was such a well-rounded one—very practical, but scriptural as well! Unfortunately, in many situations these are as far as the east is from the west!

LINDA PAULUS
Spring Grove, PA

Editor’s note: We try to accommodate requests to reprint articles, especially if the authors are GBS personnel. We also sell extra copies of issues for \$2 apiece plus S&H while supplies last. Send such requests to kfarmer@gbs.edu or call (513) 763-6650.

I think *God’s Revivalist* is the premier holiness magazine in our day. It is attractive, thought provoking, relevant, and biblical. So, thanks for your great work!

BLAKE E. JONES
Cedar Lake, MI

The issue on Oswald Chambers [Jan/Feb 2017] is outstanding. I loaned it to a friend—retired Japanese missionary Dick Barker—who quickly returned it saying that he went to your website and found it along with all the other archived editions. He was so happy to find these. He was thrilled with this issue. I am also contacting my former students at the Caribbean Wesleyan College and explaining how they can read this issue and the issue that featured Dr. Wingrove Taylor [October 2014].

ROBERT BICKERT
Wilmore, KY



Whether you're in a car, bus, airplane, or whatever, you can redeem the time by getting things done while commuting.

It must be admitted: research shows that multi-tasking is not really very effective, so you're not going to drive with 100% focus and listen to your Bible on audio with 100% focus at the same time. It just can't happen. This is side-tasking, not multi-tasking. Nevertheless, it may be worth doing two things at once, even if you can't do both extremely well. There are things you can do while commuting to make the best use of your time.

1. Just sit in silence. I love technology and listening to podcasts and sermons, but sometimes I get tired of all the noise and just want to ride in silence. I just want to think, daze off (but not too much when I'm driving, of course) and be alone. Because I'm slightly introverted, I find that these times of being alone can be energizing. So one way to enjoy God's grace as you drive to work or ride on a train or airplane is to commute in silence and don't put too much pressure on yourself to do anything.

2. Listen to books on Audible. I used Audible for a while and loved it. However, it got too expensive for me, plus my commute changed, so I don't use it anymore. With the emergence of podcasts in the past few years, I prefer a podcast instead of an audiobook. But, if you have a decent commute time (more than 45 minutes), this could be worth it.

3. Listen to your Bible on audio. I recently listened to the entire Pentateuch while driving to and from places. It's amazing how much more I picked up (and probably missed) while listening to the Bible on audio. While I still prefer traditional Bible reading, listening to your Bible on

audio is better than not consuming Bible content at all and could be a regular option for you extremely busy folk, especially those of you who work long hours.

4. Pray. Prayer is communication with God, and like other relationships, we need constant communication for deep intimacy. I often find myself praying in the car and enjoying it. These can be quick and fun prayers. With that said, however, praying in the car probably shouldn't be the extent of your prayer life. That is to say, if the only time you ever pray at all is while you are driving, your prayer life is suffering more than you realize. Pray in the car, but view it as merely supplemental, not the diet. You should also pray in private and with others.

5. Catch up on phone calls. I'd rather text than talk, but I appreciate a phone call every once in a while. I have a friend who lives in a different state who calls me once or twice a year to chat. "So, why did you call me?" I always ask. He says he was thinking of me and wanted to see how I was doing. This makes me feel loved. Perhaps every once in a while you can give someone a phone call just to see how they're doing. You never know, you may make someone's day! Obviously, you'll want to avoid this if it's illegal in your state to talk on the phone while driving.

6. Listen to sermons. I used to listen to more sermons than I do now. Again, I think this is partly due to the emergence of podcasts, but I still do listen to sermons while commuting. Hearing the preaching of God's Word done well is always a nourishment to your soul.

7. Ride with others. Discipleship doesn't have to only be during one-on-one coffee times. It doesn't have to always be formal. I've heard of those who use car rides as discipleship times. They invite others whose lives they want to invest in to come along while they drive to the grocery store or somewhere else to catch up with and talk about the Christian life. In this way, you can kill two birds (e.g., discipleship, grocery shopping) with one stone (e.g., driving). You're driving to the store, you might as well take someone with you, if possible.

