

# The High Calling

A Monthly Journal of the Francis Asbury Society

## From the President's Desk

Reading an article in *First Things*, I came upon another testimony and a universal call to a pure heart. The following excerpts reveal the benefits of a biblical worldview, and the effects of living without God:

*"Solzhenitsyn discerned a profound truth: 'Men have forgotten God.' ... Secularization is not a natural phenomenon. A thoroughly secularized world is a world without windows, doors, or skylights, claustrophobic, ultimately suffocating. A thoroughly secularized culture from which transcendent reference points for human thought and action have disappeared is bad for the cause of human freedom and democracy, because democracy finally rests on two convictions: that the human person possesses an inalienable dignity and value, and that freedom is not mere willfulness. ... To ask the question of man is, inevitably, to raise the question of God. To try to read the course of history without God is to read history in a shallow way, because God's search for man and the human response to that divine quest is the central reality of history. To ask, 'What is man, and how does the human person function in history?' is to confront the question of God. ... We find the truth about ourselves in making ourselves into the gift-for-others that our own lives are to us. The self-giving self, not the self-asserting self, is the truly human self. ... Whatever the fragmentation that besets every human life, every human being yearns to live with an undivided heart" (Weigel, "Blessed John Paul II and His Times", *First Things*, June/July 2011).*

Thank you, as always, for supporting the Francis Asbury Society.

Blessings,

*Paul Blain*

Living for the  
**Praise**  
 of His Glory  
 Eph. 1:11-14

Aug. 21-23  
 Aug. 23-25

**Hemlock 2011**

## Vital Ministry in the Age of Globalization

By Ron Smith

FAS Chief Operating Officer

## Society Update

There are two symbols—icons as I see it—that stand in Wilmore, Kentucky as a perpetual witness to what God desires to do in His Church and world. The first is the cross that stands atop the city water tower. The second is the statue of Francis Asbury on his horse, heading out of town. Ministry in our Asbury tradition is best captured by the realities that lay under these symbols. The first is that the Christian message regarding the work of Christ is captured in the cross. For those being saved the preaching of the cross is God's power for salvation. And, "Whosoever will may come," which is why we must go into all the world with the gospel. None may be excluded.

These two symbols portray an eternal reality about the gospel. The message of God's saving work must be global, and for that to happen we must be mobile. In a hallway in the FAS Ministry Center is the bicentennial print for Methodism. It is a portrait painted by Wyatt of the early Methodist missionaries commissioned by Wesley embarking for America by boat. The portrait is named "Offer them Christ." Within seventy years of the first Christmas Conference for American Methodists in 1784, one out of every three people who professed Christ in America was Methodist. That first boat trip was significant! The point is, a lot has happened in America and around the world because of itinerants, people who were global and mobile.

At the Francis Asbury Society we are doing our best to perpetuate renewal and the saving work of God through itinerants who visit local churches, camps, schools, conference meetings and mission fields the world over with the message of the full salvation Christ's work on the cross enables us to proclaim. I took an unofficial count of the places our colleagues have been in ministry and it added up to at least seventy countries on six continents, and included every state in the union.

There are at least seven ways we at FAS are being global and mobile with our renewal efforts. The Titus Women are

*continued on back...*

In Memory of

*Dr. Harold W. Burgess*

October 8, 1933–March 28, 2011

Co-founder and VP At-Large, Francis Asbury Society



## Reflection

Rev. Colleen Fitch, daughter of Harold Burgess

Originally given at the Celebration of the Life of Harold Burgess

April 2, 2011 – Wilmore Free Methodist Church

My dad was a father to many: to those within his own biological family, and to those who

accepted the shelter of his tent, students, colleagues, friends, and coffee buddies. And as a patriarch, he embraced his role as a kinsman redeemer to those who were in trouble. He offered direction to those who had lost their way; he counseled students who struggled with classes and calling; he selflessly encouraged his colleagues; and he fearlessly rescued those who had been trapped in the miry clay.

My dad's hand was always extended to welcome each person into the shelter not just of his tent, but the tent of his heavenly Father, and to the fellowship of knowing Jesus Christ, His son.

My dad set a *pattern*, a pattern to be followed of Jesus' love and grace, and he expressed that through his personal attention. My dad spent time with others. He listened. He was truly present with each one of us, and he told me once that his greatest desire in life was to love others as Jesus loved. And that is the love that we experienced when we had a visit with my dad, visiting with him in his office, chatting as we passed in the hallway or on the sidewalks, sharing a meal together, or just hanging out. My dad shared the love of Jesus, and we knew that we were loved and valued, not just by my dad, but by his Lord.

Truth; my dad spoke the truth. Sometimes the truth was painful to receive, but it was because he loved us, and because he was passionate about serving the Lord with integrity in each and every endeavor. It was a pattern of blessing. My dad spoke words of blessing and hope into our lives. He offered council, assistance, contacts, resources, and whatever help he could to keep us encouraged and walking on course with Jesus.

In my last visit home, sitting beside him, he said, "I don't know why they're doing all these tests on me, but I hope it's for your mother's good. I hope it's for your good. And ... I hope it's for my good too." He put himself last. He sent me on to Spain, his very last words encouraging me to hang on to Jesus, and to follow God's call on my life. My dad spoke blessing into our lives because he loved Jesus, and he wanted to love us with that love.

