

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of...

THE TESTIMONY

...of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel..." II Tim. 1:8

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

*"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." Lam. 3:22-23*

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ONLY ONE LIFE

C.T. Studd

Two little lines I heard one day, traveling along life's busy way;
Bringing conviction to my heart, and from my mind would not depart;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Only one life, yes only one, soon will its fleeting hours be done;
Then, in "that day" my Lord to meet, and stand before His Judgment seat;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Only one life, the still small voice, gently pleads for a better choice
Bidding me selfish aims to leave, and to God's holy will to cleave;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Only one life, a few brief years, each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;
Each with its days I must fulfill, living for self or in His will;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

When this bright world would tempt me sore, when Satan would a victory score;
When self would seek to have its way, then help me Lord with joy to say;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Give me, Father, a purpose deep, in joy or sorrow Thy Word to keep;
Faithful and true what e'er the strife, pleasing Thee in my daily life;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Oh let my love with fervor burn, and from the world now let me turn;
Living for Thee, and Thee alone, bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Only one life, yes only one, Now let me say, "Thy will be done."
And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say, "'Twas worth it all."
"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

If I truly believe this, why do I embellish worldly treasure over heavenly treasure?

Dear brother and sister, are my actions of today, going to get the Lord's approval
in eternity? Matt. 25:14-30: *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant..."*

In Christ's love,
Bruce and Lindsey Meador

THE TESTIMONY

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**“...His compassions
fail not. They are
new every morning.
Great is thy
faithfulness.”
Lam. 3:22–23**

EDITORIAL

**IS THERE REALLY
ANYTHING NEW?**

As 2025 begins, our minds turn toward “newness.” While we recognize there are new opportunities and experiences that lie ahead, I ask, “Is there really anything new?”

Ecclesiastes 1:1–11 shows the repetitive and sameness of life “under the sun.” Verses 9 and 10 say, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.” This implies that even though people and details change, underneath it all, there is a repetition and familiarity that drones on and on.

In considering this passage, two premises are important to keep in mind. First, the phrase “under the sun” points to the terrestrial, rather than the celestial. In other words, life lived in the natural state, rather than the spiritual. Secondly, the tone of Ecclesiastes takes the reader on an honest reflection of humanity’s quest for meaning and varied pursuits in life. In the context of these two assertions, clearly there is nothing new. People down through history have repetitively dealt with the same questions and ambitions over and over again. This is due to

every human’s point of beginning as a sinner by nature. Within these strivings as sinners, there is nothing new. Human pride and natural strength prove to end up on the hamster-wheel of “nothing new.”

But what about the realm “above the sun”? Is there newness there? Jeremiah points to newness in Lamentations 3:22–23, when he says, “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.” As you read the prior verses you see Jeremiah’s struggle to bear up under the disappointments and afflictions brought on by remaining faithful to his calling. Yet he comes to these verses and remembers God’s mercies and compassions toward him. This newness seems to be connected to the statements later in this chapter, that God will not cast him off forever (vs. 31). That even though times may be tough now, there is comfort yet to come. The newness Jeremiah is speaking of is a renewed understanding each morning that there is coming a grand newness where God’s compassions and mercies will be realized in an eternal way, seeing they fail not.

Revelation 21:3–5 speaks of these eternal mercies: “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his

people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 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: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.”

Dear believer, whatever disappointments or afflictions you are currently enduring, or whatever you will face in 2025, know there is nothing new under the sun, but be encouraged that there is coming an eternal newness above the sun, that is reserved in heaven for you. So, yes, there really is something new!

Grant Fullmer

SEASONAL

IN THE YEAR 2025

As the year 2024 comes to a close:

Did we have seedtime? Yes, we did.

Did we have harvest? Yes, we did.

Did we have cold? Yes, we did.

Did we have heat? Yes, we did.

Did we have summer? Yes, we did.

Did we have winter? Yes, we did.

Did we have day? Yes, we did.

Did we have night? Yes, we did.

Genesis 8:22 says, “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.” God has allowed the earth to remain, and He has guaranteed it. The things listed above will remain the same.

What will the year 2025 bring? Will it be the same? Only time will tell. Someday there will be no more of these things. So let us be faithful and remain faithful until that time comes.

We have had a very hot and dry harvest up until now! I am writing this article during the remaining effects of the hurricane “Helene.”

This Fall has been bountiful in more ways than one. Baptisms have been many! What a harvest!

The words of Jesus are reaching out to lost souls! Matthew 28:18–20 says, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

What will the year 2025 be like? Will it be just like 2024? Probably not. Weather, a new president, wars, technology, the list goes on and on.

Speaking of technology, as I start to view the year 2025, my mind goes to a song in the late 60’s that seemed so futuristic at the time. The prophetic lyrics described the times we live in right now! It described how technology would be so advanced in the year

2025 and beyond that humanity could become extinct because of our reliance on it. Technology, including genetic engineering and artificial intelligence and more, has the power to transform our lives in ways we cannot imagine. The cell phone, or smartphone, is just one example. In the 60's some of these things would have been so far out in the future we could hardly have conceived them. But here we are in the year 2025!