We are called to make the best use of time. Most of us are commuting quite often and can seize these opportunities to get things done. ■

David Qaoud is a seminary student, husband, and writer. This article, adapted from his blog, gospelrelevance.com, is used with permission.

**Christian,
Seize Your
Commute**

Dear Phil

VARIANCES IN GREEK NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS

Your October 2015 article, "The Various Greek Texts," mentioned four kinds of differences that exist in Greek manuscripts. Can you please cite some specific examples of the differences in each category? —Keith

Dear Keith,

Following are samples in each category from John 10, a chapter I'm picking at random.

I. Spelling Differences (~90% of variants)

- John 10:1 Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν....
"Truly truly I say to you"
 - λεγω υμειν – "I say to you" – alternate spelling of "to you."
 - λελεγω υμιν – "I say to you" – misspelling of "I say."
- John 10:2 ὁ δὲ εἰσερχόμενος διὰ τῆς θύρας ποιμὴν ἐστίν τῶν προβάτων. "The one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep."
 - εστι – "is" without moveable nu – alternate spelling.
 - εστην – "is" – by the 800s η and ι were pronounced the same, so this is a misspelling due to sound.
 - εστη – "is" misspelling for εστι.
- John 10:3 τούτῳ ὁ θυρωρὸς ἀνοίγει = "to this one the doorkeeper opens."
 - ανηγει – "he opens" – variant spelling, same meaning.
 - ανοιγη – "he opens" – variant spelling, same meaning.

- ανογει – "he opens" – variant spelling, same meaning.
- ανειγι – "he opens" – variant spelling, same meaning.

All these forms are variant spellings of the same word probably due to fluctuations in pronunciation over time and region. There are hundreds of thousands of these kinds of spelling differences in the NT.

II. Word Order Differences (~9% of variants)

- John 10:1 λεγω υμιν vs. υμιν λεγω – reverse order, both mean "I say to you."
- John 10:4 την φωνην αυτου vs. αυτου την φωνην – reverse order, both mean "his voice."
- John 10:5 των αλλοτριων την φωνην vs. την φωνην των αλλοτριων – reverse order, both mean "the voice of strangers."

III. Other Differences That Make No Difference in the Meaning (~0.9% of variants)

- Different Verb
John 10:3 – "he calls his sheep." Some manuscripts have φωνει, others have καλει – different verbs, no difference in meaning. Both mean "to call."

John 10:11 – "lays down" vs "gives." Some manuscripts have τιθησιν; others have διδωσιν – different verbs, no real difference in contextual meaning.

- Different Tense
John 10:6 – "they did not understand." Some manuscripts have εγνωσαν – aorist form of γινωσκω; others have εγνωσκον – imperfect form of γινωσκω = "they were not understanding." No communicable difference in meaning.

- Presence or Absence of Article
John 10:7. In most Greek manuscripts, Jesus' name has an article in front of it (ὁ Ἰησοῦς). A few do not (Ἰησοῦς). No difference in meaning.

- Addition of Conjunction
John 10:19 – "A division occurred again." Some manuscripts add the word "then" = "Then a division occurred again." Makes no difference in meaning. Verse 19's events clearly follow from what came before.

IV. Differences That Make a Difference (~0.1% of variants)

There are very few differences that make a difference in the NT. John 10:29 is an example. Two or three early manuscripts have "My Father, what he has given me is greater than all." Most others have "My Father, who has given (them) to me, is greater than all." The difference is whether the Father or the gift is being said to be "greater than all." Most English versions go with "who has given." Bottom line: either option is theologically acceptable. None of the "differences that make a difference" affect any fundamental doctrine of Scripture. Praise God!

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.



student focus

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN CANADA

The Canadian government has taken positions on sexuality without the consent of its citizenry. For example, Alberta's Child and Family Services barred a Christian couple from adopting a child because their religious views about sexuality were incompatible with the official government position. Additionally, Ontario passed a law giving state agencies the power to prevent families from adopting or fostering children if the parents would not affirm the child transitioning their "gender identity" from male to female or vice-versa.

