

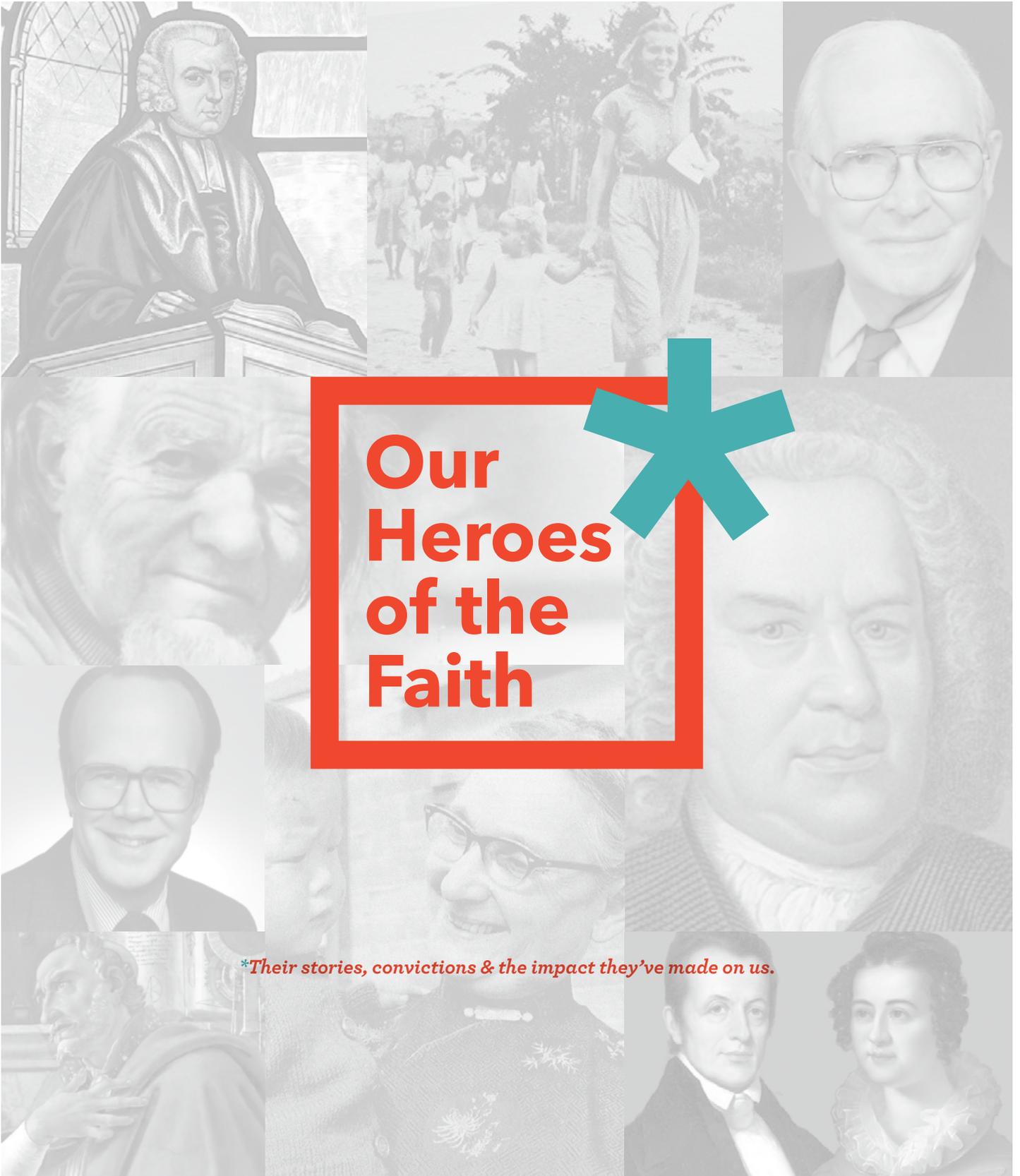


Beverly Heights
Presbyterian
Church

scattered seeds.

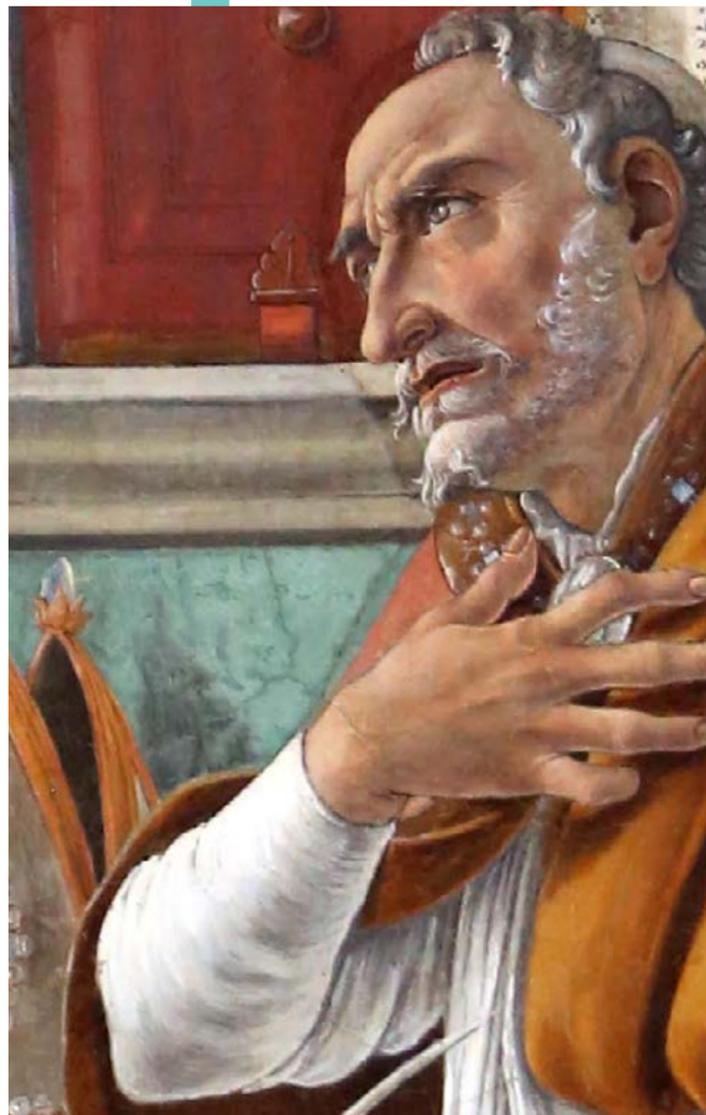
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021



Our Heroes of the Faith

**Their stories, convictions & the impact they've made on us.*



Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

BY RICK DURSTEIN

Before Augustine was in my life, there was R.C. Sproul.