Some of these things may be beneficial. Others may come at a great cost to us. That song was a take on the dangers of allowing technology to rule lives. We need to use technology responsibly in this world we live in. My, how technology continues to grow by leaps and bounds! As it says in Daniel 12:4, "...many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." We are far down this road of time, and we should do as this song in our little collection says:

*Remember thy Creator now
And seek Him while He's near;
For evil days will come, when thou
Shalt find no comfort here.*

And it seems like those days are here now.

That song back in the 60's says,
*God's a comin', and He'll look
around and say,
It's time for the Judgment Day!*

Isaiah 40:6-8 says, "...All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:

[and as time is running out] *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*"

Notice the following Scriptures: Matthew 24:3: *The disciples asked, "...when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"*

Matthew 24:13-14: *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."*

Matthew 24:30-31: *"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*

Could this happen in the year 2025?

To all believers, we need to *"Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."*

L. D. Flory

ANOTHER YEAR

Another year, and how will we spend our time in this new year? "...We spend our years as a tale that is told" (Ps. 90:9).

The Wise Men have interested me. "For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Are we, in this new year, continuing to watch for Him?

There is something given to each of us to use or to lose each day. It is *choice* that is given to us, as we meet the circumstances of life. Recently this has weighed heavily on my mind. Will we win? Will we overcome? Will we make right choices?

Notice the Bible characters of old. Joshua said to the people (Jos. 24:15), "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." We find Ruth, who chose to go with Naomi. And because of her choice, she probably never saw her own family again! Mary's choice and response has been on my mind recently. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Would I have enough faith for the lion's den (Daniel)? And could I be like the three Hebrew children, and not bow down to any other god? The fiery furnace was heated seven times hotter, and yet they, with God's help, walked out of that furnace.

Do we doubt that God will help us and take care of us? Will my prayer and my faith hold fast throughout the trials of the day? He is the way, and not we ourselves!

This new year opens with more time. Will I say there's no time nor

energy beyond the things that I want to do?

How much time does it take to do a good deed? Does it take as much time as I need to convince myself?

The words "happy" and "joy" have been on my mind, and we have found that we are "happy" if we do these things. But "joy" is in knowing God! We are privileged to know Him, and to be "the called," and to be "His People."

Psalms 16:11 says, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

God is interested in us, just like we are interested in our children, except His interest in us is more perfect. And He always gives us what is best! Many times things happen to us for our learning and growth. Throughout our trials, will the result be "a closer walk with Him"?

We must never doubt that our God cares! Jesus is our Intercessor (Heb. 7:25)!

Can we look away from our own trials and circumstances, and instead look "unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith"?

As Stephen was being put to death by stoning, he said, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56).

Can we also train ourselves to be looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith?

Then we will see things differently, and as they truly are!

Vicki Witmer

GENERAL

A CHRIST-CENTERED COURTSHIP*Paul Hershberger***PART 1****INTRODUCTION**

My wife and I had the privilege of having a courtship without regrets or guilt. We were blessed with parents who guided us in the right way and gave us opportunities that they didn't have.

If you don't have that testimony or memory, please don't go on a guilt trip. But my prayer for you is that you get a burning burden and vision in your heart to have it for your children. That can be your reward.

A Christ-centered courtship is a period of time between a single life and a married life. The decisions you make in this period will affect you for the rest of your lives. With God's blessing on your life, you can end up with no regrets or guilt.

FIVE GOALS FOR THIS CHRIST-CENTERED COURTSHIP SERIES.

Goal #1. To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children.

Goal #2. To turn the hearts of the children to the fathers.

Goal #3. That parents would get a burden to lead each one of their children into the perfect will of God for their lives.

Goal #4. That young people would get a burden to seek after God, find fulfillment and purpose in walking with God, and you would seek maturity in your manners

and in your character.

Goal #5. That young men and young women would rise up to be godly fathers and godly mothers with a vision to raise up another godly generation, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ can go on.

GOD'S PLAN FOR MALE AND FEMALE

Ecclesiastes 12:1 says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." My desire is that each one of you, remember your Creator in the days of your youth. Turn your heart, your focus, and your life to pursue after your Creator, Almighty God, in heaven.

What does he mean, "while the evil days come not..." and "the years draw nigh..."? It means to seek the Lord when you're young. Take the energy of your youth and seek after God. Young people, you're young and full of ideas, visions, plans, and dreams. I doubt there are any of you who just enjoy sitting down in an easy chair, putting your feet up, and just dreaming about how terrible and horrible life is going to be. We don't do that, do we? But if we don't walk with God and follow God's plan, hard things will come upon us. When hard things come in life, we have no place to turn to. We dream that life will turn out well. The decisions and actions in our youth affect us for the rest of our lives. The

good news is they can affect us in a good way. The bad news is they can affect us in a bad way. It depends on what decisions and choices we make. But, young people, you're young, and you have the opportunity to choose.

Let's go to the beginning of Genesis.

"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:18–24).

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and

over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26–28).

"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). *"I'll make him an help that is meet [suitable] for him."* God said that He would do that.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). God made. God created us male and female. It takes a lot of blind faith to believe that we evolved perfectly as male and female. The creation of male and female is God's plan. It is one of the living proofs of Creation. God made. God created. It's God's plan. God is the Author. And God's plan brings blessing.