BACK TO MOTHERHOOD

Erica Komisar, a veteran psychoanalyst and parent guidance expert, penned the book *"Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters,"* which explains why a mother's emotional and physical presence is critical to a child's life, especially during the first three years of life. "The more time a woman can devote to the joy and job of mothering a child in the first three years," Komisar has said, "the better the chance her child will be emotionally secure and healthy throughout his life." The author, also a clinical social worker, has been in private practice for the last 25 years. She is not a conservative but a liberal feminist who

builds her case after 27 years of research and experience.

58% OF ABORTIONS DONE "TO MAKE OTHERS HAPPY"

A study by the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons, which surveyed 987 post-abortive women, found that 58% of women reported that they had an abortion to make others happy, while 28% aborted their babies because they feared their partner would leave them. The group also showed that 67.5% had a visit with a psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor after the first abortion, whereas only 13% had done so before the abortion. Similarly, 51% reported using prescription drugs for psychological health after the abortion, compared to only 6.6% before.

DATA ON SAME-SEX PARENTING

Since 2004, the American Psychological Association supports the position that there is no difference between children raised by same-sex parents and opposite-sex parents. However, there is mounting evidence to the contrary. For example, an article by sociology professor Paul Sullins published in *Demography* (12/2017), found children with same-sex parents suffer emotional problems two to three times as often as children raised by opposite-sex parents. ■

MELISSA CROSLY spent the first 11 years of her life at GBS because her parents were the administrators of the academy. She feels privileged to have had Christian parents teaching her from an early age about the love of God. While growing up on campus, she developed a "special connection to the college" and was impressed with the consortium arrangement that now allows her to take classes from nearby colleges with no additional tuition charge.

Melissa appreciates that the "teachers really care about us and invest their time into our lives." She notes that her "desire to serve and follow God has increased" and she feels like she is "leaving with a solid Christian worldview."

After graduating with her business degree this spring, she plans to use her skills to work in children's homes/orphanages. She is excited about this next phase of her life. "I have always had a love for children and want to use the gifts that God has given me to work in children's ministries." ■

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



— Called Unto Holiness —

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

GROW IN GRACE: 2 PETER 3:18

by Asa Mahan

*“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To Him be glory now and forever. Amen.”*

This passage is everywhere cited by those who deny the doctrine of the Higher Life in disproof of that doctrine.... When individuals are urged to put away at once all sin, and accept of Christ as a complete Savior from its power, their reply is: We do not believe such a doctrine as that. We believe, on the other hand, in growing in grace, that is, in becoming gradually less and less sinful, and more and more holy. Hence the advocates of the Higher Life are accused of a disbelief in Christian growth, the quite common belief being that should we “cease from sin,” we should cease altogether to “grow in grace.” On this doctrine we remark:

1. That if it is true that growth in grace implies, as is here affirmed, present sin, then undeniably Christ was a sinner and was conscious of the fact. In Luke 2:52, it is affirmed absolutely that Christ did grow in grace. “And Jesus increased (grew) in wisdom and stature, and in favour (grace) with God and man.” The word here rendered **favor** is the identical word rendered **grace** in the passage under consideration. We have, then, “Growth in grace,” as a matter of fact, in the total absence of all sin, and the precept “grow in grace” does not of itself imply at all the presence of sin in any form.

2. If the command “grow in grace” implies the presence of sin in the heart, and such growth implies a gradual giving-up of sin, then God has given us a positive command not to cease from all sin at once, but to do it **gradually**. We cast infinite dishonor upon God when we impute to Him any such precept as that....

3. If the precept “grow in grace” requires, and it does so according to the exposition under consideration—if it requires an advancement from certain degrees of sin to others less sinful, and from states of imperfect holiness to others less imperfect, then it is impossible for us to intend obedience to this precept, and at the same time intend

full obedience to the will of God. It is a contradiction in terms to suppose that we can aim at the same moment at perfect and imperfect obedience to the will of God. An exposition that renders the divine precepts, as this probably does, thus contradictory, cannot be true.