I give credit to R.C. for encouraging me to dig deeper into my faith, to not just *believe* in God, but to believe God.

R.C.'s sermon podcasts over the decades answered the hard questions I was asking about God, His creation, and what my role is in it. Most of all his encouragement gave me the confidence to know that if I trusted God, He would bless my diligent, honest questioning. And he has!

R.C. delivered a memorable message about an incident shortly after his conversion at Westminster College. He sat through boring



philosophy class lectures until one day the teacher introduced the writings of Augustine. It so impacted R.C. that he changed his major to theology that very day and the rest is history.

I believe that R.C. loved the writings of Augustine for the same reasons I do. Augustine's *Confessions* clarified in my mind that like him, I was a sinner from birth, and that it went downhill from there.

I spent over 50 years denying that fact before I encountered the Truth, that I was at war against God. That was my "bad news" and despite Augustine's similar early life, you can hardly read a sentence of his *Confessions* without him breaking into doxology over the mercies and grace of God despite his sinful nature. This man knew he was redeemed and his praise and gratitude came out in everything he wrote. I so desire to live my life that way.

A bit of ancient history for context. Aurelius Augustine was born in 354 A.D. to lower middle-class parents, in Algeria, part of the slowly decaying Roman Empire. Christianity had been given legal status only 40 years before his birth. Until that point Christians were persecuted, under Diocletian, in the most evil of ways, at the hands of men who knew how to torture.

So, though Christianity was legitimate at his birth, it was a minority religion ... hmmm, not unlike our day. While the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible was not published until Augustine was 28 years old, many partial Latin versions abounded before his birth.

I am amazed by how much we know about this ancient giant of the Faith.

His mother, Monnica, raised Christian, prayerfully desired to see her oldest son come to faith. Augustine was well educated in Greek philosophical thought, and like any rebellious teenager, in university he abandoned his mother's faith to follow a popular religion, Manichaeism.

Augustine proved himself a brilliant student and rhetorician.

He became a teacher of rhetoric which offered a life of travel, relative wealth, and leisure to the point of riotous living. In the process he managed to impregnate a young lover who gave him a son along the way. By his late 20s, he was wallowing in the pig sty, doing quite well. He didn't have a clue that he was at war against God.

I can see a lot of similarities in his early life to my own. But God ...

As an intelligent rhetorician, Augustine soon realized the flaws in Manichaeism.

In God's timing and supported by his mother's constant prayers (and hounding), he met his equal in rational exegesis and argumentation, Father Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. After months of dedicated study without the distractions of modernity, the Holy Spirit brought Augustine to see the simple Truth in Christianity.

Once Augustine was baptized into the faith his rise was meteoric.

His background in rhetoric prepared him to become the most able defender of the Faith as the Roman Empire and Rome itself fell into the hands of the barbarians.

More than five million words of Augustine's writings are preserved today. I am amazed by how much we know about this ancient giant of the Faith as a result.

Augustine's own writings detail a fascinating life story as a defender of orthodox Christianity throughout many critical controversies during his lifetime. At age 40, Augustine was installed as Bishop of Hippo (Algeria).

His other masterpiece tome, *The City of God*, rips to shreds the accusations against Christianity as the cause of Rome's decline. This work is also a blueprint for how a Christian is to live as a citizen of God's kingdom in the midst of the City of Man.

Both Luther and Calvin pointed to Augustine's beliefs as the bedrock to which the reformers were returning. In my opinion, and that of many others, after the Apostle Paul, no mere man has had a greater influence upon Christianity.

Elisabeth Elliot, the young widow in Ecuador, with daughter Valerie.



Elisabeth Elliot (1926-2015)

BY MARY WOLLING

You may remember the incredible story of Christian missionary Jim Elliot, who was speared to death on a beach in Ecuador in 1956.

Equally inspiring was the life of his widow, Elisabeth Elliot, who served the Lord for 59 years following Jim's tragic death.



I became acquainted with Elisabeth – and her truly remarkable story – in the early 1970s. She was a Writer in Residence at Gordon College in Massachusetts while Rick and I were students there.

She arrived at Gordon in the midst of her very amazing life when her second husband, Addison Leitch (the former chaplain at Grove City College), came to Gordon-Conwell Seminary to teach theology. Addison was stricken with cancer and Elisabeth was widowed for a second time when he passed away in 1973.

Elisabeth was a close friend of my spiritual mother, Judith Bynum (wife of Dr. Bynum who spoke at our retirement festivities in 2018), so I had opportunities to be in her presence over the years.

Despite her fame, Elisabeth was a humble servant of God – quiet, shy, unassuming.

Tall in stature, her presence was always noticeable even though she never stepped forward to be noticed. Her story is one worthy of investigation, filled with romance, joy, sorrow, tragedy, adventure and danger.

Elisabeth married her college sweetheart Jim in the late 1940s after they graduated from Wheaton College in Illinois. Together they sought to follow God's leading for their future as missionaries. They were willing to give all for the spread of the Gospel and to go where He would send them. Little did they know that all would be required of them in the days to come. Jim Elliot's death occurred while trying to make a long-anticipated contact with the Waodani Indian tribe in Ecuador. He and

his missionary companions met their death on an isolated beach in the middle of the jungle.

It was an event that rocked the world as news of this tragedy spread to all corners of the globe. Elisabeth, now a young widow with daughter Valerie, eventually went back into that same jungle with her baby and spent two years taking the gospel to the people who had killed her husband.

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How does that happen in the day in which we live? How can one risk all for the sake of the kingdom of God?

We never know what God has in mind for our future as we cannot see beyond today, as one hymnwriter so aptly put it.

Life in the kingdom is not for the fainthearted as one experiences what God has in mind, where He will lead, what sacrifices one may have to make, and how one may be required to live in the future.

I would encourage you to acquaint yourself with this amazing woman's life by reading some of the many books she has written over the years. They are filled with examples of a life well lived in the kingdom. Among my favorite titles of hers are:

*The Savage My Kinsman
Through Gates of Splendor
Suffering Is Never for Nothing
A Chance to Die*

Recently reading her biography, written this past year and endorsed by daughter Valerie, has increased my love and admiration for this wonderful woman of God.

Becoming Elisabeth Elliot, by author Ellen Vaughn, tells her whole story from beginning to end. It gives a picture of the woman who put her trust in God and never looked back.

It is filled with personal diary entries and letters which Valerie allowed to be used. What a tremendous story and witness of God's work in the life of one person! Many of my friends know that I am fond of the quote from Elisabeth: "Do the next thing." I heard her say this in a pre-marriage class she taught in 1971 for engaged women only, just before Rick and I married.

