

"And the dragon...went to make war with the remnant...which keep the commandments of God, and have...

THE TESTIMONY

...of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

*"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son
to be the propitiation for our sins." I John 4:10*

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AN ODE TO MY SAVIOUR

This is a faithful saying,
And worthy of all acceptation,
That Jesus came into the world
That I might have salvation.

The chief of sinners I was,
And even a blasphemer,
But Jesus Christ enabled me
By being my redeemer.

The grace of our Lord abundant,
His faith and love exceeding,
In mercy He bore all my sin.
His stripes became my healing.

I thank Christ Jesus my Lord
For me He hath enabled.
What He finished on the cross
He began in a stable.

Now unto the King eternal,
Immortal, invisible and wise,
Be honor and glory forever,
And ever Alleluias arise! AMEN!

Larry Bower

THE TESTIMONY

CONTENTS

FRONT COVER	1
AN ODE TO MY SAVIOUR	1
EDITORIAL	3
IF YOU MISS HEAVEN.....	3
GENERAL	4
LUKE 15 — CELEBRATIONS OF SALVATION	4
MATTHEW 18: THE MISSING LINK	8
BEING THANKFUL.....	12
TO HOARD, BUT THEN TO SHARE	13
NEW 2022.....	14
A THOUGHT	16
FOR CHILDREN	17
JACOB'S NIGHT EXPERIENCE.....	17
MEDITATIONS	20
QUESTIONS TO PONDER	20
GENERAL ITEMS	21
POEMS	22
OBITUARIES	23



“And God shall
wipe away all
tears from
their eyes; and
there shall be
no more death,
neither sorrow,
nor crying,
neither shall
there be any
more pain...”
Rev. 21:4

EDITORIAL

IF YOU MISS HEAVEN...

There is a hymn which we all love: "We speak of the realms of the blest—That country so bright and so fair; And oft are its glories confessed: But what must it be to be there?" Every time we sing that hymn a sobering thought passes across my mind, "But what would it be like to NOT be there?" We sing with joy and expectation—in anticipation of the fulfillment of the blessed assurance, which is ours, of eternity in heaven singing praises to our God and to the Lamb in a world without an end. But what if—just what if.

We can all think back to the time when we were under conviction when the Holy Spirit was pleading with us. Perhaps in our early teen years. Some labored longer under conviction than others. Some of us had farther to come back than others—had wondered farther from the Father, had resisted the Spirit longer, had too many things we wanted to do yet. There may be a reader here who is at that point right now.

Many of us live a life of relative ease and carelessness. Not really experiencing a deep relationship with the One who gave His life for us. Not spending time in the Word as we should. Not experiencing the prayer life that we need. Succumbing to the pressures of a life lived on the border between serving the flesh and serving the Lord.

We have many demands upon

our time. Youth is a time of growing up. Exploring "Who am I?" Developing friendships and relationships. Pulled in many directions. But always there is the Holy Spirit calling, beckoning, pleading. Then in young adulthood there are demands of married life, pursuing an occupation, being a parent to children, providing for the physical and spiritual needs of family. There are social demands and a perceived need for recreation and entertainment. All of these pull us in various directions, taking time from personal and family worship. Finally, in advancing years, we may be pressed by declining health, concerns about the future, how we should spend leisure time (for which we are held accountable). Still the Holy Spirit is pleading for more and more of our time.

But from youth to old age, Eternity should be our focus and Heaven our goal. All other things detract from that for which we were created. The purpose of life is to prepare for Heaven. So, what would it be like if we were not there when God makes up His jewels and receives the righteous into His Kingdom?

Many things demand our time and energy from youth, through productive years, into old age. One thing above all others should be continually on the mind of every child of God and that is this: If we miss heaven, we'll miss it all.

Marcus Miller

GENERAL

**LUKE 15—
CELEBRATIONS OF
SALVATION**

It only takes about five minutes to read Luke 15. Red letter editions reveal that Luke 15 is overwhelmingly red. It is the words of our wonderful storyteller, Jesus in the flesh. His discourse doesn't sound theological like the book of Romans or the other theological epistles, yet in simple language, pictures what the epistles are all about, salvation of the lost and the heavenly joy that it produces. Jesus used three short stories to illustrate this, namely, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. The story of the lost son is probably the most remembered; it is known the world over as the parable of the prodigal son.

Jesus had an audience when He spoke these three stories. We meet the Storyteller Himself in verse 3, but in verses 1 and 2 we meet His audience. Publicans and sinners in verse 1 came to hear Him. They were corrupt, and hated, and for the most part esteemed as dishonest, dreadful people not worth associating with. In verse 2 we meet murmuring scribes and Pharisees who were openly upset that Jesus received and mingled with these bad people and even ate with them. Many of these scribes and Pharisees had the fatal flaw of trusting in themselves that they were righteous while they des-

pised others. And then there were His apostles who no doubt heard and remembered and shared these stories. So, the storytelling begins.

In verse 4, Jesus pictures a concerned shepherd counting his one hundred sheep and coming up one short. So, if you put a flock of ninety and nine beside a flock of one hundred you will not be able to tell the difference, so why be concerned? Because the Good Shepherd (that's the Storyteller) is always concerned when just one goes astray. That would be me. I don't hate my Shepherd, I know He really cares, and as a sheep I have this tendency to follow Him. But also, as a sheep, I have this tendency to stray. When one strays, heartache and trouble follow. But Jesus is full of grace and truth. He leaves the faithful, stable flock of ninety and nine who are grazing beside the still waters, and goes for the rescue, and does not give up until the lost has been found.

I just love verse 5. Jesus doesn't lead or drive the lost sheep home; He carries it home. Jesus said His yoke was easy and His burden light, so it is no burden for Him to carry you. You readers have probably all heard some version of a more modern parable, of a man who had a dream in which he saw the path of his life represented by two sets of footprints, his own and his Savior's walking beside him. He was alarmed when he saw sections of his life in which there was

just one set of footprints. So, he asked what he had done to cause the Lord to cease to walk with him in those times. The answer was, "Son, I didn't ever cease to walk with you, those were the times when I carried you." Yes, the shepherd carried the lost sheep on his shoulders. Notice he did not return in a foul mood because of the grief the lost sheep had caused him but returns rejoicing. In verse 6 he shares the good news with his friends and neighbors and invites them to rejoice with him. He offers them a celebration. He is beside himself with joy.