My dad assumed a *posture*, a posture that would glorify

God. One of the sermons that I heard my dad preach over the years that blessed and challenged

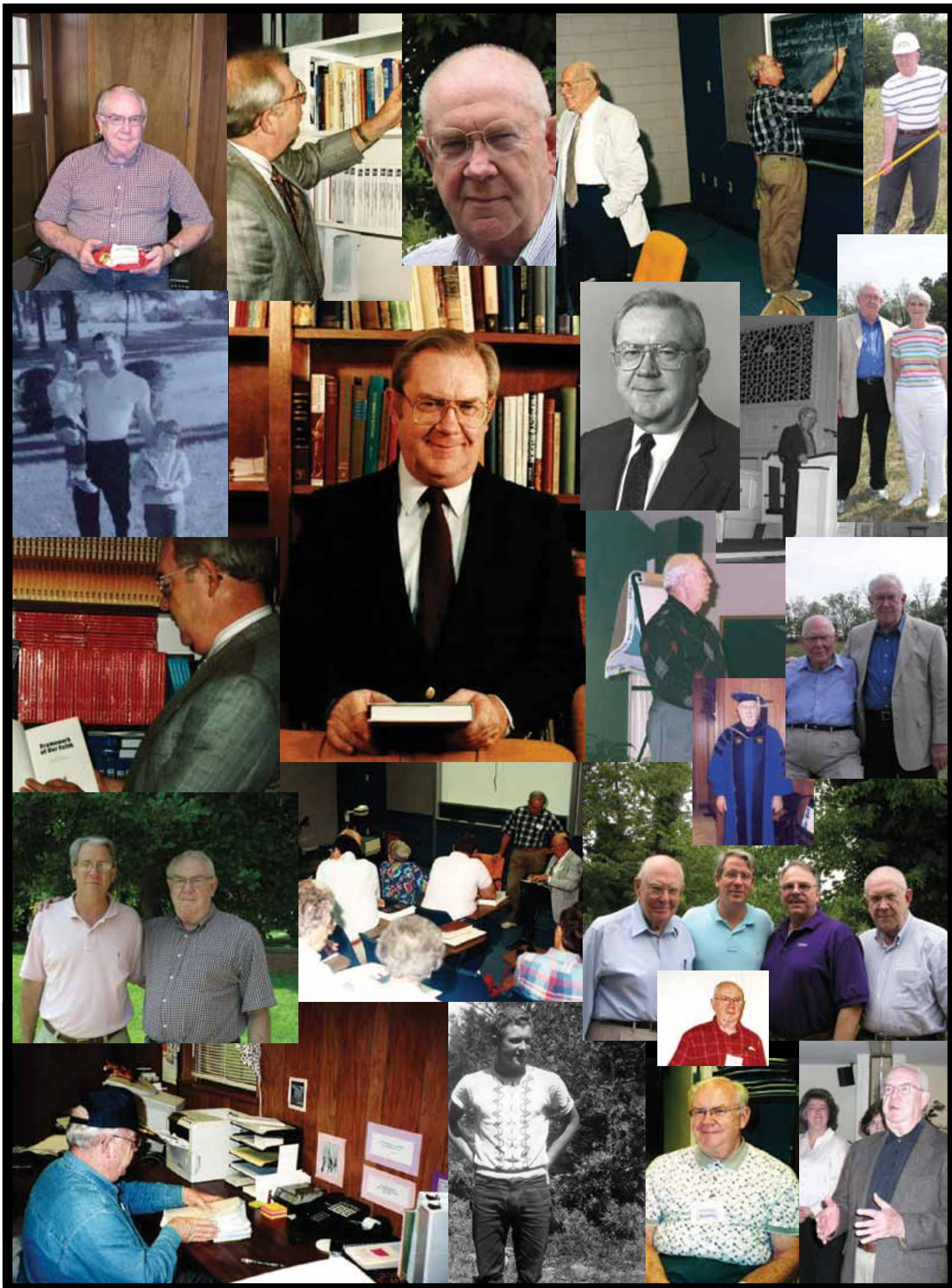
people in each and every occasion was a message on the postures of Peter. Peter was sinking, sleeping, slinking, and finally standing with the other disciples on the day of Pentecost.

I came home from New Jersey when my dad first went into the hospital, and when we brought him home, he was completely dependent upon our care to get dressed, to walk, to eat. There was nothing he could do without assistance. I returned home to New Jersey, and I was reading through John 21, and discovered that there was one last posture that my dad had never mentioned in his sermons. It's in John 21:18-19. Jesus is speaking to Peter, "I tell you the truth, when you were younger, you dressed yourself, and you went where you wanted. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you, and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said, "Follow me."

That was my dad: a posture of complete surrender assumed for the glory of God, and he followed Jesus, all the way home.

A *patriarch*, a *pattern*, and a *posture*. Let us give thanks, and let us together take up the mantle that my dad has laid down, so that we can welcome others to the family of God, set a godly pattern, and always be prepared to assume a posture that will glorify God.





doing spiritual conferences in many places in the US and abroad. Our evangelists, preachers, and teachers are going out to teach, preach, and win souls. We are sending short-term missionaries out. We are publishing godly materials, at both the academic and lay levels, and they go around the world in many languages. We host spiritual campaigns and training events. We train others to go, and equip them for the work through encouragement and covenant living. And, we sponsor academic work in order to teach and preach to those who teach and preach. Most recently we dedicated our new facility in Wilmore as a Ministry Center for renewal and equipping, and for making disciples.

I have concluded that the symbols in Wilmore capture it well. The highest place in town is for the highest purpose in life: the message of the cross. And, if that is the highest purpose, it's time to get on your horse! Why not join us through your gifts, partnership, and covenant to live His highest ideals in our daily walk. Continue to pray for the Francis Asbury Society in its global, mobile mission of the cross.

## The High Calling—July 2011

The High Calling is a monthly journal published by the Francis Asbury Society to serve as a link between FAS and its constituents, building loyalty and awareness so that the teaching and experience of Christian holiness may continue to be lived and proclaimed throughout the world.

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