It was practical advice that has stayed with me through 50 years of marriage and service. Whatever God gives to our hand to do – whether raising children, serving others, teaching, working, whatever one does – ... **"do the next thing"** ... with a joyful and sacrificial heart.

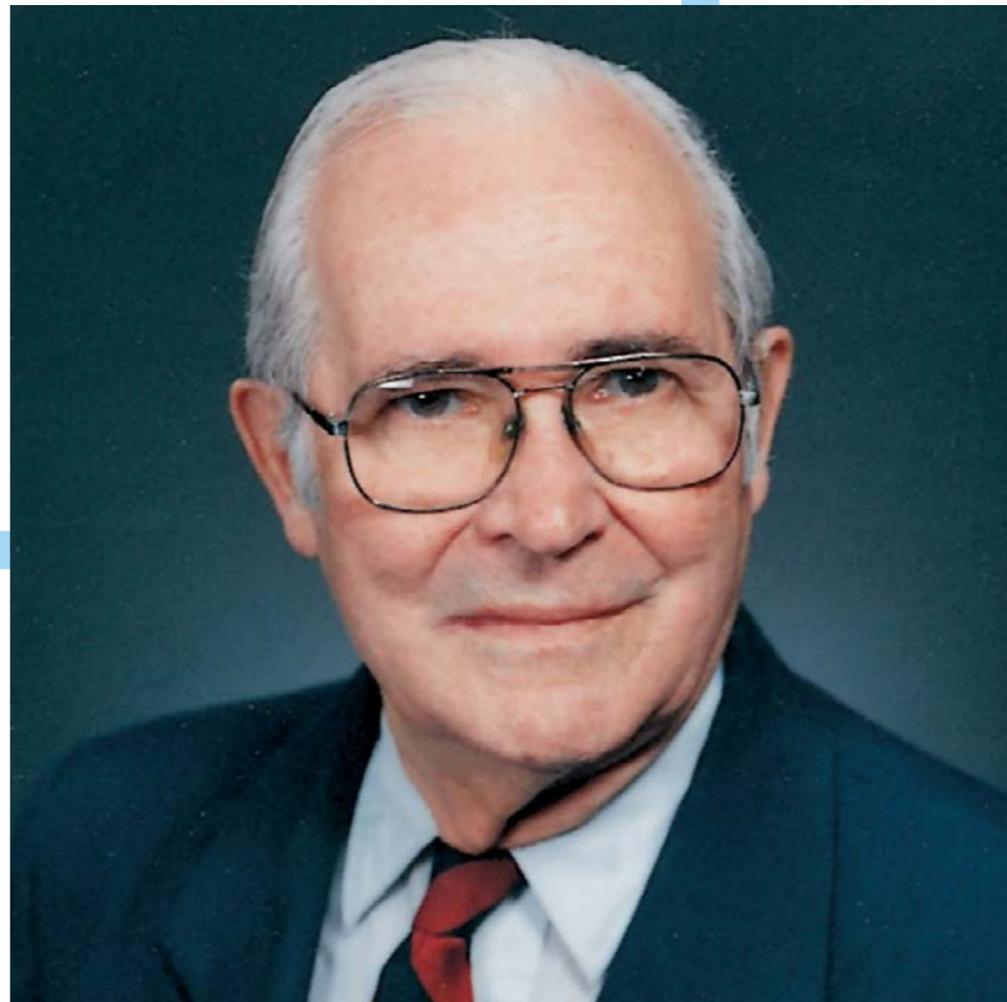
That was Elisabeth, who since 2015 has known the joy of being present with her Savior in a very real way, having influenced countless persons for the kingdom, including me. Now at home with the Lord. *Soli Deo gloria.*

John Gerstner (1914-1996)

BY JOAN MARCINKO

In 1959, Andy and I were newly married and joined Brentwood Presbyterian Church. We assumed a church would be faithful to the Bible. We knew nothing about the liberal movement and certainly nothing about “Neo-orthodoxy.”

We were headed toward a year of strange teaching and a real education! An assistant pastor was hired from Harvard and began teaching this theology.



As ignorant as we were, the Holy Spirit started nudging us that this teaching was wrong. We found others who believed like us and formed a small group. Fortunately, in the group was an older couple who became our spiritual parents.

One of the members had heard a really good teacher/preacher at First Presbyterian Church downtown and urged us to go hear him. His name was John Gerstner. Our group became his groupies and we followed him wherever he would be teaching.

The first series we heard him preach, as providence would have it, was on the dangers of “Neo-orthodoxy”! God knew exactly what we needed.

John Gerstner was born in Philadelphia in 1914. He earned his Master of Divinity at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and a doctorate at Harvard University in Philosophy and Church History. He became a professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh and retired from that institution.

He taught with energy and passion that encouraged critical thinking. His style of

teaching was Socratic where he dialogued with people by him either asking a question or a person asking a question which resulted in a dialogue with Dr. Gerstner for 15 to 20 minutes.

I once asked him a question, which was, “Does man live in darkness or light?” (Remember, I was a very young Christian then!) At the end of the discussion, I was mentally wiped out!

It was under Dr. Gerstner’s teaching that I heard about a beautiful flower, TULIP! It is an acronym for T=Total Depravity, U= Unconditional Election, L=Limited Atonement, I= Irresistible Grace, P=Perseverance of the Saints. Thus, began our journey into Reformed Theology.

From the beginning God chooses people. He chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, etc., all the heroes of the Old Testament. He even chose me! What a glorious thought. The Bible begins with a Covenant with Adam and ends with the Covenant of Jesus born of a virgin, living a perfect life in keeping the Law, shedding His blood for us sinners and rising to give us new life in Him.

Another major concept I learned along

the way was the difference between how Roman Catholics believe we are justified before God, and what the Bible actually instructs from the perspective of Reformed Theology. Dr. Gerstner explained it this way:

Roman Catholic doctrine:
Faith + Works = Justification

Biblical doctrine:
Faith = Justification + Works

As we grew in our faith and attended so many classes of Dr. Gerstner, we became friends. Every summer we went to Ocean City, N.J., together. He and his wife, Edna, had a summer home there. Edna was a frequent attendee at our Bible study group in Ocean City.

Dr. Gerstner was always writing a new book while at the beach. We had meals together.

With all his brilliance, he was a regular guy. Jonathan, his son, has donated all of Dr. Gerstner’s works to Geneva College in Beaver County and they are established in a room dedicated to him at the McCartney Library there.