This joy spills over in verse 7. The publicans, sinners, scribes, and Pharisees are listening. It is no longer just an earthly joy. The joy that is produced when something lost has been found is likened to a heavenly joy that is produced when one sinner repents. Could any of those listening have been thinking that what Jesus was really saying was that one publican who repented caused more joy in heaven than ninety and nine righteous Pharisees who thought they needed no repentance? But what about the truly faithful ninety and nine that had not gone astray? Was not heaven thankful for them? Why this more joy over one than ninety and nine? Think of it this way. Each one of us, the faithful, had our day when heaven rejoiced over us. When we attend the baptism of a repentant one, we do not laud and celebrate the ninety and nine faithful ones who are in attendance and have

formerly repented, but we hug and kiss and receive that which was lost. The saved rejoice for the salvation of the lost. Likewise at a wedding celebration, the joy and reception are centered on the newlyweds. If we reccelebrated the weddings of the ninety and nine faithful couples who attended, surely the cake and punch would be in short supply very quickly. But Jesus is saying that the moment of repentance is no little thing. It does not produce shame, but instant joy, and, in the case of heaven, real celebration joy.

Likewise in verse 8, a diligent woman is alarmed to find that one of the silver coins she cherished is missing. She still had nine, but does not focus on the nine, but rather set her full attention to finding the missing piece. These ten pieces of silver (perhaps a wedding dowry worn in a garland by married women) meant more than just money. To lose one of them was just unacceptable. Jesus has this woman shining the light, giving us a picture of serious diligent searching. Her diligence is rewarded, the lost is found, the flawed garland is whole again, and the woman is almost beside herself with joy, insomuch that she offers a celebration with her friends and neighbors. Once again Jesus emphasizes that repentance of just one will cause joy like that in heaven.

These very short stories of just four and three verses respectively, share these features. The one who has lost something, does the seek-

ing. They were both diligent in their seeking. They both found what they were seeking. (Jesus said, “Seek, and ye shall find.”) They both shared the good news that the lost had been found. And the joy produced in both stories is likened to that produced when one sinner repents.

The first two stories involve precious things, one living, one tangible. Now, the third longer story of 22 verses, known as the parable of the prodigal son, involves living people with free wills, emotions, passions, and choices. Unlike the first two stories, the father who loses his son does not go seeking his lost son. The son left of his own free will. So, the father waits and yearns for him. Here are the players:

1. A generous father who loves his two sons and has a lot to give.
2. An older son who is faithful and practical.
3. A younger son who is lively and adventuresome.
4. Harlots in a far country.
5. A citizen in that country.
6. Some hungry, filthy swine.
7. Some hired servants.

Let us start in verse 12. I see a lot there. I am a little disappointed with the younger son’s “*give me*” attitude. It does not seem that he graciously asked; but kind of demanded. “*Just give me mine.*” I am quite surprised at the father’s response. He divided to **them** his living. Without bringing all the cultural customs, birthrights, and such into this short story to try to justify the father’s willingness to divide his living, let’s assume that

the father did trust his two sons. Maybe it was time to transfer some assets. If that father had known that his younger son would soon disgrace him and waste his inheritance on riotous living, he surely would have been more reluctant to divide his living. I feel that who we have here is a younger son who has been trained well, knows what respect looks like, and really does love his father. But it seems he has an adventurous side to him. Remember this father is well off enough to have hired servants who have **bread enough and to spare**. I am going to assume that the two sons received substantially. We have a heavenly Father who gives **us richly** all things to enjoy. It is our duty to discern how we can enjoy all things in a wholesome way. The younger son will soon show us just the opposite. Even the best of us has some *prodigal* in ourselves to deal with. Prodigal means “waster.”

I don’t want to overwork this parable; but I am tempted to speculate. Jesus simply lays some groundwork so that he can produce a salvation celebration to the story at the end. But I am intrigued. What kind of a son was he? Your speculation will be as good as mine. I’ll just ask these questions. Was this son dishonest and rebellious? Did he leave home in a rebellious manner? Did he secretly leave with no goodbyes? Did he intend to be gone forever? Could it have been a friendly goodbye? Just a little adventure trip

with plenty of money left to start a livelihood when he came home? Were his parents devastated to see him leave? Was he so disenchanted with home life that he was overjoyed to be leaving? The world beckoned to him, but with his training and money he could handle it all wisely, right? The questions could go on, I am sure, but the bottom line is this. The son stayed away so long that the father considered him *dead*. And he was. Dead in trespasses and sins. Verse 13 says the son gathered all, journeyed to a far country, and **wasted** his father's living with **riotous** living. How could he do such a thing in an age of no printing press, no automobiles, no radios, no television, no newspapers, no magazines, no pornographic movie screens, and no internet or social media? But he did it and was thorough in that he wasted it all. Jesus does not detail what **riotous living** looked like. He mentions just one word later in the narrative, a word that he put in the elder son's mouth when he lamented that his little brother had devoured the father's living with **harlots**. I'm confident that riotous living consisted of a lot of banqueting of wine, women, and song. We will briefly let the Scriptures speak. Riotous living is a mankind problem, whether modern or ancient. It is **out-of-control, wasteful behavior**.

Romans 13:13 exhorts us to "... walk honestly, as in the day; not in **rioting** and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness,

not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Note the type of sins associated with **rioting**.

In I Peter 4:3–4 we read, "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of **riot...**"

Let us briefly look at a modern riot. It is an outburst of uncontrolled feelings. There is shouting of insults and obscenities, throwing things, breaking things, destroying things, and trampling of things. It is a violent disturbance of the peace. **It is out of control behavior**. By extension, this same mindset is revealed today as out-of-control drinking, and drugs, and wasteful spending, but also out-of-control thinking, fantasies, lusts, and sex. It is promiscuous, unprincipled, unrestrained living with no moral restraint. Hebrews 13:4 teaches that, "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled: but adulterers and whoremongers God will judge." But the evil one has twisted what God intended to be an act of pure love for the procreation of the human race, and has presented it in every enticing, perverted way possible to appeal to the lusts of men. God only knows the exact extent of it, but we live in a sex-crazed, gender

confused world where pornographic tools are used to graphically turn that which is holy into that which is a shame to even speak about. Ephesians 5:11–12 exhorts to “...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a **shame** even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.”

To be continued...

Philip King

MATTHEW 18: THE MISSING LINK

When you read the verses in Matthew 18 where Jesus gives instruction on resolving offenses, do you believe He was instructing us to address obvious moral sins, or interpersonal conflict, or both?

First, I want to acknowledge that when German Baptists use the verbal handle “Matthew 18” we automatically think of the steps of reconciliation between brethren that Jesus teaches on. This is because we have the practice of publicly promising to observe these steps. Please remember that the 18th chapter of Matthew teaches on several other topics and most Christians won’t understand the quick reference we are inferring when we say “Matthew 18.” However, for the sake of simpler communication, when I use the term “Matthew 18”

in this article, I am simply referring to the three steps of reconciliation that we German Baptists promise to live by at our baptism.

It is sometimes said that the steps of Matthew 18 are only to be used for sin issues. That is not an exact quote from Jesus to be sure. Certain statements about sin often reveal a reductionist approach to sin that fails to recognize how deeply sin has permeated our lives. It also fails to account for the different ways the New Testament church responded to a variety of sin-caused problems.

