

A New Year Challenge

As I write this edition of *Christian School Comment*, I am sitting in my favorite recliner by the fireplace in our family room and listening to Christmas music, with our dog, Mollie, by my side. In addition to the sound of Christmas music is the occasional sound of my wife, Bonnie, pounding nails into the wall in our study. We decided to update our family photo wall! On the bottom left of the collage of framed pictures is a picture of our family, including me, in full academic regalia with our oldest son, Jared, in his graduation cap and gown. On the lower right is a similar picture with me and our son Drew in academic attire.

This past Christmas season was a very memorable one for the Simmons family! Our son Jared was engaged to a beautiful young lady named Mary Claire. Our son Drew and daughter Aubrey were home from work and college for the first time since early fall, and our daughter Lindi graduated with a degree in elementary education from Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU).

I was honored to offer the invocation at Lindi's commencement. As I look back on my career as a Christian school teacher and administrator, and specifically on my three years as one of the vice presidents at IWU, I see that I have witnessed firsthand the blessing of a Christian K-12 and Christian college education in the lives of my four children, three of whom are now graduates of IWU. Bonnie and I have many dear friends at the two K-12 schools and at IWU, including the president, Henry Smith, and his wife, Teresa.

Last year, Lindi was a member of the IWU Chorale, an 85-voice choir. Henry and Teresa traveled with the chorale for a fall tour in Southern California. One of their performances was at our ACSI Southern California convention in Anaheim. During my keynote address, I held up a Bible that Henry had given to me while I served with him as a member of his cabinet, and I encouraged our teachers to be students of the Book. This particular Bible I held up was a softcover *One Year Bible* in the New Living Translation, published by

Tyndale House (Carol Stream, IL). I had read this particular Bible three times, and it was beginning to look a bit tattered.

This time last year, I received a package in the mail. In the package was a new, leather-bound *One Year Bible* and a note that said

Dear Brian,

When I saw you wave your tattered *One Year Bible* at the ACSI convention, I knew I wanted to give you a new one to remember IWU! Thank you for your service to IWU and for your strong and enduring friendship!

Cordially,

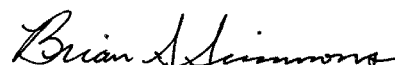
Henry [Smith, President, Indiana Wesleyan University]

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My challenge for you in this New Year is a simple one. Let's spend regular time in the Word of God in this coming year. We cannot impart what we do not possess. God has communicated with us in the twenty-first century, and He has written His message in a book. Let's read it, meditate on it, and obey it (Joshua 1:8)!

Four years ago, the Wesleyan Church distributed thousands of copies of the *One Year Bible* and challenged its members to read the Word of God in its entirety in the coming year. I offer to you the same challenge! May we be students of the Word of God, the Holy Bible. I promise you that if you make the regular, systematic reading of the Word of God a priority in your life in this coming year, it will transform your life and the lives of those around you.

Blessings to you in this coming year!


Brian S. Simmons, President