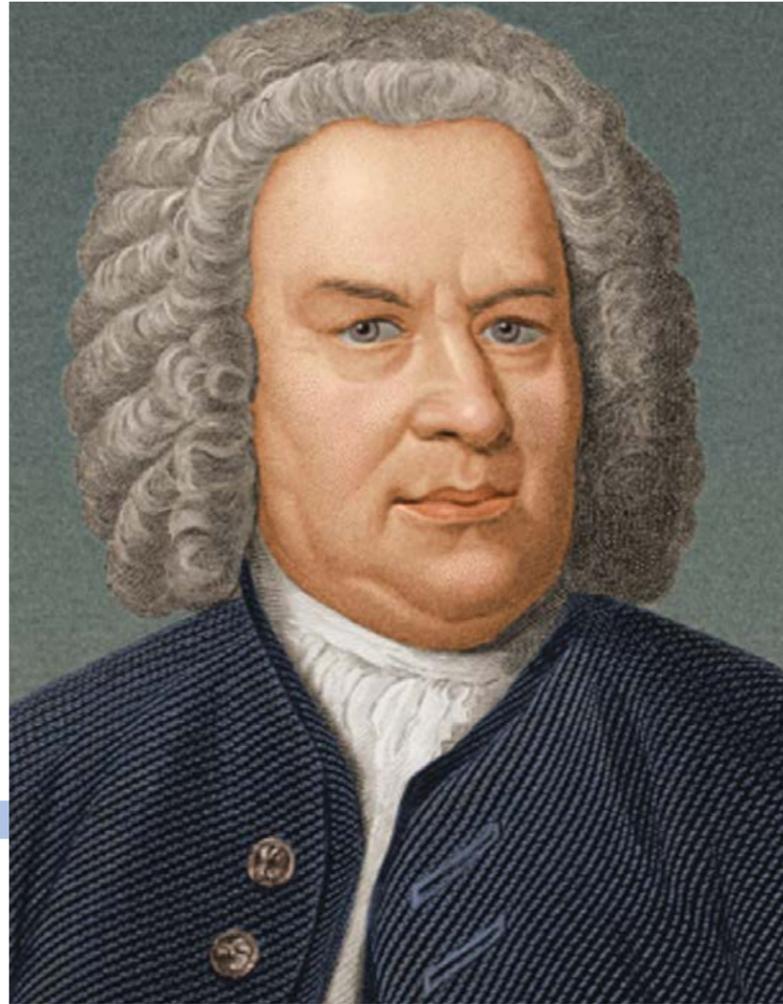
So, I learned great theology from a great teacher.

What did it do for me spiritually? It propelled me to a daily study of the Bible and a daily devotional time. The devotional time each day is what sustains us in our Christian life.

Every passage I read in the Bible fits into my Reformed Theology frame of mind. It inspires me to know that God knows me, cares about me and loves me. He chose me!

As I grow older, and now a widow with Andy’s passing to his eternal glory, it is a comforting thought beyond all measure.

“With all his brilliance, he was a regular guy.”



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685- 1750)

BY ANNE WILLIAMS

I was first exposed to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach in utero. My mother, also a professional cellist, practiced up until the day I was born.

Is he my favorite composer? Probably not. I will always say my most favorite composer and composition is that piece which I have performed the night before.



But if someone asks me, “which composer has influenced your life the most?” surely my answer would be J.S. Bach. I admire and I try to model his many virtues.

Bach was born in 1685 in Eisenach, Germany, into a family of musicians where he learned to sing and play several instruments at an early age. His mastery of the organ was legendary and he made his reputation as a keyboard player.

He worked as a composer, arranger, teacher and performer in several secular positions in the court of minor nobility until he landed a job as cantor (music director) at the Lutheran St. Thomas and St. Nicholas Churches in Leipzig, where he worked for the rest of his life.

He did not receive many external rewards for his success nor gain any notoriety for his own works. He was never attracted to stardom and fame.

For such a genius, he was modest and without pretense. When an acquaintance praised Bach’s wonderful skill as an organist, he replied, “There is nothing very wonderful about it. You only have to hit the right notes at the right moment, and the instrument does the rest.”

He once told a student, “Just practice diligently, and it will go very well. You have five fingers on each hand as healthy as mine.” This humble attitude is not prevalent in the music field, where competition to be the BEST is expected.

While a student at Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, I recall hearing a statement by Bach. “Music’s only purpose should be the glory of God and the recreation of the human spirit.” His inscription, “Soli Deo Gloria” (glory to God alone) at the conclusion of most of his works, is well known.

He often began his compositions with the initials “J.J.”, for “Jesu Juva,” Latin for “Jesus, help me.”

At the beginning of his *Orgelbuechlein* (*Little Organ Book*), he wrote, “To the honor of the Most High alone, and for my neighbor, to be enlightened from it.”

Music is about glorifying God and blessing others.

His understanding of what is primary in performance has been a great inspiration to me and is refreshing as well. Fulfillment is found not in the musical vocation itself, but in the acknowledgement and recognition of the source of the gift, and the response in service.

Bach’s productivity was astounding. For three decades, he churned out a new cantata every week (no computers, copiers, or electricity), which was copied, rehearsed and performed.

The sheer number of works he composed as well as their diversity is staggering. In all, there are 1,080 pieces known today, including chorales, cantatas, masses, passions, oratorios, concertos, and solo works.

He once said, “Ceaseless work ... that is my secret.” Also, “I was made to work; if you are equally industrious, you will be equally successful.”

“Fulfillment is found not in the musical vocation itself, but in the recognition of the source of the gift.”

All of this while fathering 20 children! (10 survived).

Being Lutheran, he may have come across Luther’s famous quote: “The Christian shoemaker does his duty not by putting little crosses on his shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship.” Bach’s prolific work wasn’t merely marked with SDG; it worshipped God through excellence.

It is clear that Bach possessed a deeply personal faith. He was a student of the word of God as evidenced by his well-used and marked Bible. His library contained two complete editions of Martin Luther’s works.

While he clearly devoted himself to church music, his devotion to God did not cease when he worked on secular music. There was no separation of his vocational life and his Christian life, pursuing musical excellence as worship to God in ALL areas of his life.

It has been said that during Covid, the music of Bach has been classical music’s primary source of comfort. His music has always been played at milestone occasions, whether weddings or funerals.

Bach said, “It is the special province of music to move your heart.” I AGREE! And it is especially true of Bach’s music.

I saw that demonstrated at Beverly Heights on July 25. I hope many of you were present that day when our organist Alex Buiel played the Fantasia in G minor at the end of our worship service. It was the last organ piece Alex played before departing for a new, full-time job.