Sin can enter our relationships at a subconscious level and is not easily identifiable. Imagine if a person could never claim to be sick until they could positively identify exactly which strain of bacteria or virus was at work in their body. I can tell when a relationship is not right much sooner than I can identify exactly which strain of sin or exactly which disorder is at work in my life or the life of another.

Sin damages our relationships in the forms of cynicism, naivety, narcissism, passiveness, aggressiveness, passive-aggressiveness, rebellion, mindless subservience, and on and on. We don’t need to be a psychologist to understand human brokenness. A commitment to biblical reconciliation will deepen our understanding of how sin has impacted the whole human race as well as ourselves.

Sometime in the recent years, a man by the name of Stanley Hauerwas gave a lecture at St Paul’s Cathedral. He is considered by

some to be one of the most influential contemporary theologians. He gave a lecture called "How to Change the World." Hauerwas embraces the doctrine of non-resistance.

In his sermon Hauerwas says, "We tend to cherish our enemies, waiting to pay them back for what we think they owe us. We would rather sacrifice our loves to God than our hates, because what we hate helps define who we are."

He states that, "A community of peace cannot afford wrongs to fester, because the results are uncontrolled rage."

Hauerwas argues that war is preferred over the use of Matthew 18 because in war, I can slaughter my opponent but in Matthew 18, I must listen to my opponent explain what is wrong with my perspective or behavior. Thus, he argues, that true following of Jesus actually increases conflict, because instead of letting conflict go unfaced until war breaks out, the followers of Jesus actually face conflict sooner and more often.

Christianity is expressed in many paradoxes. Paradoxes are truths that may appear contradictory but are actually complimentary. For example, Faith and Works, Grace and Truth, Justice and Mercy, and let me add one more, Doctrine and Relationships. None of these realities exist alone in our faith but one is primary and comes first. You can't have faith without works, but faith must come first. You can't have true relationships without true doc-

trine, but Christian doctrine is foundational for God-honoring relationships. Doctrine consists of unmovable truths and relationships consist of shared commitments between very movable beings. Jesus calls us to be committed to doctrine which by nature is immovable and also to relationships which are quite malleable.

In modern psychology there is a mental disorder called "splitting." This is when a person is unable to hold two truths in tension at the same time. Splitting is a self-protective technique in which a person discards an inconvenient truth and clings to a more convenient truth. Splitting involves using black and white thinking to protect ourselves. For example, if my church elder has blind spots and I am a mental splitter, I will then decide that he is a bad elder. This protects me from having to be vulnerable and love and even yield to an imperfect leader. Or if I like a decision he makes, and I am a splitter, I may then agree with everything he thinks or does without using any discernment. This protects me from disappointment and the pain of discernment. To believe that he is a good elder who can make mistakes requires mental balance and strength. To believe that I should respect him in spite of imperfection requires more strength. Splitting is a mental and spiritual disorder that protects me from having to learn, submit, love, forgive, and work in close commitment with other imperfect human beings.

Jesus calls us to this way of virtue. I believe that in Matthew 18, Jesus has imbedded the very technique that counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists spend hours trying to implant in people's minds. However, it only works if we are committed. I am going to use a simple illustration in our marriage to explain how I believe committed relationship interplays with doctrine and truth.

We have a garden. I like the many delicious and fresh dishes my wife makes throughout the summer from the garden, but I do not actually like the garden. It is a pain. It produces a plethora of hardy desert weeds all summer long. My wife likes all the same things about the garden I do, plus, she actually enjoys working in the garden. She can't have a garden without my help; she can't till the garden or get the irrigation system up and running without me.

I have good biblical reasons to back up my dislike for working in the garden. Jesus said in John 6:27, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth..." Why should I waste time gardening when I could be writing an essay on Matthew 18? But she has a Scripture verse for her perspective as well. Paul said in II Thessalonians 3:10, "...if any [man] would not work, neither should he eat." I have time in the evenings to help my wife, and I have done my share of complaining about the grocery bill. So, which one of us is right?

You can't actually know by reading my argument. We may

both be wrong, one of us may be wrong, or we may both be right. I may be covering up my laziness with a Bible verse, and she may be hiding behind her goal-oriented workaholic tendencies with a Scripture verse.

My wife and I know that we need each other's perspective. If we were not committed in our marriage, we could each take the biblical truths that represent our own tendencies the most, and walk off in different directions. They call that *divorce*.

Herein lies a great deception. Christian doctrine so comprehensively covers the experience of life, that when we Christians fall out with each other, we can always emphasize the difference in beliefs, and we never actually have to resolve the conflict. In other words, *every relationship conflict can eventually turn into a doctrinal conflict. It is the teachings of Jesus on interpersonal relationships that keep us doctrinally balanced.* The tendency to disregard separation from the world in pursuit of evangelism, or the tendency to disregard evangelism in order to maintain separation could be held in balance by committed relationships to others who are seeing an angle I am not seeing.

This is, of course, precisely what Paul teaches in Ephesians 4. Paul's concern is for both good relationships and good doctrine, and he sees those concerns as symbiotic rather than antagonistic. Love, unity, and the proper func-

tion of gifted members will bring us, finally, to the unity of “the faith.” (Note that the phrase “the faith” does not necessarily designate belief, but rather, the body of Christian orthodoxy.) Furthermore, as we mature, together, into this “perfect man” we will be protected from the winds of doctrine, the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness.

The Protestant church at large has made shared biblical doctrine the premise for fellowship, while the Roman Catholic church has made shared church authority the basis for communion. Ironically, we Protestants have produced thousands of denominations because we don’t prioritize biblical doctrines the same.

It is committed relationships that keep me from becoming a “SPLITTER” both psychologically and spiritually. In our modern Christian culture, it is so acceptable to casually part ways. In the Early Church, schism was considered one of the gravest sins. Incidentally, individuals who have a splitting disorder or what is sometimes called, “borderline personality disorder” are very uncanny in their ability to pit authorities against each other.

In the world, it is not uncommon for people to lose their job because of a failure to resolve interpersonal conflict, but it is pretty rare to hear of a church member losing fellowship for failure to resolve a relationship conflict. Do you think we Christians all find relation-

ships quite easy to maintain and correct doctrine is the only goal worthy of taking a stand?

A few years ago, I called up several surrounding churches to try and understand how they apply the teaching of Jesus on reconciliation in Matthew 18. From what I learned; Catholics at large would not require interpersonal relationships to be resolved to retain church membership. The priests themselves would represent the church in a conflict and a good priest will get involved, but typically they don’t disfellowship for those kinds of things.

The Protestants that I talked to all try to apply Matthew 18 at some level. However, most seemed to view it as a method of dealing with obvious moral transgression in the church, especially in leadership. One friend admitted that it is very easy in their culture for believers to just move on to another church if there is a relationship conflict that is very serious.