I'd like to look at ten different aspects of this blessing of God's plan.

1) GOD BRINGS EVE TO ADAM.

"And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen. 2:22–23).

God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. Then God created Eve and brought her to Adam. Adam awoke and realized, "This one is for me!" He had seen all the animals go by when he named them. Now God brings him someone that is for him. He also realized, "She was taken out of my side." She's close to his heart. "This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." It's not a dog; it's not a giraffe, or a monkey, or an ape. This one that God brought to him is like him. God's plan has a blessing.

Adam and Eve had never had a companion before. Adam and Eve had never let the emotions of their heart go before. Something happened in Adam's and Eve's hearts. Adam was a "one-woman man," and Eve was a "one-man woman." They never gave their heart passions to anybody else. God has that plan for us, too. God's plan brings blessings.

2) LEAVING AND CLEAVING IN UNITY FOR LIFE.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

This verse says, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother." But Adam and Eve did not have a father and mother. What God is saying, it doesn't work for there to be cleaving unless there's leaving. Also, in Mark 10:7, we read, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife." This is God's plan, and God's plan brings blessing.

Leaving means to leave behind, to abandon. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother..." is to leave parents behind. Let's consider a young man who has a really good home life. He's blessed and has everything he needs. Yet once God brings his Eve into his life, something rises up inside him, and he says, "I'm leaving!" But this is God's plan. And God's plan brings blessing.

It's not just leaving his father and mother; he also cleaves to his wife. Cleave means "to glue to, to adhere." We are very familiar with glued wood panels. All kinds of solid furniture are made out of panels glued together. And if they're glued together right, they will not come apart at the joints. If you tear them apart, you're going to have to tear the wood apart. God's glue is the same way, where it glues two people together. The only way to tear them apart is by splintering and ripping and God does not bless that. But leaving and cleaving, staying together and being glued together, that's God's plan and it brings blessing.

3) THEY SHALL BE ONE FLESH.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Two single people who become one married couple, become one unit before God, and become one family before God. They become one flesh, where God sees them as together as one.

"And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let

not man put asunder” (Mark 10:8–9). God’s plan for male and female is that He brings Eve to Adam. Then the leaving and cleaving take place. He causes them to become one flesh. Pulling apart is no blessing at all but brings agony, pain, travail, and hurt. There is no blessing in separation. But God’s plan brings blessing.

4) NOT AN UNEQUAL YOKE.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” (II Cor. 6:14–15). “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord” (I Cor. 7:39).

God’s plan is that marriage is an equal yoke. God will not bring an Eve to an Adam in a marriage that is an unequal yoke. Let’s think about leaving and cleaving, getting glued together, and two becoming one. In marriage, those two are now one before God. Imagine being in a bad marriage relationship like this—a family like this trying to function together. There will be no blessing.

But an equal yoke brings blessing! God desires that we be joined together in one flesh, one heart, and one mind. He wants to see us joined in heart, mind, and flesh—the whole being, being one. God’s plan brings blessing.

5) God planned for married couples to have children.

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful,

and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:28). Think of the joy and miracle every time another child is born into a Christian home. God planned it this way. And if God brought Adam his Eve, and they leave and cleave, they become one flesh, one heart, one mind. If they are equally yoked and God blesses them with children, it becomes a joyful haven where God can dwell. “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 9:1). “And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein” (Gen. 9:7). God’s plan brings blessing.

6) HEADSHIP ORDER.

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (I Cor. 11:3). It is God, and then Christ, the man, and the woman. God established a headship order, and this headship order is a blessing. It’s God’s plan, and it’s a blessing.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1–3). “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord*” is a part of the headship order. This is

not difficult to understand, is it? A home following the plan of God is just a blessed situation. Young people learn to be under authority. Make that your high priority. The sooner you learn to be under authority, the better you will be prepared for the responsibilities in life. I remember looking at married life and having aspirations about teaching children and raising a godly family. I listened to the "Godly Home" series and thought I was ready to go. But then the day came when it was my turn and my responsibility, and all of a sudden, my heart wanted to wither. Responsibility doesn't feel the same as dreaming about it does. YOU need to do something! YOU are responsible. YOU need to make it happen. And, by the way, not just make it happen; you need to make it happen in a Christlike way. You need to make it happen in a way that the anointing of the Spirit of God can come down on your family. The better we learn how to be under authority, the better we'll be prepared for those responsibilities. The more we realize we need God, the better off we are. Let's make a high priority out of learning to be under authority as children and as young people. "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee" (Prov. 3:1-2).

God will add His blessing if we stay in this headship order. The more you learn how to be under authority, the more you will be

blessed when you establish your home. God's plan has blessings.

7) A GODLY MARRIAGE.

Ephesians 5:21-24 says, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

First of all look at verse 21, "Submitting yourselves one to another..." There's a blending together that needs to happen in a godly home. This blending together should happen in the fear of God. If we're submitting one to another in the fear of God, we're going to obey God because we want His blessings.

Ephesians 5:22, 24 "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Young ladies, you can count on it: submission to Dad equals submission to a husband. You can practice while you are single. This will help build character in your life. Being a rebellious and froward woman is not going to bring the blessing of God.