The musical tension was building so intensely that I remember leaving my conversation and exclaiming, “Please, please ... resolve!” When that magnificent major chord finally arrived, the congregation erupted in joyous applause.

You will have to look hard to find one who has given more joy to the world than Johann Sebastian Bach. Even now, 271 years after his death, his music still lifts the spirit, inspiring, energizing and soothing the soul.

Gladys Aylward (1902-1970)

BY REBECCA SPARKS

I am privileged to descend from a line of women with strong faith and adventurous spirits. As such, women in the mission field have been a source of inspiration for all of us.

None loomed larger in my imagination as a child than Gladys Aylward due, in part, to a curious intersection with my family.

Gladys was a missionary in Yangcheng, China, from 1932-1949. Later in life, she ran an orphanage in Taipei which is where her story coincides with that of my great-grandmother, Bonca.



My great-uncle served as an administrator at an American school in Taipei in the 1960s. When Bonca visited him and my great-aunt there, they were privileged to dine with Madame Chiang Kai-Shek who graciously asked Bonca: is there anyone you'd like to meet here?

Her wish was to meet the famed British-born missionary, Gladys Aylward. A lunch was set, but Gladys was extremely late. Upon her arrival, she explained a baby had just been left at her orphanage, and she had to care for him.

Fast forward to the 1980s, and my grandmother is telling this story to a delegation of Chinese officials visiting her home in Virginia. One of the gentlemen dining with her was the very baby left at the door that day!

While this story captivated me as a child, it is a footnote compared to the substantial moments of providence in the story of Gladys Aylward.

Hers is a story of how God uses the seemingly unremarkable to glorify His name and further His kingdom.

When I consider the events of Gladys'

life, steadfast is the word that comes to mind – both her steadfast faith against seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and the steadfast love shown by God to her in times of need.

Despite failing her Bible classes and receiving no missional support, Gladys was determined to get to China. She put down money every week on her ticket before she even knew where in China she would serve.

She taught herself how to preach by standing on soap boxes in London's Hyde Park.

She was kicked off the trans-Siberian railroad and forced to walk 30 hours along the tracks to the nearest town. Detained by Russian officials, she was sent to an industrial town to be a machinist. Through these trials, God provided ways for her to reclaim her passport, avoid sexual abuse, and eventually escape on a Japanese freighter.

Arriving in Yangcheng after a two-day ride on a mule train, she finally met her mentor, the Scottish missionary Jeannie Lawson. At first, they were perceived as "white devils" among the homogenous community they were serving.

Little was accomplished until they opened the Inn of the Eight Happinesses and catered to muleteers traveling among the villages in the region. They offered comfortable arrangements with an added bonus of Bible stories in the evenings. These stories were then carried throughout the region by the muleteers.

“She taught herself how to preach by standing on soap boxes in London's Hyde Park.”

While the inn served as one vehicle to share the gospel with the local people, God orchestrated a second way for Gladys to reach even more.

The highest government official in the province, known as the Mandarin, paid Gladys a visit at her inn and "voluntold" her to be his official foot inspector. This job would require her to visit every village and convince families to end the practice of foot binding.

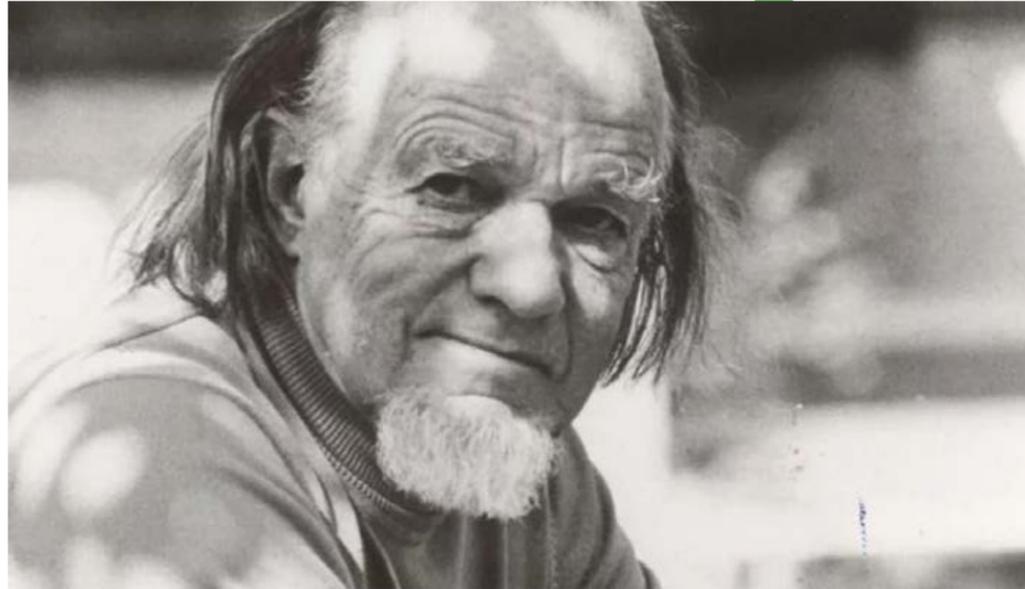
In a brave testament of her faith, she communicated to the Mandarin she would only submit to his authority if she could obey the higher authority of God's call to spread the gospel. This was granted, and she now traveled throughout the province as an official of the Mandarin whose words and actions carried significance.

Her work as a foot inspector was successful, and her work as a Christian marked her as a person worthy of honor. She was no longer known as the white devil, but as *Āi Wēi Dé*, the Virtuous One.

During her years in Yangcheng, Gladys also adopted several children and became a refuge for many more during the Second Sino-Japanese war. The number of orphaned or displaced children in her care reached 100.

In 1938, when the Japanese army was approaching Yangcheng, she managed to lead all 100 children to safety, on foot, to Xi'an, over 400 km away. They began the journey with two days of food, little clothing, and no guarantee of assistance along the way.

God made an impact in China through Gladys, and her story has inspired me to grow deeper in my relationship with God to discern his calling in my life. She repeatedly risked her physical safety and embraced the unknown with a confidence and assertiveness that can only come from a steadfast reliance on God.



Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984)

BY BOB THOMSON

He was a strange looking man sporting knee breeches, hiking shoes, a goatee, and long hair.

I first saw Francis Schaeffer on a screen during my first visit to Beverly Heights shortly after we had moved here in 1976.

The film *How Should We Then Live?* was making the rounds of the evangelical world and changing it forever. A few years later he produced *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* which was instrumental in turning opposition to abortion from a predominantly Roman Catholic concern into an evangelical pro-life movement.