If we all followed the three steps in Matthew 18 according to our public commitments, would not marriage conflicts sometimes come to the church as the third step attempt at reconciliation? I am curious. How does a marriage make it through the yearly visit and communion when it is in shambles? Is it possible that we have not given reconciliation the deep dignity it deserves? Do we believe deep down in, that personal conflicts are not actually worthy of blood, sweat, and tears? Is it appropriate and honora-

ble to stand strong on doctrinal issues but shameful to give the same attention to relationships?

I propose that the teaching of Jesus on Matthew 18 is one of the single greatest affronts to self-righteousness or moralism. It is in learning to love and be reconciled with other imperfect humans that I am made more deeply aware of my innate self-centeredness. It is in taking offenses and the offended person seriously that I become keenly aware of how unspiritual I really am.

I find the teaching of reconciliation in Matthew 18 verses 15–22 to be exceedingly difficult, but I'm not interested in deconstructing it or reconstructing it for my personal convenience.

It's pretty humbling to belong to a faith tradition that makes public promises to use this teaching upon becoming a member of this church.

I would further propose, that Jesus Christ put such a high value on reconciliation that we could lose our place within the body of Christ for failing to resolve interpersonal conflict.

And one more point: Jesus did not say, if you WANT to resolve interpersonal conflict, use this method; He said, if there is a conflict, GO...

Now that is a religion emphasizing *relationship*, if there ever was one!

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Hess

BEING THANKFUL

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Ps. 100:4).

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Rom. 1:21).

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful” (Col. 3:15).

My Thoughts on Thankfulness

In the Greek, thankfulness means grateful, well favored. And we should be grateful for the small things. When life is hard we need to be grateful and thankful for our trials and tribulations, too. There may even be a people we do not get along with very well. But we need to be thankful for them and pray for their success, just as we would for ourselves.

We may have expectations regarding a situation, or of having a wonderful day, and it doesn't go as we had expected. We still need to be thankful when it does not go our way.

I am in the process of moving, and there are lots of unknowns concerning a new place. I have thoughts of being *homeless*. Isaiah 55:8–9 speaks of a God that is higher than we are and whose thoughts are higher. “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,*

saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher...

Since we are thankful for God as we read these Scriptures, we can be thankful we are protected and that we do not have anything to be fearful of. Jesus said (John 14:27), "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." When we are discouraged or depressed, we are probably not as thankful or grateful as we should be.

I am going to list some of the things I am thankful for:

1. A loving God
2. Trials—knowing that it is more precious than gold. (I Peter 1:7) "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ..."
3. A roof over my head (even though there are things I don't like).
4. Good health
5. America
6. Bibles
7. Good food.
8. A ride to church.
9. Happiness.
10. Freedom to worship.
11. The promise of going to Heaven.

Daniel Bowman

TO HOARD, BUT THEN TO SHARE

As the writer of hymn #37 says, "Hoard up his sacred word, and feed thereon and grow; Go on and seek to know the Lord, and practice what you know."

The word *hoard* is usually speaking of accumulating and storing and hiding away something that one doesn't need, or use (money, etc.).

So when we sang this song recently, the word *hoard* stood out like a sore thumb! So thankful for hoarding up His sacred Word, from childhood until now. Have you appreciated parents, ministers, or others who have taught you through the years with His sacred Word? I sure have. Without this, there wouldn't be anything to feed upon and grow in.

Then as we feed upon and grow, "Be with me, Lord, where'er I go, Teach me what thou would'st have me do: Suggest whate'er I think or say, Direct me in the narrow way. Assist and teach me how to pray; Incline my nature to obey; What thou abhor'st, that let me flee, and only love what pleases thee."

II Corinthians 5:17–18 says "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

Now that we have hoarded, we should share what we know with

others, just like past generations.

Is the word *hoard*, plenty harsh with this application? I came up with this:

*Collect up his sacred word,
And feed thereon and teach;
Go on, and seek to know the Lord,
And practice what you preach.*

Whether you're a hoarder or collector, its time to share with others the Gospel throughout. It shouldn't be, but probably is easier said than done. Here is a simple heartwarming start in sharing the Gospel with others.

#182 *The Bible a Delight*

*I love the sacred book of God;
No other can its place supply;
It points me to the saints abode,
It gives me wings, and bids me fly!*

*Sweet book! in thee my eyes discern
The image of my absent Lord;
From thine instructive page I learn
The joys his presence will afford.*

*But while I'm here, thou shalt supply
His place and tell me of his love;
I'll read with faith's discerning eye,
And thus partake of joys above.*

Psalm 19:14 “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”

Revelation 14:6-7 “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue,

and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come;; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

II Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Loren Flory

NEW 2022

When we awoke this sunny Sunday morning our mind went to last Sunday's sermon. “This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24).

Not, as we so often hear, the “let us” of other translations but “we will,” with purpose, as the King James states. This brought us another thought of what we might hear today. We have noticed the last while where we have worshipped that we are hearing some of the same chapters preached on, same songs sung, and wonder if maybe we need to consider this. While there is nothing wrong with it, we just feel there is so much more. There are churches who of a purpose make it a point to teach through the Bible, some even book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse. We may think this sounds

tedious but when was the last time you heard a sermon from... say Nahum 2 or Hosea 7:7? I'm pretty sure the Lord would not be offended with us hearing what Paul refers to in Acts 20:27, *"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."* We would encourage brethren to consider a new chapter or song from the old books.

As the morning dawned we noticed the moon had waned to a fingernail which means we will see a new moon on January 13. This is a new month, new year, and the first Sunday we have meeting in our local district. We are looking forward to a couple of new babies in our family this year. Walking across the living room we appreciated new carpet after two months on a subfloor of plywood.

To a child everything is new but as one ages we begin to see that there truly is nothing new under the sun; repackaged perhaps but familiar. Isn't it interesting how the older we get the less we appreciate what's new? We don't want to change because it's not really new, just different and maybe improved, but is it worth the learning required to use? We've got time and what's a little of it compared to relearning something?

A child can, even amid new, be bored. New doesn't last long much to one's disappointment and age teaches one to be satisfied and content.

With this in mind have you lately thought of a new city, all things new? We read about a new city, the new Jerusalem in Revelation 3:12 in the letter to Sardis, and in Revelation 21:2 where John sees it coming down out of heaven. Not so long ago we had the opportunity to visit Waveland, Mississippi, a town destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Everywhere we looked, all the houses had been rebuilt in the last fifteen years. The only indication was the broken piers still sticking out, with here and there a jagged post that had not been replaced.

Everything was clean and orderly. When we think of the new Jerusalem what comes to mind? We've been in churches with a lot of gold and it's not something we would wallpaper with ourselves so pavement makes sense. What we can relate to is new.

Our present dwelling is over 100 years and age has it's effects. Even the ground has changed and we have two trees soon coming down because they are shifting a foundation wall. While we have here no continuing city, we are looking forward to a new and perfect one needing no repairs.

Most children don't think about a new body. Most older adults think of one frequently. Defect, disease, illness, and age all make us sigh for one as soon as we learn there will be such a blessing.