4. Peter, before he wrote the above precept, we remark finally, set forth, under the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, the renunciation of all sin as the first condition of real growth in grace. “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings” (in other words, all sin), “as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” Sin in the new-born soul is not more necessary to growth in holiness or grace than is disease in the new-born babe requisite to its normal physical growth and development. Sin in the new-born soul is there as a moral and spiritual disease and renders its moral and spiritual growth unhealthy and unnatural, just as disease in the new-born babe renders its growth dwarfish, phthisical, or consumptive. When we have “put off the old man which is corrupt after the deceitful lusts” and “put on the new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness,” then and only then are we prepared to “grow up in Christ in all things.” When growth in grace in the churches shall accord with God’s revealed conditions and method, there will be “none sickly and none feeble” among their members. Wherever the old and unscriptural idea shall obtain, there will be none among them but “the sickly and the feeble.” ■

Asa Mahan (1799–1889) was a U.S. Congregational clergyman and educator serving as the first president of Oberlin College (OH), president of Adrian College (MI), and a trustee for Lane Seminary while pastoring in Cincinnati, OH. This excerpt is from Misunderstood Texts of Scripture Expounded and Explained (Schmul Publishing, 1996, pp.138-41).



THE BAPTISM WE NEED

by Allan P. Brown, Chair

GBS Division of Ministerial Education

Scripture—Matthew 3:1-17

Text: Matthew 3:14—John the Baptist speaking to Jesus: “I need to be baptized by you.”

This is the humble, honest confession of one of the greatest men who ever graced planet earth. In fact, according to the statement of Jesus, up to that time in history there had never been a man born of woman that was greater than John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11).

I. The Character of John the Baptist

John the Baptist was a God-sent man. He was born to Zacharias and Elizabeth and filled with the Spirit while yet in the womb of his mother (Luke 1:15). His mission in life, according to the angel Gabriel, was to be the forerunner of the Messiah. John, as “the prophet of the Most High” (Luke 1:76), would minister “in the spirit and power of Elijah,” seeking “to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people for the Lord” (Luke 1:17).

Not only was John a great man and a God-sent man, he was a faithful man. When he was grown, we find him boldly declaring God’s message: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). He offered “a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Luke 3:3).

He was also a humble man. When the Jewish authorities came and asked him if he, John, was the predicted Messiah, he replied, “I am not.” He then

described the Messiah’s ministry. He said, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand to clear thoroughly His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Luke 3:16-17).

John the Baptist stirred the hearts of the Jewish people. Great crowds gathered around him to hear his message and many turned to God. In the midst of what the world would call a “successful ministry,” John shows that he is not self-motivated and egotistical. When he recognized the personal identity of the Messiah, he cried, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Shortly thereafter the crowds began to forsake John and started following Jesus. When some of John’s disciples tried to stir up jealousy and resentment, John said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). John was delighted that his followers, who had been so faithful to him, should turn their backs on him and follow Jesus. John’s response demonstrated that not only was he not jealous or resentful of Jesus’ popularity, but he truly had a servant’s heart, for a faithful servant rejoices when his master’s work prospers!

II. The Confession of John the Baptist

Yet, when John the Baptist stood in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had come to participate in John’s baptism, this great and godly man bowed his head and confessed to Jesus, “I need to be baptized by you” (Matt. 3:14).

No, John was not talking about water baptism. He was not saying that he needed Jesus to baptize him with water for the remission of his sins. Every Gospel writer that mentions the ministry of John the Baptist speaks of him only in glowing terms. There is nothing in Scripture that indicates that John himself was not saved. He, without doubt, was a godly man.

However, John the Baptist knew that the Messiah had come into the world to administer a specific kind of baptism, a baptism that did not involve water. God had told John that the person “upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit” (John 1:33). Thus John is confessing his need for the type of baptism the Messiah will perform: a baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John’s confession is all the more remarkable since the Bible declares that he was “filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15). Evidently, the “filling” with the Holy Spirit that John experienced before his birth, and the baptism with

the Holy Spirit and fire that Jesus would offer His followers, are different in nature.