It goes on and says, in Ephesians 5:25-29. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own

flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.” Young men, this says that husbands should love their wives. So who do you think God put in your life to prepare you to love your wife? Your mother! Do you want to learn how to love your wife? Learn how to get along with your mom, love your mom, and care about her. Do you want to practice to love your future wife? Go ahead and love your mom.

Ephesians 5:33, “Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” God’s plan brings blessings.

8) BEING HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE.

I Peter 3:7 says, “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” As husbands, we give honor to the wife. She is the weaker vessel and the one that bore the children! She’s gone through a lot of traumatic changes in her life. She’s the one that gets worn out and tires sooner.

And he says, “Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge.”

Young men, learn to understand your mom and your sisters. It will help you after you get married. Don’t conclude that, “Ah, that’s just women.” No, you want the blessing of God. Learn to know and understand them.

“Being heirs together of the grace of life.” God wants us to be heirs together of the grace of life. If we’re not heirs together of the grace of life, can we be heirs separated, of the grace of life? I don’t think so. He says we should be heirs together so that our prayers are not hindered. So if we’re heirs separated, could we say our prayers will be hindered? Yes, our prayers will be hindered. Let’s give honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel. Every ounce you can gain in this area will only bless you later. It’s worth it. God’s plan brings blessing.

9) A BLESSED AND SECURE HOME.

This comes partly out of I Peter 3:7, but also from Psalm 144:12. “That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.” The grace of God is on a secure home where there is unity—where Dad is understanding Mom, where Dad cares about Mom. Dad is ministering and is there to help and guide. He’s there to give direction with a heart of compassion. God’s plan for male and female—God’s plan, brings blessings.

10) AS CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

“Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might

present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph. 5:24–29).

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it..." God is looking for men who are willing to give their lives—single young men, who are willing to answer the call and give their life. This is a high calling of God. It's the plan of God.

Young men, are you willing to lay down your life, your agenda, and those independent things you like to do? Are you willing to be patient, gentle, and understanding? Are you willing to lose sleep and keep going even when you're tired? Are you willing to stay calm and not react in stressful circumstances? Are you willing to lead and guide a wife and children, eternal souls, through this life?

But my plea is that you would volunteer and say, "I'm willing to apply myself to the Word of God, the will of God, the plan of God, and I'll give my life. I'm willing to lay it on the altar." Jesus gave His life for us, and He's comparing the marriage to the church and to Him.

There's also a need for mothers who are submissive and yielded to authority. Mothers who do not follow the women's lib of our day but

are rather content to be keepers at home.

Young ladies, are you willing to enlist? Will you give your heart to be guided and led? Are you willing to follow and to cheerfully submit to your authority? Are you willing to serve and be spent for YOUR family? If you get married someday, it will be YOUR family that you'll be serving and being spent for. Are you willing to bear pain and discomfort? Are you willing to be a help meet, giving yourself for his burden and vision?

But as we look at God's plan and blessings, you want God's blessing, young people! But that means you need to make choices accordingly. Rise up and make decisions that will lead to maturity. Maturity comes with the process of seeking after God. Make a commitment in your heart to open yourself to God's blessings and principles. I encourage you to walk with God, to have a relationship with Jesus Christ, and to do so in humility.

Seek after Christlike character, and do it on purpose. It is so easy for us to just live life however it happens. But if we make decisions on purpose, it will take us somewhere! Those decisions matter. Do things according to God's plan.

God has a plan for male and female, and He has a plan for you.

Selected from the Summer 2024 issue of *The Remnant* by

Kenneth Hopkins

GOSSIP

My name is Gossip.

I have no respect for justice.

I maim without killing.

I break hearts and try to ruin lives.

I am cunning and malicious and gather strength with age.

I love to talk on the phone and repeat things that are not facts.

The more I am quoted, the more I am believed.

I flourish at every level of society.

My victims are helpless.

They cannot protect themselves against me,

because I have no name or face.

To track me down is impossible.

The harder you try, the more elusive I become.

I am nobody's friend.

I talk and talk and talk.

Once I tarnish a person, it is never the same.

I topple churches and ruin marriages.

I ruin careers and cause sleepless nights,

heartaches, and indigestion.

I like to spawn suspicion and generate grief.

I make many innocent people cry in their pillows.

Even my name hisses

I am called Gossip. I am evil.

Author unknown

*"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*

Selected by

Kevin and Lori Jacobs

FOUR ANCIENT BUT “WOKE” TRADITIONS

This title uses the word “woke” with a nod toward a mid-1900’s usage. The word “woke” meant having an awareness of social injustice, especially among urban blacks. In more recent times, the word has evolved into a general description of left-leaning political thinking and is often used as a derogatory word among politically conservative Americans.

So many of our received practices have imbedded within them a richness that contradicts and overcomes some of our current cultural injustices. It couldn’t hurt to get a little “woke up” about their value.

A comprehensive definition of sin is so well described by the prophet Isaiah 53:6 where it says, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone unto his own way.”

The teachings of Jesus and biblical practices take on more beauty when they are understood as the antidote to “going our own way.” Jesus did not say, “Let a man deny his sin and follow me” He said, “Let a man deny himself and follow me.” By refusing a reductionist approach to sin and salvation, the Bible opens up far more treasure to us.