When men think of paradise they tend to think of nature.

Wealthy men of England included gardens with their estates. They had gardeners on the payroll and would even build a house for their family on the grounds. Today you can visit many beautiful gardens, but they aren't Eden. We have battled the Canadian thistle in one garden for years only to see it spread to the point that we have two choices, poison or mow so this year we will likely sow a cover crop. Having tried many things, we know heaven will never have thistles and look forward to dress and keep rather than sweat and fight for a lush garden free of briars.

Doubtless there are times when we groan and wish for a change of circumstances in life. We often wonder how men go through the days without the Lord's Day set apart. While we await His coming let's not forget Lamentations 3:23. Jeremiah is reflecting on his affliction and it was great. Israel was in a terrible state and he tasked with telling them, none of it positive to a negative reception, if any, by the people. Not only did they not care, they didn't want to believe what he said. He couldn't even throw up his hands and walk away. But he could say, knowing all that was coming, "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Jer. 3:22-23). Every morning he woke up free and not destroyed by his countrymen. It was a new mercy from

God because he knew they hated what he said. Every day Jerusalem stood and Judah was still in her place. It was a new mercy.

When was the last time you considered how God gives new hearts, and thanked Him for yours? We've seen men suffer a sudden heart attack, survive, and they tend to have a different—we'll say, glow, after they recover. It's because they have a new appreciation for life.

*The old year now is gone,
The new year takes its place;
And may it bring to every one
New love, new joy, new peace.*
Hymn 340

Rachel Brubaker

A THOUGHT

Time Is...

Too slow for those who wait...
Too swift for those who fear...
Too long for those who grieve...
Too short for those who rejoice...

But for those who love —
Time is not.

*"To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under
the heaven."*

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Selected from a calendar page,

Mike and Sondra Miller

FOR CHILDREN

**JACOB'S NIGHT
EXPERIENCE**

*(This is a description of how this
experience in Jacob's life could
have been)*

JACOB— “Well, it is getting late, and I and my families will have a big day tomorrow. It is about ten o'clock and I need to get ready for bed. I will use a small log for a pillow.”

MAN Appears:

JACOB— “I didn't know anyone was around. Whence comest thou? And who are you? For I perceive you are not from here. What is your name?”

MAN— “Wherefore dost thou ask me my name? The same question should be asked of thee.”

JACOB— “Well my name is Jacob and actually I am not from here. My father sent me to my uncle Laban's house to find a wife. He did not want me to marry anyone from the Canaanites. My twin brother Esau married an Edomite. He was born just before me. He was a hunter and I'm a shepherd.”

MAN— “That sounds interesting. What about your mother?”

JACOB— “My mother Rebekah helped me get the birthright because she loved me. My father liked Esau's savory pottage very much.

“On my way to my uncle's land I slept at Bethel, and I saw a ladder

stretched up to heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it. My pillow was stones that time.

“I was seventy-seven years old when I left home, and now after almost twenty one years I am anxious to reach Canaan. One of the real reasons I fled was because of Esau. Now I have fled uncle Laban because he wants to make me a slave.”

MAN— “Well, Jacob, you seem to be pretty trim. How old are you?”

JACOB— “I am only ninety-seven years young now, in good health, and seem to be pretty strong.”

MAN— “Let's prove it by wrestling.”

(Wrestling match begins late in the evening).

MAN— “Tell me more about yourself.”

JACOB— “I am from Canaan and am returning back to the land that my grandfather Abraham was promised by Jehovah. My father Isaac inherited it and soon I will inherit it. Also, my father is the one that my grandfather Abraham was going to offer up to God as a sacrifice. Instead God provided a ram caught in a thicket for the burnt offering. God was well pleased with Grandpa for being obedient to Him. That happened on Mt. Moriah.”

MAN— “Were you successful in finding a wife?”

JACOB— “Oh, yes! In fact, I got two! The first one is named Leah. I wanted her sister Rachel but was tricked by Laban, and he gave me Leah. I worked seven more years for Rachel. I was with Laban for

Rachel is expecting and will soon have a baby. I don’t know if we will make it back to Canaan before she delivers or not. Maybe Esau will kill all of us. I have separated my family into bands.”



twenty years total. Laban took advantage of me ten times. My lovely wife Rachel is now forty-three. She is a real beauty. Leah is older than Rachel. Leah has eye problems, which I call tender eyes.

11:30 P.M.

MAN— “You look on the beauty of a woman. But be careful, you need to look at her character and her heart.”

JACOB— “You ought to see my children. I’m the father of eleven sons and one daughter. My wife

MAN— “Tell me about that. What do you mean?”

JACOB— “Well, one band is my servants. They are driving my flocks. They will offer Esau a peace offering of several sheep, goats, milking camels, oxen, and donkeys.”

12:30 A.M.

“The second group of people is Leah’s handmaid Zilpah and two sons Gad and Asher, Leah and her six sons and one daughter. Their names are Reuben, Simon, Levi, Ju-

dah, Issachar and Zebulun. She also has one daughter named Dinah.

"The next group is Rachel's hand maid, named Bilhah, and her sons, Dan and Naphtali and my beloved wife Rachel and her one son Joseph."

2:00 A.M.

"My son Joseph is a blessed son and I love him very much. He seems to be a real leader. I have some material saved for a coat for Joseph that will have a lot of colors in it. Joseph has a lot of dreams for a young lad.

"If we have another son, we will name him Benjamin. Rachel is heavy with child, and she is very tired.

"I myself will be the last of the groups, for I fear Esau. Esau wants to kill me because he sold me his birthright for one morsel of meat which he regretted very much. He even sought it carefully with tears. That happened about twenty-one years ago. My father Isaac is now about one hundred and fifty one years of age. I am so anxious to see him."

3:30 A.M.

"Each group is spaced out so that if one is attacked by Esau the rest of us may flee.

"Each group is to bow to Esau.

"The report is that Esau has four hundred men with him. That is one reason why I fear him.

"Laban and I made a deal that if I worked seven more years that

my wages would be all striped and straked animals. Uncle Laban wanted only animals that were of a solid color. You ought to see all my flocks and herds. They are all striped or straked because of the water treatment I gave Laban's flock. There were special branches that I peeled back so the white part of the inner branch showed. They were placed in their water troughs and that was especially effective in causing them to have young which are very large and vigorous. I believe Jehovah had a hand in that. I worked for my uncle for twenty years, which I said before. The first seven years went very fast but the last six went slow. During these last six years, I really prospered. God gave me strong flocks and herds."

5:00 A.M.

MAN— "It is beginning to dawn and I must depart."

JACOB— "You have not revealed much of anything about yourself. Where are you from? What is your name? You must bless me before you go."

MAN— "Wherefore dost thou ask me my name again? What is your name?"

JACOB— "My name is Jacob."

MAN— "Not any more, Jacob. From now on your name will be Israel."