The first “filling with the Holy Spirit” that John experienced was an equipping and an anointing by the Holy Spirit for John’s ministry as the forerunner of the Messiah. Such a “filling” with the Holy Spirit was also experienced by his mother Elizabeth, when she was visited by Mary, the mother of Jesus. At the sound of Mary’s greeting, baby John leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was “filled with the Holy Spirit” with the result that she received divine insight into what had transpired when the angel Gabriel told Mary of her role as the Messiah’s mother (Luke 1:39-45). Such a filling also happened to John’s father, Zacharias, who, at John’s birth, was “filled with the Holy Spirit” and “prophe-sied” (Luke 1:67-79). Evidently, these fillings with the Holy Spirit enabled and equipped the recipients to say and to do what God wanted said and done.

On the other hand, Jesus’ baptism with the Holy Spirit was identified by Luke as being identical to “the promise of the Father” spoken of by the prophet Joel. Luke 24:49 records that Jesus told His disciples, “And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high.” This command is also repeated in Acts 1:4-5.

According to Acts 2:1-4, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Later in the same day, Peter preached to the crowd of people who had gathered to see what was happening. He explained that Jesus had risen from the dead and had ascended to heaven. Then he said, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:32-33). According to Peter, Jesus’ baptism with the Holy Spirit was inaugurated on the day of Pentecost. Further, Peter, a few years later at the Jerusalem counsel, added that the baptism of the Spirit that occurred on the day of Pentecost resulted in their hearts being purified by faith (Acts 15:9).

III. The Confusion People have about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Book of Acts records four specific events when people received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It occurred at Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13), at

Samaria (Acts 8:14-25), at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48), and at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7). From these four events, we learn the following truths about how to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The baptism with the Holy Spirit follows no consistent pattern. There were a variety of ways that the believers in the early church received this baptism. Some had dramatic phenomenon like wind and fire accompany their baptism, others did not. Some are baptized in water before the experience, others are not. Some receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, others do not. Some receive it as the result of the man of God praying for them, others do not. Some first receive teaching about the Holy Spirit before they receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, others do not. As a result of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, some speak in tongues, others do not. Some prophesy, others do not.

If a person seeks to compare the recorded experiences in Acts of people who received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and then asks, “Who is right?” they will learn that all of the descriptions are right because they are telling their personal experience of being baptized with the Holy Spirit. However, all of them would be wrong if they insisted that every other person’s experience related to being baptized with the Holy Spirit be exactly the same as theirs. The Book of Acts gives us the record of the practices and experiences of the early Church. It is the Epistles that give us the teachings of the early Church, and none of the Epistles stress the way or manner in which one is to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

What we learn from Acts is the purpose of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Jesus told his disciples that it provided the needed power and incentive to be witnesses for Jesus wherever they went (Acts 1:8).

Conclusion

There is one thing that both the Book of Acts and the Epistles make clear: A person cannot be baptized with the Holy Spirit without experiencing change. The baptism with the Holy Spirit resulted in praise. The baptism with the Holy Spirit resulted in heart purity and power; power to witness, power to heal, power to live victorious lives. The baptism with the Holy Spirit also resulted in unity. It is not just John the Baptist who needed Jesus’ baptism with the Holy Spirit. That baptism is needed today. All of God’s children need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire. ■

Editor’s Note: Dr. Allan Brown has graciously consented to contribute articles on substantive theological and biblical concerns. To allow him more time for his new assignment, the “Revivalist Pulpit” will be featuring various pulpiteers who consent to share their outlines with *God’s Revivalist* readers.

DOLLARS from Heaven

 by Sean Dietrich

I met her when I was a boy. It was a double-dog dare. I drew the short straw—I have a history of drawing the short straw.

She was standing outside the supermarket, ringing a bell, wearing a Santa hat. I'd heard my mother say she was a little "off." My father called her "plumb nuts."

"Merry Christmas," she said. She handed me a dollar bill, smacked my hindparts, then shook her bell.

I ran back to the gang. They hollered, "Did she give you a dollar? Did she smack your hiney? Is she REALLY crazy?"

Yes. Yes. Not sure.

We inspected the George Washington. On it were hearts, drawn in red marker. And red words: "For prayer, call this number...."