You may not think of these four examples as traditions. You may simply classify them as biblical doctrines. They can be called traditions for this reason: They are

Christian minority positions and biblical understandings that have been passed down to us through our faith heritage.

#1 THE HOLY KISS.

We live in the aftermath of what is sometimes called the Sexual Revolution. Our culture’s hyper-focus on sexuality has gone as far as making a person’s core identity defined by their deviant lusts. Some modern philosophers bear much responsibility for this perspective. Christianity teaches that our core identity is in Christ and the love of God. The holy kiss witnesses to the fact that God’s eternal love is at the core of our identity and not our sexuality. By practicing the holy kiss as a covenantal expression, we are affirming a covenantal foundation to our love and not an emotional or mood-based foundation. There is evidence that in some regions, the early church actually practiced the holy kiss across genders. The Bible does not give all the details on how it is to be practiced. I am more than happy to stay within the traditional practice as we have received it.

#2 THE HEAD COVERING.

Women are under many pressures today that often pull in opposing directions. One direction obligates them as objects of male pleasure. They are pressured to frame their lives to impress and to keep up with the demand for fashion and beauty. The other direc-

tion is the pressure to quit trying to be feminine. Many women get weary of the demands to be beautiful and perfect, and they choose to disregard femininity and any attempt to be beautiful. There is plenty of evidence that many women are undergoing the transition toward a male expression because they are weary of trying to meet the demands for feminine beauty and perfection.

First Corinthians 11 both recognizes and affirms natural female glory and calls it to be veiled. It is not an either/or teaching but a both/and teaching. The woman is not publicly obligated or even allowed to serve the passions of men, or worldly fashion. Her primary allegiance is to God. Her long hair is given to her as glory and her glory is to be veiled. The head covering both veils and affirms her femininity. This is relevant to our current cultural crisis. It is possible to practice this tradition in enough contradiction to its intended aim, that very little of the blessing is received.

We are taught by Jesus, that in the New Heavens and New Earth we will be neither given nor taken in marriage but will be like the angels. I'm not suggesting that there will be no male and female distinctions, but it appears that something will be quite different as well.

The head covering points to an understanding of gender and femininity that is far above and be-

yond the prevailing cultural views of women.

What a sacred calling among the current gender confusion!

#3 PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONFESSION.

We belong to a tradition that expected private moral failures such as fornication and adultery to be confessed publicly to the church. Historically, these sins received automatic discipline as well as confession. There are good biblical arguments that can be made for that practice, but it is

**The beautiful teachings
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not my intention to provide them here.

Several years ago, a movement called the #MeToo Movement broke out. Many, many women got up the courage to come forward and reveal that they had been treated inappropriately by men in positions of power and were intimidated into both cooperating and staying silent.

Chronically abusive people intimidate their victims into silence and privacy. They often accuse their victims of gossip and employ techniques to make sure their victims do not talk to each other or to

anyone else. For this type of people, Matthew 18 is a convenient Scripture to flout because it emphasizes going alone to the offender, and abusers are masters at retaining control in private.

On the other hand, some men's careers and lives have been ruined by false accusations. Living transparently in local brotherhood can be a protection against unwarranted accusations.

Our tradition of public discipline and confession is a direct affront to these particular issues. I am not going to claim that it has been foolproof, but it certainly is not an old-fashioned practice. It is a timeless answer to some serious societal ills. Requiring all Christian men and women both inside and outside of leadership to be held accountable for private moral behavior is a received practice that directly addresses the current social catastrophe. Lawsuits, bankruptcies, extortion and other issues fit within this practice as well.

#4 NON-RESISTANCE.

Our nation is in another arms race, perhaps just as serious as the Cold War. More and more we are becoming dependent on satellites to operate our world. Recently Russia manifested its capability by blowing up one of its own satellites in space. China sent a supersonic missile into outer space orbit and then aimed it at a practice target on the earth. This is mind

boggling power. Jesus' call to non-violence frees us from the deep anxiety we would feel if we were obligated to be responsible for self-defense. Historically, the land and the sea were the only zones that needed controlled nationally. Imagine the burden humanity now has to patrol and protect outer space.

Men, not women, are the primary initiators of physical violence on the earth. Just as the head covering calls women to submit their feminine power to God, Jesus' teaching on non-violence primarily confronts men to surrender their masculine power and place their physical protection under the Lordship of Christ.

CONCLUSION

How we think about sin, salvation, and church life, has a huge impact on how we perceive these biblical practices. It is so natural to interpret the Scriptures through the lens of American individualism or through a reductionist view of salvation and church life.

It is not my interest to support each of these biblical traditions or my observations with proof texts from the Bible. Rather, I invite the readers to judge for themselves whether or not these truths and blessings are embedded within scriptural teaching and practice.

May you be blessed,

Anthony Hess

MANY RESCUERS— ONE SAVIOR

The sea was a blue chop with stiff whitecaps. The ship, having taken a direct hit was unsafe for the remaining crew. One minute they were transiting through the Gulf of Aden in the Greek owned, Liberian flagged ship *True Confidence* under sunny blue skies with a load of steel products and trucks from China destined for Saudi Arabia, and the next they were in jeopardy. Of the 23 men on board three lay dead and four badly burned, all from Vietnam, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.