I read my first Schaeffer book, *Escape from Reason*, in 1972 when he had written only one other book, *The God Who Is There*.

Now I have read all 22 of his books and one by his wife Edith, *Everybody Can Know*, which I read to my kids at the dinner table.

Schaeffer showed me what a worldview was and how the Christian worldview was the only one that had answers to all of life's fundamental questions. He did this by comparing it to the humanist worldview in the areas of philosophy, art, music, science, culture and theology.

The humanist worldview inevitably leads to despair. For example, without absolutes given from outside man, there can be no basis for law, as he explained: "The Reformation system of law was built on the fact that God had revealed something real down into the common things of life." And the scientific revolution was born out of the concept that the world was created by a reasonable God so we should be able to find out about the world through observation and experimentation.

After a stint as a Presbyterian minister, Schaeffer moved to Switzerland to found L'Abri, after the French word for "shelter." He and his wife opened their home to anyone who wanted to come and stay as long as they wanted, for people who needed physical and spiritual shelter.

The stated purpose of L'Abri was "to show forth by demonstration, in our life and work, the existence of God." People from all walks of life came to Schaeffer with their basic philosophical and metaphysical problems.

Schaeffer always listened carefully and provided them with answers. He said, "To the best of my ability, I gave the Bible answers. But all the time I tried to listen and learn the thought forms of these people."

This demonstrates one of the reasons I so admire this man. He had the rare ability to demonstrate his love for God, truth and people all at the same time.

“He had the rare ability to demonstrate his love for God, truth and people all at the same time.”

Finally, all of Schaeffer's teaching was grounded on a forthright defense of the inerrancy of the Bible in all that it states.

In 1978, he was one of the 200 who participated in a group, led by R.C. Sproul, that published the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy, the most significant event in the life of the Church in the 20th century, in my opinion. It states:

WE AFFIRM that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit. WE DENY that biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of the assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation or the flood.

This Statement has been recognized by the EPC General Assembly as a resource for member congregations. Schaeffer concluded by warning:

Holding to a strong view of Scripture or not holding to it is the watershed of the evangelical world. There are two reasons in our day for holding a strong view of Scripture. First and foremost, this is the only way to be faithful to what the Bible teaches about itself and what Christ teaches about Scripture.

But today there is a second reason we should hold a strong uncompromising view. There may be hard days ahead of us – for ourselves and for our spiritual and our physical children. And without a strong view of Scripture as a foundation, we will not be ready for the hard days to come.



A stained-glass window of John Newton, in Olney, England, where he served as parish priest at St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church.

John Newton (1725-1807)

BY SCOTT MOORE

There is no one I admire more in the history of the church than John Newton.

Many of you know him as the famous British slave-ship captain who wrote *Amazing Grace*. He had “sinned with a high hand” then called on God during a North Atlantic storm. The Lord delivered Newton from the storm and from the gates of Hell. From there, he went on to compose what is arguably the world’s most famous hymn.



It’s a great story, but as broadcaster Paul Harvey used to say, “Now for the rest of the story.”

John gave up seafaring, was disciplined and then while living in Liverpool, he heard George Whitefield, the great itinerant evangelist. He became Whitefield’s enthusiastic disciple. After self-learning Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Newton decided to become an Anglican priest. However, the Archbishop refused the request, fearing he was a fanatical “evangelical.” Newton persisted and after seven years became a parish priest in Olney, northwest of London, in 1764.

Newton became a great preacher and loving pastor. While at Olney, he became best friends with the poet William Cowper. Cowper and Newton held regular weekly church services for which they sought to write a new hymn each week as a teaching tool. Many of their 348 *Olney Hymns* remain popular to this day. John wrote *Amazing Grace* for his 1 Chronicles 17:16-17 sermon.

In 1780, Newton left Olney for leadership of St. Mary Woolnoth, a prominent Anglican church in London. There he drew large congregations. Among his followers was William Wilberforce, whom Newton urged to remain in Parliament as leader of the campaign to abolish slavery.

Newton started the Eclectic Society to promote evangelical discussion and missions that in the mid-20th Century was revived by evangelical pastor and author John Stott. This society brought together Anglicans and Dissenters (that is, other Protestant denominations).

John Wesley, leader of a revival movement within the Church of England known

as Methodism, called Newton a “uniter (happy work!).” Newton, a Calvinist, shunned doctrinal controversies in an effort to promote unity within God’s family.

Near death, he said, “My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Savior.”

A devoted husband and loving father of two adopted girls, he died in London in 1807, only months before Britain abolished the slave trade. It was abolition assisted by Newton’s advocacy.

His self-penned epitaph, on his tombstone in Olney, reads: “Once an infidel and libertine a servant of slaves in Africa was by the rich mercy of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST preserved, restored, pardoned and appointed to

preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy.”

Newton’s greatest virtue was his humility. He prayed: “Lord, give me a humbling sense of my sins, give me a humbling view of thy glory, give me a humbling view of thy love, for surely nothing humbles like these.” His greatest strength was speaking truth in love, reflecting Christ’s grace and truth (John 1:14).

Moreover, his humility, persistence, prayerfulness and promotion of church unity are worth emulating as is his mentoring focus, doctrinal beliefs and commitment to social reform. In Sierra Leone, where Newton once captured slaves, the city Newtown was named after the slave trader turned abolitionist. The city has ties to Newton’s town of Olney to this day.

Before I retired, I would go annually to London to meet with Lloyd’s underwriters. Most mornings, I would start the day by walking a few blocks and having devotions in Newton’s St. Mary Woolnoth. It was *Amazing*.

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The wives of Adoniram Judson (1788-1850)

BY SARAH REED

The missionary himself should be mentioned first. Were it not for him, there would be no wives, no Ann Hasseltine, Sarah Hall and Emily Chubbuck.

His most beautiful feature were his eyes, observers said. They were very large and filled with a searching fire.



Portrait paintings of Adoniram Judson and his first wife, Ann.

As a missionary to Burma, Adoniram Judson would need fire and passion, a great deal of it. One of the first missionaries from America to travel overseas early in the 19th century, he translated the Bible into Burmese and stayed there almost 40 years, while Burma was territory fought over with the British.

What a glorious battle for Christ awaited him, and his new wife Ann, in Burma!

For Ann Hasseltine, whom he married in 1812 two weeks before they left for that faraway land by way of India, her animation gave life to all around her, and made her a school favorite. At home, Ann was the joy of her father's dwelling.

It was probably this cheerful disposition

hope God will make us instrumental of preparing each other for usefulness in this world, and greater happiness in a future world."