She must've handed out mountains of those bills to folks coming and going. People all looked at her with confused looks.

When I hit college, I had to write a semester paper on misunderstood people who were "different." Miss Martha was the first who came to mind.

I finally found a number for the old woman through a friend of a friend. The woman's daughter answered the phone and said, "Mama's been gone for years now, but I can tell you about her."

It went like this:

She worked as a custodian, and one December she volunteered to be a bell-ringer.

On her first day, she ran into a young man who said he was depressed. She took the man aside and prayed with him for an hour. Before they parted ways, she wrote her number on a piece of paper and said, "Call me, anytime."

The man never called. He took his own life days later. It changed her. She started cashing paychecks into one-dollar bills, scribbling her number on them.

"Mama," her daughter asked. "Why not write your number on plain paper?"

"Folks throw away paper," she said. "Nobody throws away a dollar."

She was right. Phone calls trickled in for nearly a decade. All kinds. All hours. People with problems. Men whose wives left. Children who were grieving their parents. Heartbroken teenagers.

Sometimes at night, her daughter recalls her mother shuffling into the kitchen, half asleep, answering a phone, then praying until sunup.

"How'd you get my dollar?" the old woman would ask. Answers were always different.

The farthest phone call came from Wyoming—a woman who'd been diagnosed with cancer. She prayed long and hard.

She prayed for anyone who dialed the number—the desperate, depressed, degenerates, and snot-nosed kids calling from curiosity.

Like me.

Anyway, she quit doing it decades ago. Age caught up with her. Age catches everyone.

She died of pneumonia in her own bed, and I understand a varied lot attended her funeral—some from church, others from support groups.

"She'd wait in parking lots after AA meetings just to pray for folks. They'd stand in line to let her lay hands on 'em."

There were so many dollars in her casket, you couldn't see her dress.

"Mama was a different woman," said her daughter. "I can accept that now. She wasn't perfect, but she taught me how to care."

Sometimes I wish I'd never spent that dollar she gave me. But then, I hope it found its way into the hands of someone who needed it.

I got a C on my college paper.

Miss Martha got an A plus when she met the One who listens to all prayers. ■

Sean Dietrich is a columnist, novelist, and public speaker who has authored seven books. This article is from his blog, *Sean of the South* (seandietrich.com), and is used here with permission.



photo of Cheryl Waiters by Kevin Moser



EBENEZER ACCOMPANIES FAMILY TO PORT ST. LUCIE

John (BRE '84) and Shanda (Huber) (1981-83) Croft

After 33 years of combined pastoral and missionary service, John and Shanda Croft started over, entering a new mission field.

St. Lucie County is home to Crosstown Fellowship Church in Port St. Lucie, Florida. This is a five-year church plant begun by Phil and Crystal Spriggs. Following a couple of sudden pastoral changes, the church was facing closure.

Port St. Lucie is a real mission field with a community comprised of 71% unchurched in the 2010 census. The community has strong representation of many races and ethnicities, including Latinos, Haitians, Caribbeans, and African-Americans. Crosstown Fellowship is striving to reflect the face of the community as a multiethnic congregation.

John was the third of four children of Rev. John and Naomi Croft, missionaries (11 years) and pastor (more than 40 years) in The Wesleyan Church. All four of their children have followed in the ministry footprints of their parents. They all attended and graduated from GBS: Bob, Eunice, John, and Dorcas.

Before we turn our attention back to John and Shanda, let's

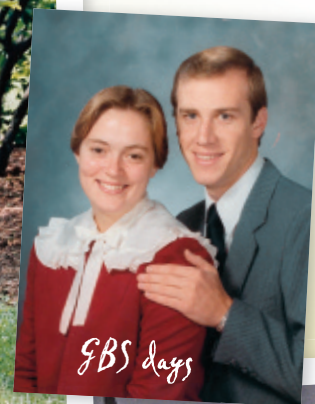
briefly mention what his siblings have been doing. Bob (BA '79) and Cindy (Franklin) Croft (BA '81) have been pastoring the Hyde Wesleyan Church for more than 30 years. Dorcas Croft (BA '89) is a missionary—spending the last 25 years in Swaziland, Africa. Eunice (Croft) (BA '82) and her husband Rick Cox (BRE '86) have pastored in Kentucky and Pennsylvania, served 8 years as missionaries in Africa, and have been church planting in Pittsburgh the past 6 years.