They sent an SOS, launched a lifeboat, and some of the crew were soon bobbing precariously in the very visible orange raft. It would be a long seven hours and fifteen minutes before the Indian Naval ship *Kolkata* sailed into sight and began the rescue operation.

The Pelican fell from the sky toward them. The picture I was looking at was the small figure of a man aboard the ARS Pelican, an Air Rescue System attached to a cable and winched into the helicopter hovering above. The person in the chopper was guiding the cable. In the next shot he was securing a person, clearly of Asian descent, inside the open cockpit door with a lap belt across the seat. The man looked up at his helmeted rescuer and the photographer had his shot.

We are living in truly perilous times. Are they any more or less than bygone ages? Do we just hear and see more sooner? Who knows?

Death has stocked man since the second generation if not the first. This time one nation had finally nailed a civilian, actually three from two nations. They had made a mess for—let's see, so far nine nations—none at war with them. Others would soon be involved as the ship's salvage crew not to mention the hospital in Djibouti where the crew was being treated, but this hardly turned heads. After all, it was "over there."

For now there is a ten additional days trip around the Horn of Africa, Cape Hope. The Bible says this isn't going to improve. The enemy is going to further besiege the sea gates. Those nations who in the past controlled them will lose them, or in the case of the Panama Canal, return them. Twice, in 1957 and 1967, the Suez Canal was closed. When a ship stuck sideways in 2021 it cost Egypt roughly 14 million dollars a day just in revenues, not to mention holding up the 400 million that transits within the waterway hourly. Supply chain? We're all linked to it somehow. Product is produced, traded, and shipped all over the world.

Today it is steel and trucks. Tomorrow it might be something you really need and much more expensive. We all live in this one-and-only world and we're not ignorant of how shipping can be effected.

Back to the picture. Clearly the man was thankful to be rescued. He had that "I could kiss your feet" look of relief that any work-a-day rescuer knows to guard against lest he let it go to his head and he make a fatal mistake. It strikes a chord in the heart of all

but the hardest. It is the reason why Christianity has something that no other religion can give.

In one word it is called salvation. It gets in the blood of every rescuer to the point that, if not controlled, can endanger them. They will take greater risk perhaps not so much for the praise of men but for the rush of endorphins. It gives you a good feeling.

It can happen to the rescued, too. They ignore fear and if it doesn't cost them their life it can cost someone else's. This is why authorities hate a false alarm and will sometimes arrest or at least soundly admonish when they discover there is no real danger. It is why we once saw a man arrested after he stepped off the trail to take a photo in Bryce Canyon, got stuck, and was rope-rescued by a trained rappeler. We are our brother's keeper even if we think a thing is harmless. Salvation cost the Savior and rescue costs money.

We see people all the time who are enamored by salvation. Search and Rescue sounds very brave and noble. Who doesn't like the gear and all that glow-in-the-dark reflective apparel? Much bravado and not enough humility can be its downfall. After all, if we are honest we may get to help, but we do not save anyone. Don't even think of robbing God of His glory or stealing His thunder.

The Apostle Paul had to confront this. "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye be-

lieved, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God..." (I Cor. 3:4-9).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Oh, but that refers to the soul. Sure does, but not for a minute should anyone think that men save lives or hides. All that we are and have we owe to one name, Jesus.

When men begin to praise, when they get that "idol worship look" every faithful rescuer is going to start squirming because he knows or remembers the time he found out he couldn't save. When CPR didn't bring breath, when he got there too late to revive the stricken, when death-clouded eyes stared back. He remembers when he did everything right and nothing wrong and for no human reason the person died in his arms or failed to recover all they had before.

Well I remember the frustrated anguish of a recently hired surgeon who lost his first patient. His "I did all I could" tore at my heart. I tried to reassure him that no doubt he did, but sometimes God has other plans.

Maybe he was not a believer or maybe it was ideal circumstances/ideal outcome thinking, but he could not be comforted in the moment. Tell me, where is that picture? No one wants to see wasted effort or the disappointment of death. There is no pleasure there. "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezek. 18:32). The best laid plan, the best preached sermon will be for naught if we don't consider that salvation is of the Lord. Nevertheless it is a sweet, sweet thing.

It doesn't take much to rescue the perishing. Oh, the Pelican looks state-of-the-art and a helicopter turns everyone's head, but boats were also used. Many fine words preached eloquently hold people's attention, but quiet prayers work, too. Mere nails of iron held no glory until the resurrection. We never know what a word, a hand, or a smile will do.

And may it ever be that way.

What a wonderful surprise heaven will be when we realize the impact our smallest effort was on someone. Those things least esteemed by men compounded by the plan of salvation will bring the most satisfaction. If life seems mundane and daily begins to grind remember it takes a team to rescue, and some of them are so far behind the scene they are never seen.

Rachel Brubaker

LEARNING TO WALK

Marla J. Bowman

Our life is like a baby learning to walk. Children are tottery; they teeter back and forth, in and out, while learning to balance or stand. Often they are overanxious or trying to go too fast; they begin leaning back and forth too quickly. Then they fall; they cry out for help; they look up and reach up for our hands and our help. We take their hands and get them balanced and on their feet again.