Ann passed in 1826, a model of supreme Christian courage and devoted wife to the end. She died alone while Adoniram was exploring the newly ceded British province of Tenasserim, which became the foothold for Protestant Christianity in Burma.

Their third child died six months later.

Adoniram's second wife, Sarah Hall, was born on the morning of Nov. 4, 1803. Sarah accompanied her first husband George D. Boardman to Burma. Then with the death of Ann and the short life of

him as a companion back to Burma.

In her farewell writing, Emily asked her family and friends, "When dangers and difficulties are about me, will you plead earnestly, 'God help her!'"

"Will you pray for me, now that we are to see each other's faces no more in this world? Ah, I know you will; so let me ask the same for those among whom I go to labor; those who know not Christ and His salvation and yet 'are without excuse.' Pray for them, and for me, that I may do them good."

They arrived back in Burma, serving a few years there together, until Adoniram developed a serious lung disease.

In April 1850, our dear Mr. Judson boarded a ship with the hope of recuperating his failing health.

This time, a crying widow was left.

For he had passed at sea, his body released into the water without any recognition or honor, accept the most desired commendation coming from his King.

With his passing, Emily returned to the United States. She then assisted with his memoirs and soon after, met him in glory.

And as Daniel Clarke Eddy concludes his thoughts on these remarkable women, we now close the volume.

Here are grouped the names of three estimable women, of different sects, and of various degrees of culture, all of whom are now at rest.

Well would it be if all the daughters of the cross would emulate the bright example left for them by their missionary sisters of charity; and, though not called out to other lands to die amid strangers, yet here at home develop those high virtues and noble traits for which this cluster of Christians have become so widely and justly distinguished.

"For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing." Deuteronomy 2:7

Well would it be if all daughters of the cross would emulate the bright example left for them by their missionary sisters of charity.

which enabled her to endure protracted sufferings, and, by the side of her missionary husband, smile amid the clanking fetters and gloomy dungeons they encountered in British-occupied Burma.

She loved to look upon the bright side of every picture, wrote Daniel Clarke Eddy, a 19th century clergyman and author who wrote about prominent female missionaries, including Adoniram Judson's three wives.

While aboard ship en route to India for five months, from February until June of 1812, Ann journaled often.

She writes, "I find Mr. Judson one of the kindest, most faithful, and affectionate of husbands. His conversation frequently dissipates the gloomy clouds of spiritual darkness which hang over my mind, and brightens my hope of a happy eternity. I

Mr. Boardman ending in 1830, Sarah and Adoniram were married in 1834.

They knew one another through the mission life and were devoted to the cause of Christ. After having four children together, her health began to fail.

When Sarah passed on Sept. 1, 1845, Adoniram was alone again.

Miss Emily Chubbuck, his third wife, was a writer known by the pen name of Fanny Forrester.

Emily was born in the central part of New York state. Adoniram had returned to America in 1846, with hopes of writing Sarah's memoir. He met the amiable Fanny, asking if she could undertake this task for him. After spending many hours together, this dear writer agreed to join

James Montgomery Boice (1938-2000)

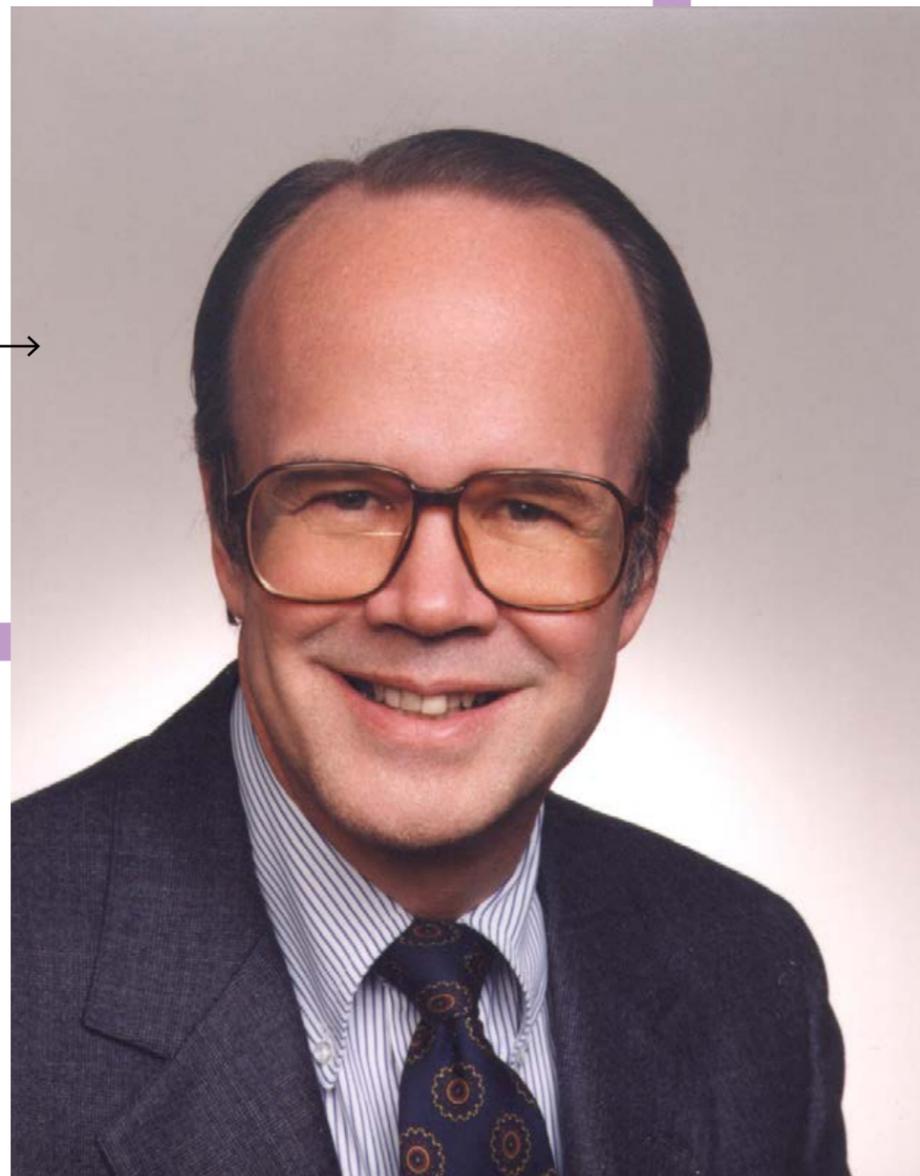
BY JOE WILLIAMS

Over the years I have often said that when Anne and I were in our 20s, living in Philadelphia, we were “living the Acts.”