And so he blessed Jacob but did not revealed his own name. Seeing that he could not overcome Jacob,

The Man touched Jacobs hip joint and threw it out of place.

JACOB— “That really hurt! Now I suppose I will limp. I will probably never know what those two lumps on his back were. I just feel like they were wings.”

So the man departed without telling his name. Jacob named that place Penuel which means “*face to face with God.*” Jews will

not eat the meat around the hip joint unto this day.

And the next day—

It is interesting to think that Benjamin was born on Jacob’s return to Canaan. Rachel had a hard delivery and soon died, after she named her son Ben Oni.

Marshall Dutter

MEDITATIONS

“Special people” have not what others have. They have what others don’t.

Points in Scriptures more specific, seem to be more important.

Obedience is not a thing to do. It is a grace to be embraced.

A man spiritually born must be spiritually fed.

Simply moving may not mean progress.

Faithful discipleship is a way of life.

God knows what He’s doing.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

This section offers some questions to think about, or for Sunday afternoon discussions, or to prompt future articles from our readers, etc. Readers are encouraged to offer questions.

The Scriptures are replete with expressions like “**great joy**,” “**exceeding joy**,” etc. These expressions are often used when men and women in the flesh have encountered the spiritual things of God.

Let’s ask ourselves some questions regarding this “joy”:

1. Do you remember the first pure thrill that you experienced when you gave your heart to the Lord?
2. Do you remember the joy of sins forgiven, and a new and pure start on your journey with God?
3. Have you felt the excitement and happiness that *love for others* brings when it fills you?

4. Is that joy and excitement still in your heart?

5. Have the burdens of life’s way tried to threaten and quench it?

6. Has it been difficult to focus on Heavenly things, when trials seem to press in on every side?

7. Have you felt *lonely* in your pursuit of spiritual joys?

8. Do you have a *friend* with whom you can share your hunger for God?

9. Thoughts about God, and the things of God should always fill us with joy, should they not?

10. How can the “wonder” and the “thrill” be restored, if they wane?

11. Is this worthy of daily pursuit?

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Dec. 19, 2021; Fair Haven, KS
Tyler Wray
Dec. 19, 2021; Living Epistle, NM
James McConaughy

NEW MEMBERS

Dec. 5, 2021; Mission Valley, MT
Mark Culp

COMMISSIONS

Dec. 11, 2021; Cascade Valley, WA
Aaron Long (with wife Hope Ann)
Ordained to the Eldership
Anthony Root (with wife Heather)
Advanced to the second degree
of the ministry

COMMUNION NOTICES

Feb. 5, 2022 Living Epistle, NM
Feb. 5, 2022 Pine Grove, FL
Feb. 26, 2022 West Manchester, IN
Feb. 26, 2022 West Modesto, CA
Mar. 5, 2022 Morning Star, OH
Mar. 26, 2022 Dallas, OR
Mar. 26, 2022 Fair Haven, KS
Apr. 2, 2022 Mt. Zion, PA
Apr. 2, 2022 Fall Creek, IN
Apr. 16, 2022 Modesto, CA
Apr. 23, 2022 Cascade Valley, WA
Apr. 23, 2022 Cutler Ridge, IN
Apr. 23, 2022 Sugar Grove, OH
Apr. 30, 2022 Bear Creek, OH
May 14, 2022 Shiloh, OH
Sept. 24, 2022 Pleasant View, OH
Oct. 15, 2022 Maple Grove, OH
Oct. 22, 2022 Stillwater, OH
Nov. 12, 2022 Covington, OH

HARVEST MEETINGS

July 3, 2022 Lower Twin, OH
July 24, 2022 Shiloh, OH
Aug. 7, 2022 Maple Grove, OH
Aug. 14, 2022 Covington/Sugar Grove, OH
Aug. 21, 2022 Salem, OH
Sept. 11, 2022 Stillwater, OH
Sept. 25, 2022 Bear Creek, OH
Nov. 24, 2022 Pleasant View, OH

CASP PROJECT 2022

Plans for our next project are well under way. The Lord willing, the project will involve home construction and repairs in Ocracoke Island, North Carolina January 31 through February 25, 2022. It will utilize 10 young men, and administrative staff, all of whom have been selected from those who have volunteered.

We want to commend those who have responded to the request for volunteers. We sincerely appreciate the interest and support shown, not only by those who have offered to participate in a project, but to the entire Brotherhood for your continued support.

Please pray for the success of this project, for wisdom and direction for the staff, and for the young men selected that their conduct and service will reflect the image of Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

Any who desire to support this project financially may direct donations to:

Brethren Charity Fund
P.O. Box 365
Brookville, OH 45309-0365

Please designate your donations specifically for New Conference CASP Fund

In behalf of the Old German Baptist Brethren—N.C. CASP Constituency Committee

John Fall, Secretary

POEMS

CHILD OF GOD

Cherished

Held

Innocent

Loved

Desired

Obedient

Forgiven

Gifted

Overcomer

Delivered

Nicole Jamison

**LET'S READ THE
TRUTH**

There are so many lies in the world,
So many half-lies (untruths),
The News of the world is darkness,
So why do we turn to the News?

His Word brings glad tidings of Truth!
And wisdom to lead us today,
The ageless Truth, ever new,
Leading us up the narrow way.

The News of the world brings us down,
Things written to put us in fear,
Let's read what will bring us to
Heaven.

While reading it, God is so near!

The Bible's News is eternal,
Telling us of the love of our God,
While we read it, we find Jesus
calling,

Giving mercy – spared from
His rod.

So open your Bibles and see light,
Today, tomorrow, forever!

While reading, our days become
bright,

Today, tomorrow, and ever!

So why should we choose such
darkness?

When reading such things lead
us down?

Our Bibles will be here to bless us
Where the way of the Truth is
found!

Vicki Witmer

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Phil. 4:8

OBITUARIES

DEATON — Sheryl K. Deaton, age 74, of West Alexandria, Ohio, passed away peacefully on Fathers Day, Sunday, June 20, 2021, at his residence. He was born February 10, 1947, in Dayton, Ohio, to Omer and Esther Deaton. Sheryl was married to Lila Fisher of Piqua, Ohio, on January 1, 1972. They were both baptized into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church on March 10, 1973. He had a heart for helping others, and was always willing to help in the church and in the community.

He was preceded in death by his father, Omer Deaton; and sister-in-law, Linda Deaton. He is survived by his wife of forty-nine years, Lila Deaton of West Alexandria; sons, Kevin (Leanna) Deaton and Craig (Rhonda) Deaton all of West Alexandria; grandchildren, Clay, Curt, Kip, Wesley, Layla, and Phoebe; mother, Esther Deaton of Eaton; brothers Lloyd (Karen) Deaton of Eaton, David Deaton of Delphi, Indiana, Gerald (Bonnie) Deaton of West Milton; sisters, Linda (Glen Dale) Knaus of Camden, Barbara (Dennis) Brunk of Lewisburg, Rita Sue Deaton of Camden; sister-in-law, Lorene and Doug Shoup; and numerous nieces and nephews. It was Sheryl's heart that each one of you would join him in heaven. He had selected these verses as an encouragement to you:

Matthew 22:37–40, “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Romans 8:14–17, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Romans 6:22–23, “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Funeral services were held on June 24, 2021, in the Lower Twin (New Conference) Meeting house with the burial following at the church cemetery. Special thanks to Dean and Dale Deaton, Dave Oyler, and the Lower Twin (NC) home brethren for taking care of the services.