We grownups are so like that. We are still learning to walk. We stand up on our feet. We try out our feet. We take a step or two. We get too anxious, overconfident, or overbalanced one way, then another. We try to correct our steps; sometimes we are able but often we overcorrect or overreact, taking two steps forward and four backward, thus causing another stumble.

We are so like children, even at our age. We are still learning to walk.

Do you suppose God looks down upon us and says, "You are not able to learn to walk"? No. He does not say that. He simply reaches out His hands and takes our hands and lifts us to our feet, saying, "Child, try again!"

Selected from the August 2024 issue of *The Vindicator* by

Alice Mae Haney

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Sept. 22, 2024; Fair Haven, KS
 Carly Fisher
 Oct. 9, 2024; Dallas, OR
 Savannah Garber
 Oct. 20, 2024; West Modesto, CA
 Carter Brunk
 Nov. 9, 2024; Mt. Zion, PA
 Kyle Heffley

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

Aug. 25, 2024; Shenandoah, VA
 Rosanna Popejoy
 Sept. 26, 2024; Bear Creek, OH
 Daniel and Naomi Dickerson
 Nov. 19, 2024; Morning Star, OH
 Jaima Filbrun
 Nov. 28, 2024; Sugar Grove, OH
 Luke and Cara Haney
 Weston and Lori Fisher

COMMISSIONS

Oct. 19, 2024; Shenandoah, VA
 Richard Jamison (with wife Nedra)
 Ordained to the Eldership.
 Gregg Hubbard (with wife Brenae)
 Advanced to the second degree of
 the ministry.
 Nov. 25, 2024; Salem, OH
 Nathan Wright (with wife Kendra)
 Called to the office of Deacon.

COMMUNION NOTICES

Feb. 1, 2025 Living Epistle, NM
 Feb. 1, 2025 Pine Grove, FL
 Feb. 22, 2025 West Manchester, IN
 Mar. 2, 2025 Morning Star, OH
 Mar. 29, 2025 Dallas, OR
 Apr. 5, 2025 Cutler Ridge, IN
 Apr. 5, 2025 Shiloh, OH
 Apr. 12, 2025 Fair Haven, KS
 Apr. 12, 2025 Salem, OH
 Apr. 19, 2025 Modesto, CA
 Apr. 26, 2025 Cascade Valley, WA
 Apr. 26, 2025 Bear Creek, OH
 Apr. 26, 2025 Sugar Grove, OH
 Sept. 27, 2025 Pleasant View, OH
 Oct. 11, 2025 Lower Twin, OH
 Oct. 18, 2025 Maple Grove, OH
 Oct. 25, 2025 Stillwater, OH
 Nov. 1, 2025 Bethel, OH
 Nov. 8, 2025 Covington, OH

HARVEST MEETINGS

Jul. 13, 2025 Lower Twin, OH
 Jul. 20, 2025 Bethel, OH
 Jul. 27, 2025 Shiloh, OH

Aug. 3, 2025 Maple Grove, OH
 Aug. 10, 2025 Covington/Sugar Grove, OH
 Aug. 24, 2025 Stillwater, OH
 Aug. 31, 2025 Salem, OH
 Sept. 21, 2025 Bear Creek, OH

DISTRICT NOTICES

Shenandoah District, VA

Our Shenandoah District has agreed to start having a worship service on the first Sunday evening of each month at 6:30 P.M. (beginning in January 2025).

We welcome everyone to come anytime to our worship services.

On behalf of the Shenandoah District
 Richard Jamison Sr.

Mount Zion District

We at Mt. Zion have been making progress on our building project. We now have our permits and have begun construction. Saturday, December 7, our district got together and dug footers. We had an enjoyable day and were encouraged by the opportunity to work together and by the enthusiasm displayed.

We are planning to frame the addition on February 13, 14, and 15. If anyone would like to come and help with these workdays, we would feel blessed to have the support. If you are interested in coming, please contact Leslie Bowman at 717-729-0850 so we can keep you updated if there are any changes.

We would like to thank everyone for their continued prayers and support. If any feel to contribute financially to this project, please send donations to:

Mount Zion Building Fund
 c/o Keith Garber
 2890 Guilford Springs Rd.
 Chambersburg, PA 17202

We desire your prayers that the Lord would continue to bless and build our district both naturally and spiritually. May all we do be to His Glory and the building of His Church.

Leslie J. Bowman
 Building Committee Secretary

Ignatius of Antioch (50–110 AD)

“We recognize a tree by its fruit, and we ought to be able to recognize a Christian by his action. The fruit of faith should be evident in our lives, for being a Christian is more than making sound professions of faith. It should reveal itself in practical and visible ways. Indeed it is better to keep quiet about our beliefs, and live them out, than to talk eloquently about what we believe, but fail to live by it.”

MEDITATIONS

Peace in your soul is God’s recompense for the things you’ve suffered.

Guilt looks ahead, behind, right, and left, but often fails to look up!

Deception says, “I think I can handle a little more of this world.”

The last of the year should be a lot better than the first.