What do I mean by that? During this fertile time in our Christian formation, we witnessed the power of God’s transformation in the lives of those around us.

We shared the gospel with our musician friends and hosted a Bible study for those who wanted to learn more. Years later, unbeknownst to us, we discovered we’d been part of a renewal movement that had swept across college campuses!

What was the primary catalyst for these extraordinary times? Besides the Holy Spirit, it was the ministry of one man: Dr. James Montgomery Boice.



Even before we were married, Anne and I would meet on Sunday evenings at the church he pastored, Tenth Presbyterian in Philadelphia, to worship together under his preaching and to fellowship with other young people with whom we established relationships that we cherish to this day.

James Montgomery Boice was born in nearby McKeesport in 1938.

After his first birthday, his family moved to Philadelphia where his father, Dr. Newton Boice, received additional medical training at the University of Pennsylvania. During their two-year stay in Philadelphia, the family attended Tenth Presbyterian Church and became close to their then pastor, Dr. Donald Barnhouse.

After one particular worship service, Dr. Barnhouse walked up to the family and said, “I believe this boy is called to be a preacher.” He then put his hands on the child, prayed for him and blessed him. Dr. Barnhouse’s prophecy was fulfilled when young James, at age 14, decided to become a minister of the gospel.

His formal education included degrees from Harvard, Princeton Theological Seminary and the University of Basel in Switzerland, where he received his doctorate in theology.

Two years after graduating from Basel, he was installed as pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in 1968, where he served until his death in 2000. He faithfully pastored Tenth for 32 years – just one year less than Dr. Barnhouse, his lifelong mentor.

“His primary calling was to awaken the church from its worldliness.”

Dr. Boice was a gifted preacher, Bible teacher, author and conference speaker who was considered the dean of Reformed pastor-scholars of his generation.

He was a prolific writer, authoring 60 books (including his commentaries) during his 61 years. Under his unifying leadership, Dr. Boice started the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology (PCRT) in 1974 – a conference that several members of our own church have attended.

In 1977, out of a concern for Biblical Inerrancy, he and others associated with PCRT founded the International Council for Biblical Inerrancy. His legacy continues to this day through “The Bible Study Hour,” his books and commentaries, as well as devotionals that have been a blessing to me.

Even though I consider Dr. Boice one of my personal “heroes of the faith,” I really didn’t know him. We conversed only a handful of times. While preparing this article, I shared that observation with organist and composer Paul Jones, who worked directly with Dr. Boice at Tenth in the final three years of his ministry there.

That I didn’t know Dr. Boice very well was not a surprise to Paul – “as there were not many people who did ... he was both a lofty figure but rather introverted and shy.”

But Dr. Boice was not shy during worship! He loved to sing the beloved hymns of the faith with great gusto, even pumping his fist at times. He knew most if not all of the hymns by heart (which brings to mind our own Pastor Emeritus, Rick Wolling).

In the final year of his life, Dr. Boice worked very closely with Paul while composing a collection of hymns that we at Beverly Heights know and love so well.

During this time, he often told Paul that his primary calling was “to awaken the church from its worldliness. ... We need to have a new reformation in the church’s thinking!”

No less than the late R.C. Sproul concurred when he wrote, “Dr. Boice shared Calvin’s zeal for the reform of worship (*solus deo gloria*).”

That zeal is communicated in Romans 11:33-36, which he viewed as the proper worldview for the believer. This scripture became the text of the first hymn he wrote, “Give Praise to God,” in *Hymns for a Modern Reformation*, the hymnal in our pews.

It seems only appropriate that I leave you with the last words of the benediction that Dr. Boice, our revered pastor, typically used to end the worship services at Tenth:

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.
Romans 11:36

BETWEEN | SUNDAYS

BY RICK WOLLING

Lives which inspire us

In the early 2nd century, the Greek philosopher Plutarch (46-119 A.D.) published the work for which he is most famous, *Parallel Lives*.

Plutarch's *Lives* is a series of 48 biographies of great and famous Greeks and Romans. He arranged their stories in compare/contrast pairs to italicize their common moral virtues and failings. It is a work of both historical recollection and ethical reflection.

John Foxe (1516-1587) was a Puritan clergyman and historian. In a call to believers to reject what he regarded as false teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and to return to true Christianity, he wrote the now famous *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. It chronicled those who sacrificed their lives for the cause of church reform, particularly those martyred under the reign of Queen Mary ("Bloody Mary").

More recently, we have inspiring stories of individuals of great faith and commitment to the cause of Jesus Christ and His kingdom.

In his book of short biographical sketches, *Seven More Men and the Secret of Their Greatness*, Eric Metaxas explains that the purpose of his book, as well as his books *Seven Men* and *Seven Women*, is to "put on the written page the lives of people who lived in a way that warrants our admiration and, to some extent, our emulation. These are people whose lives inspire us, and who doesn't need that?"

Metaxas' words are a simple explanation for why the stories of those who have gone before us are important for all of us and, particularly, for those who have written the essays included in this edition.

Each featured person has, in their own way, made an impression and valuable contribution because of what they have said

or accomplished and the integrity of words and actions displayed in their lives.

Most significantly, their examples have inspired men and women, well beyond their time, to live lives of devoted imitation.

“These are the places where the attention of an imitator is focused - it's on Christ alive and active in one's life.”

There is a biblical precedent for such imitation. At least six times in his epistles, the Apostle Paul shares biographical information about his ministry for the cause of the gospel and follows it up with the challenge, "... be imitators of me."

What an audacious, proud statement to make! Who lives the kind of life that

warrants following by others, especially that of Paul, given his personal history?!

The caveat is that the challenge to follow is only at those points where Christ can be seen in his life; Christ's character, Christ's words, Christ's sufficiency, Christ's glory!

To the Philippians, for example, Paul wrote: "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse in order that I may gain Christ. ... Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us" (Phil. 3.8, 17).

These are the places where the attention of an imitator is focused - it's on Christ alive and active in one's life. I suspect that's what made the impression on those who contributed to this issue.

Metaxas wrote: "We are living at a time in which the concepts of nobility and virtue and heroism are either ignored or maligned and mocked. This is part of why we are suffering many of the problems we face in our culture."

And, I might add, suffering in the church.

Why not read a biography of each individual highlighted in the articles written by our brothers and sisters here in the church? Why not have a follow up conversation to expand on the lessons they learned which limited space eliminated from their stories?

And why not consider the extent to which your life in Christ and your personal history will be an imitation of Christ and a life worth emulating by someone else? In our day who doesn't need that!

Rick Wolling is pastor emeritus of Beverly Heights Church.