

Voices: My experience with revival at Glorieta

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I have been watching the [Asbury Revival livestream](#) from Asbury University. So far, I have heard much singing of hymns and worship songs, some with repetitive choruses. “Do it again” and “rest on us” became a group chant after so many rounds of singing.

The crowd at times is spellbound and unmoving. At other times, there is movement, transition and walking around. Sometimes, there is applause and cheering. There’s even been howling at the sound of “Praise the King!”

A variety of emotions abound, and the thumping, cheering and howling probably are distracting to some worshippers. Yet, the excitement and fervor remind me of the worship experiences my age group had at Glorieta in the 1970s.

Glorieta & BSU in the 1970s

Glorieta in the 1970s was *the place* to meet Southern Baptist leadership, and we knew they were passionate about developing our generation as a missions force. Our elders likely were more pivotal in mission work than we were, having a vision for what we students could become in the next few decades.

Baptist Student Union helped us mature on our college campuses. We college students came from Southern Baptist churches where we mainly had sung on choir trips to Hawaii or Mexico. BSU sent us out to witness on campus—quite terrifying, but we did it.



Photo provided by the Glorieta Staff Alumni Facebook Group.

Some students—particularly older guys who were known on campus—witnessed in dorms and went room-to-room in men’s dorms. They would tell us of witnessing to their professors and which professors at our state schools were open to the gospel. These students in leadership went on to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and became BSU directors or pastors.

We memorized Scripture that we kept in our pockets on cards, so we could study the verses any time we had a free moment. Some students were able to memorize whole chapters of the Bible. We used tracts like “Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?” We loved the cross forming a literal bridge between the opposing cliffs of God and man.

We sang songs at Noon Day meetings to which churches brought us Frito pie or burgers for lunch. We had a worship and teaching hour, getting out right before 1 p.m. classes. When we convened for BSU conventions or at

Glorieta, we knew the entire *Sing and Celebrate* songbook.

New music and musicals were debuted at Glorieta, and students could join the Glorieta choir for worship and performances. Great singers from various campuses could read the new music and thrilled us all with the new songs. We saw slides of students on mission as the choir sang.

Our emotions ran high, and we were on our feet singing, unless asked to sit down for preaching.

Glorieta was a place to see people from other schools and celebrate being together. Those of us called to missions felt we were with our true family of like-minded souls. We thought any student would have been crazy not to want to join the Baptist family, marry a Baptist spouse, and live on mission for Christ—even in a church or missions-oriented vocation.

We didn't know how special those days were at the time, but we carried back to our daily lives, to our campuses and churches what we experienced at Glorieta. We still remember it.

Revival at Glorieta



Photo provided by the Glorieta Staff Alumni Facebook

Group.

I remember the doors of the worship hall flung open to New Mexico breeze and sun, while fans twirled over our heads. Pastors like John Bisagno called us to build lives upon Christ, on missions and Christian services.

Missionaries challenged us to apply for post-college mission support positions with Journeymen and US-2. We saw videos on the lives and work of missionaries, and I walked forward to pursue that call.

Singers like Cynthia Clawson and lyricists like Regan Courtney brought us such beauty in music. Like at Asbury today, we felt like we were praising God in heaven, and we never wanted to leave. If there had not been buses waiting to carry us back to Oklahoma and Texas, if the cafeteria food had not run out, we still would have been there.

But there is a time to go to class, graduate and live daily life on mission for Christ. Music and preaching will only carry one so far. A million repetitious choruses cannot make Jesus any more precious than he is. The Spirit can be a still, small voice, not a howl.

Yet, revival is to be treasured.

Its memory soothes us in the difficult and mundane times of life. It provides a standard of wonder, total acceptance of God in us, and commitment. It leads me to ask: "Have I lost my first love? Am I backslidden?" Revival days are a tutor, a measure of growth.

Believers do not grow past our need for revival, though we grow in our ability and desire to be the church in the world.

I still long for Glorieta—to be young, to have life and calling lie before me open and new. We older people long for heaven now. How ironic.

The revivals of college tore that glory veil between here and heaven a bit. They let us look in and see praise. We now know praise and want it.

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