While John was at GBS, he met Shanda Huber, who was enrolled in the joint nursing program between GBS and The Christ Hospital. Like the Crofts, the Huber family has been dedicated to ministry, also. Shanda's brother Kent (BRE '90) and wife Jill (Brookens) (BA '90) are pastoring a Wesleyan Church in Southern Indiana. Her two sisters are married to ministers.

Cindy (Huber) (BA '97) and Steve Caniff are also pastoring in Southern Indiana. Tamarah (Huber) (BA '97) and David Crosley (BRE '97) are pastoring in northeastern Ohio, and David is a member of the GBS board of trustees.

John and Shanda married in September 1984. After graduation from GBS, they pastored for 10 years in Falmouth, KY (1985-1994). They then served as missionaries with Global Partners pioneering the Wesleyan work in the Czech Republic (1994-2016). Shanda homeschooled their three children (Travis, Brooke, and Rachael) and John coached a semi-pro football team for ten of those years. The Lord helped them to plant a church in the city of Brno, and today there are three Wesleyan churches across the Czech Republic.

Widely known as director of the JESUS Film Partnership of



*showing the Jesus Film
— Ghana, Africa*



Global Partners, John references God's faithfulness through that ministry (2012-2017). "We saw 700 new churches planted during the last five years around the globe." However, the Crofts knew that God was calling them elsewhere, and although there were a lot of unknowns, they had "absolute confidence in God's faithfulness."

In June 2017, the Crofts accepted the invitation of the Florida District of The Wesleyan Church to serve as the pastor of Crosstown Fellowship Church in Port St. Lucie. When they arrived at their new home, the church had been without leadership for several months and was down to 15 people. They immediately went to work, and it began to show. Their vision is for the church to grow with the purpose of multiplying themselves into each of the Port St. Lucie quadrants.

"I begin with the end in mind," John explains. "Shanda and I like to start things, to build culture. With God's help, we did that in the Czech Republic beginning with basically a dream 23 years ago."

A large rock accompanied the Crofts to Port St. Lucie. It isn't especially noticeable—there are no special markings on it. But the rock is a treasured family possession. It is the Crofts' "Ebenezer" stone (1 Sam. 7:12).

"We keep the rock in front of our house," John said. "Every time we come and go, we are reminded that God has been faithful. The rock doesn't move. God doesn't move. God has always been faithful wherever we have served." ■



*a treasured family possession
in a new setting*



© Juster Images

THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

JUST THE FACTS!

***"The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar Witness; 'For,' they said, 'it is a witness between us that the Lord is God.'"*—Joshua 22:34 NASB**

The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh were going home! For years they had been traveling with their Israelite brothers on the mission to conquer Canaan, but now they had fulfilled their promise and could return to their families on the eastern side of the Jordan. Just across the river, with home in sight, they constructed an altar of remembrance. Miles away in the Israelite camp, news arrived. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh had defied God by building an altar by the Jordan river! God had been very clear that no sacrifices could be made except on the altar He commissioned. What if God punished the rest of the tribes for the sin of their brothers? There was only one thing to do—attack and wipe out this sin from among them. But someone had a revolutionary idea. Perhaps they should check the facts by sending a delegation. When the delegation arrived, they found that, far from being an altar to defy the Lord, their brothers had raised it as a testimony to the descendants of Israel on both sides of the river. It was an altar of witness, not one of rebellion. What if Israel hadn't found out the truth? History would tell a much different tale. How often do we rush to judgment and marshal our troops before we have the full story? How many lives, churches, schools, and homes have been torn apart because we didn't take the time to learn the truth? The next time you hear a "report," remember the altar by the Jordan. Facts matter. ■

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

APRIL 2018

23



GOD'S BIBLE SCHOOL & COLLEGE

VIP DAY

April 20, 2018