The family wishes to extend a heartfelt Thank-You to all who encouraged us with so many acts of kindness and prayer the last few weeks of Dad's life.

The Family

MEADOR — Ivan Charles, son of Paul Charles and Cozetta Florence (Metzger) Meador, was born October 22, 1928, in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, near Pymont. He was called home to be with the Lord forever on September 30, 2021.

Ivan was raised in Indiana with his siblings Lavaun, Joseph, Bethel, Duane, Joyce Ann, and Barbara until he was eight years old, when the family

moved to Whittier, California in 1936 due to his mother's health. Living in Whittier was a time of spiritual encouragement for the family and established a pattern of faithful church attendance. He reluctantly moved back to Indiana with his family in December of 1941. They moved due to his father's concern of a potential Japanese invasion of Southern California during World War II. Ivan finished high school in Rossville, Indiana, in 1946, and then came to California alone on a Greyhound bus at age seventeen. That summer he worked for C. B. Rumble and Sons, and then in the fall went on a cattle boat to Germany as a caretaker for cattle and horses at the end of the war. In January of 1947, he returned to California, and in the following June he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. He was baptized along with nine other young men, and became a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, in the Modesto District. On June 18, 1949, Ivan was united in marriage to Clara Louise Mettler and the Lord blessed them with four children, Kathleen, Paul, Patricia, and Walter, and seventy-two years of marriage.

Ivan was called to the office of deacon on January 28, 1968, and served faithfully until his passing.

He was employed in woodworking, first working at Stanislaus Mill making specialized church furniture, and then other cabinet shops until 1982. He was then hired as principal of Brethren Heritage School and continued in that position, and also later as a teacher for fourteen years, until his retirement in 1996.

Ivan was instrumental, along with several others, in starting Camp Peaceful Pines for the young people in 1958 and continued as a chaperone for twenty-eight years.

He thoroughly enjoyed record-keeping, and kept records of the Modesto District, which led to making sev-

en Modesto District books. He also researched and kept records of family genealogy. He enjoyed maps and driving trips and traveled to all fifty states. He also toured Israel in 1995. He greatly enjoyed taking a trip to Alaska (his last unvisited state) in 2012 with his entire immediate family.

Ivan was a man of humble means throughout his life, but always felt greatly blessed by the Lord. He was a strong supporter of the Church, the Body of Christ, and was faithful to attend whenever there were church services. He loved music and his heart was thrilled with all music and singing that honored the Lord.

Ivan enjoyed good health until June of 2018, when he had a health crisis following Annual Meeting in Indiana. He spent twelve days in the hospital at Goshen and was anointed there by the brethren before returning home. He enjoyed reasonable health until early July of 2021 when he began making multiple trips to the hospital. He asked for and was again anointed on July 25, 2021. On the morning of September 30, he voiced his desire to go home to heaven, and asked his family to let him go. He passed peacefully that afternoon into the arms of the Savior who bled and died for him.

He is survived by his dear and devoted wife Clara, daughter Kathleen, son Paul and his wife Katie, daughter Patricia, son Walter and his wife Marjorie, much loved grandchildren Brett Walter and Melanie Anna, and nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He preceded in death by his parents; brothers and sisters, Lavaun (and Chester) Brovont, Joseph Meador (infant), Bethel Meador, L. Duane (and Lois) Meador, Joyce Ann Meador, and Barbara (and Raymond) Royer; father-in-law, Walter Gulick Mettler; mother-in-law, Anna Alida (Rumble, Mettler) Miller; stepfather-in-law,

Lloyd O. Miller; and sister-in-law, Mary Jane (and Warren) Jarboe.

Ivan was keenly aware of the many prayers on his behalf over the past several years, and knew it was only by God's mercy and grace that he lived to be nearly ninety-three years old. He was so grateful.

Funeral services were held in the Modesto District church on Saturday, October 9, 2021, officiated by Elders John Fall, David Rumble, and Mike Flora. Burial followed at the Wood Colony Cemetery with a message from Elder Dean Crawmer.

The Family

GARBER — Ralph Everett, 92, of Covington, Ohio, passed into the presence of the Lord, Friday, October 15, 2021. He was born January 5, 1929, in Gettysburg, Ohio, to the late Elmer D. and Fannie Mae (Lavy) Garber. He was also preceded in death by his stepmother, Rachel (Denlinger) Garber. Ralph married Betty J. (Yoder) Garber on September 4, 1949; she preceded him in death on February 14, 2005.

He will be missed and remembered by his children, Dwight (Nancy) Garber of Pleasant Hill, Wayne (Bonnie) Garber of Covington, Wendelin (Harry) Anthony of Pleasant Hill, Mary Ann (Joseph) Wintrow of Covington, Brian (Kimberly) Garber of Tipp City, and Jennifer (James) Hughes of Tipp City; a daughter-in-law, Kathy Garber (Doug) Brubaker of Sawyer, Kansas; two sisters, Opal Fullmer of Dayton and Ethel (Calvin) Jamison of Quinter, Kansas; a step-brother, Norman (Donna) Denlinger of Brookville; a sister-in-law, Nancy Garber; forty-three grandchildren; forty-eight great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his son, Lynn Garber; a grandson, Andrew Paul Garber; great-

granddaughter, Kylee Jane Reece; two brothers, Harold and Eldon Garber; a sister, Dorothy (Harold) Turner; and a brother-in-law, Lloyd Fullmer.

Ralph was a graduate of Gettysburg High School and worked as a farmer, real estate agent, and a builder of homes and grain bins. He served as President of The Board of Realtors and was a member of Toastmasters. He attended Vineyard Fellowship in Bradford, Ohio.

He will long be remembered for his articles on God and health, talking Scripture, and his unwavering faith. He lived by Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." His family brought him much joy. He wrote a family newsletter and enjoyed staying active with his grandchildren. Ralph always said, "When you have a good family, keep it and pass it on." He credits his wife of 55 years for many of the blessings enjoyed by his family. He touched numerous lives, was a faithful friend to many, and it was his desire that we all love one another.

The Family

YODER — John Daniel, 75 of Hillsville, Virginia, passed away Saturday, November 13, 2021, at Northern Regional Hospital.

Mr. Yoder was born January 5, 1946, in Goshen, Indiana, to the late Lee and Rosa Hufford Yoder.

Survivors include his wife, Dorothy Yoder of Hillsville; children, Cheryl and Mark Barlow of Salisbury, North Carolina and Paul and Wendy Yoder of Church Hill, Tennessee; stepchildren, Scott and Sheila Allen of Bassett and Michele Allen of Rocky Mount; grandchildren, Abigail Yoder and Emily Grace; step-grandchildren, Am-

ber, Dillon and Augustine; great-grandson, Mason Lee; and siblings, Phyllis Brovont of Nappanee, Indiana, Dean Yoder of Troy, Ohio, Tom Yoder of New Paris, Indiana and Joe Yoder of Eldorado, Ohio.

John was a graduate of Goshen High School of 1964. He was a master at the wheel in trucking fifty-four years and over six million miles. He was a faithful member of Cliffview Church of God for more than thirty-eight years. He served in many ways, including Sunday School superintendent.

Funeral services were held Saturday, November 20, 2021, at Cliffview Church of God, Galax, at 11 A.M. with Pastor Jackie Poe and Deacon Jeff Brovont officiating.

Burial followed in the Gardner Memorial Cemetery in Hillsville. The family received friends at the church Friday, November 19, 2021, from 6–8 P.M.

The Family

FLORY — Norman Lee Flory, son of Riley and Ruth (Beeghley) Flory was born near Cerro Gordo, Illinois, August 4, 1929. He passed peacefully from time to eternity on November 20, 2021, at his home near Eldorado, Ohio, at the age of ninety-two years, three months and sixteen days.

Dad accepted Christ as his Saviour and was baptized into the Old German Baptist Brethren fellowship on August 15, 1948, and lived faithful until death. He was united in marriage with Pauline S. Landes on December 23, 1951, and this union was blessed with four children. Dad and Mother were called to the Deacon's office in the Prices Creek District on August 10, 1967. He enjoyed serving on the Tent Committee for many years and always put church opportunities first. Dad was anointed with oil according

to James 5 a few days before his passing, from which he received much comfort.

Preceding him in death are his wife, Pauline; his parents, Riley and Ruth Flory; father-in-law and mother-in-law, Lee and Alma Landes; two brothers, John Elmer Flory and Marvin Flory; and one sister, Anna Hess; brothers-in-law, Donald Knaus and Kenneth Landes; and sisters-in-law, Eula Belle Flory and Ann Flory.

Dad is survived by one daughter, Rachel Landis of Eldorado, Ohio; three sons; David (and wife Pam) of West Manchester, Ohio; Dale (and wife Diane) of Eldorado, Ohio; Galen (and wife Becky) of Mesilla Park, New Mexico; brother-in-law, Charles Hess and wife, Julia, of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania; and sisters-in-law, Elsie May Flory of Covington, Ohio, Thelma Landes of Eldorado, Ohio, and Luella Knaus of Knob Noster, Missouri; thirteen grandchildren; fifty-five great-grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends.

Dad and Mother began their married life near Cerro Gordo, Illinois, then moved to Ohio in 1958. They raised their family in the Prices Creek District near Eldorado and remained in that area the rest of their days.

Dad enjoyed farming, making things, and fixing things. He was gifted with simplifying things that seem complicated and making it look easy. He greatly enjoyed his woodworking shop in his later years. His practice of sharing and helping others will be greatly missed and long remembered.

The visitation and funeral were both held at the Prices Creek meetinghouse near Eldorado, Ohio. The visitation was Sunday, November 28, and the funeral service was on Monday, November 29, 2021. The home brethren gave encouragement from

John 3:30–36 and other Scriptures. Burial followed at the Prices Creek Church Cemetery.

The Family

GEISER — Elsie, daughter of Daniel and Maude (Miller) Fingerle, was born February 6, 1924, in Flint, Michigan. She passed away 6:10 P.M. on November 22, 2021, at the age of ninety-seven.

On September 5, 1940, she was married to Robert D. Geiser. Together they shared the joys and sorrows of life for over sixty-six years and were blessed with two children.

She leaves to mourn her passing, her daughter, Diane and Galen Long; daughter-in-law, Linda Geiser; seven grandchildren and their companions, Jeff and Darlene Geiser, Rodney and Valerie Geiser, Rhonda and Martin Hernandez, Coreen and Phillip Garber, Sheriann and Jeff Hoblit, Gary and Jill Long, and Rachelle and Albert Mast; seventeen great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren; a brother, Chester Fingerle; a sister, Doris Kelsey; one brother-in-law, Max and Ann Geiser.

She was preceded in death by her companion, Robert; her son, Duane; brothers, infant Marvin, Kenneth and Anna Fingerle, Robert and Gladys Fingerle, Donald and Betty Fingerle; sisters, Pauline and Ralph Miller, infant Dortha; brother-in-law, Dale Kelsey; and sister-in-law, Helen Fingerle; brother-in-law, Millard and Ruth Geiser; and sister-in-law, Marjorie and Robert Metzger.

Realizing their need for a Savior, Daddy and Mother were baptized on August 17, 1941, and became members of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. She remained faithful unto the Lord until her death.

Our precious memories of Grandma include traveling, camping, fishing, many games, cookies in the freezer, lots of love and contagious laughter. We've been inspired and encouraged watching grandma conquer the fears of living alone. She taught us by example about joyful contentedness, patience, kindness, and caring for others.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (II Tim. 4:7).

The Family

Terms

Subscriptions should be made through the congregational contact or through *The Testimony* office. Subscription price is \$20.00 per year. New subscriptions should be paid (prorated) through the remainder of the current year. All renewals begin at the first of the calendar year. Newly married and those unable to pay for a subscription may receive a free subscription through the agent of their local congregation.

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Authors of essays, devotionals, poems, etc. are asked to review the Statement of Purpose on the back page of this periodical. Articles should

be based on Scripture. References are appreciated. Shorter focused articles are more desirable than articles that move from one topic to another. Selected material will be considered. Original writings are preferred. It is recommended that writers submit themselves to the Spirit, which reveals the will of God to the Church in every age, according to the varied needs and circumstances.

Written articles should be legible. Typed material is preferred and should be double-spaced. Electronic transmission or CD will be accepted. The author's name and address must be included on all material. An attempt will be made to contact the author of articles that are not accepted.

Old German Baptist Brethren
Church—New Conference

THE TESTIMONY

353 Billman Rd.
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The Testimony is a Christian publication intended for those who desire nourishment in their spiritual walk, and for writers who wish to express witness to the Truth of the Gospel as experienced in their own lives. It holds the Holy Scriptures to be its only Creed. Its purpose is to bear witness to the Truth of God's Word as it is applied in the daily life of committed Christians. It supports the anabaptist and pietist foundations of the Brethren of Schwarzenau, Germany (1708) including the biblical principle of the community of believers bound by a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus confirmed by adult immersion baptism (Mark 16:16). It strives to promote a life of true living piety among all who confess Jesus as their Lord. It seeks to restore and

maintain a fellowship of true primitive Christianity through the communication of all good things.

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