Life’s dis-appointments are still appointments.

“Jesus saw their faith.” Faith is visible.

God never says, “Oops!” or “Uh-Oh!”

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.

An elder among us was asked a few years ago, “Are you at peace, with all that is happening in the church, and in your congregation, and in the world?”

His answer was, “*Nothing can take away my peace.*”

The world is in turmoil. Nations are at war. Major conflicts are erupting, and it is very possible that this nation could be drawn into a world war, and a call for our youth to enlist and engage.

“*Nothing can take away my peace.*”

This is surely a good answer for faithful Christians who have placed their faith in God and His promises.

Questions:

1. Is this true for me?
2. Is my faith so deeply rooted in my God that my answer could be the same?
3. Why then am I so troubled at the smallest matters?
4. Why do I awaken in the night and fret about things I cannot change?
5. Should I pray about this?

POEMS

ANGELS IN THE NIGHT

Sometimes the voice of Jesus and of God seem far away.
And the Spirit doesn't speak to me for a while in any way.
Then there comes to me, a glimmer and a ray of heavenly light.
It appears while I am sleeping—it's an Angel in the Night.

Perhaps I've been too careless in my devotions for a while.
Perhaps I've failed to seek Him and the blessings of His smile.
I've strayed a little here and there to the left and to the right.
But suddenly He appears again—as an Angel in the Night!

Tonight, I was awakened, and sleep escaped my head.
"I need someone to talk to," I'm sure the Savior said.
So, I'm here to listen to what the Spirit has to say.
The voice of God is speaking, and He'll show to me the way.

When you hear the voice of Jesus in the night upon your bed,
When rest and sleep escape you and when slumber long has fled,
Perhaps it is the Spirit who contributes to your plight.
Perhaps you were awakened by an Angel in the Night.

So, answer, "Blessed Jesus, Holy Spirit, here am I.
I feel your presence near me and Angels hovering nigh.
Speak to me and make me hear Your will for me, Dear Lord.
Send Angels, Lord, to guide me, and reveal to me your Word."

"Thank you, Child, for listening," I heard the Spirit say.
Then I fell asleep in peace, and soon dawned a better day.

Marcus Miller

OBITUARIES

DENLINGER — Thomas Arlen, passed from this earthly life into the presence of his Heavenly Father on August 5, 2024. Throughout the years Tom spoke of “Crossing the Jordan” and what a glorious day that would be (Crossing the Jordan was his reference to entering the promise land of Heaven). His anticipation of this is now reality, and he is with his Lord and Savior for eternity.

Tom was born to Ira and Doris Denlinger on November 26, 1941, in Whittier, California. At the age of 8, his family moved to Modesto in 1950, where he spent the balance of his life. Tom was a devoted husband to Shirley Denlinger (Flory), with whom he celebrated 60 years of marriage in 2023. He was a loving father to his children, Darin Denlinger (Fran), Darla Andrew (Paul), and Dana Flora (Mike). He leaves behind a cherished legacy with his 18 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Tom is survived by his sisters, Diane Brubaker (John) and Darleen Layman (Phil). He was preceded in death by his parents, Ira and Doris Denlinger, and Dana joined him in heaven just nine days later.

In his early years, Tom worked on his parents’ peach farm off Yosemite Avenue, graduating from Thomas Downey High School in 1959. He soon embarked on a lifelong journey as an auto mechanic,

dedicating more than 50 years to his profession. In 1979, he opened his own automotive shop, which he successfully operated for 30 years before finishing his career as a part-time fleet mechanic for Layman Electric. Tom was known for his mechanical skill, but most importantly his integrity and honesty in business, always putting his customer first. His desire to repair a vehicle correctly at the most economical price quickly grew a loyal customer base. His genuine care for his customers turned many of them into lifelong friends. When repairing vehicles for his family, he made careful effort to teach them how to properly care for their vehicles, then he would hand us what he called a “love note,” also known as the invoice. While he was often generous in his billing, he wanted to let the family know there was a financial responsibility to maintaining vehicles. Through Tom’s profession, his care for people was evident. He was a missionary in coveralls.

A man of deep faith, Tom accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior alongside his beloved wife, Shirley, in 1965. Together, Tom and Shirley faithfully served the Lord the rest of his days. His strong faith was evident throughout his life. He passed his faith to his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He often commented to Shirley how grateful and blessed he was to have his

family serving the Lord. This was most important to him. Tom often referred to his favorite Bible verse, Isaiah 40:31 (NIV), "...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." Tom drew his strength from the Lord, even when his physical condition deteriorated. He recognized that a loving Heavenly Father would carry him beyond his capacity.

We knew Tom for his kind demeanor, hardworking nature, and sense of humor. We all remember him telling stories of his life experiences and subsequent laughter. Tom's greatest joy came by spending time with his family, who fondly remember him for his strength and love. He had faith and often encouraged various family members by saying "everything is going to be ok." Known as "Papa," he loved having his grand and great-grandchildren climb up on his lap for snacks and stories, spending some quality time with them. He regularly shared life lessons with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, weaving in how important it was to follow Jesus and do what is right.

Tom enjoyed riding motorcycles. Whether it was a quick day trip over the Sierras or a longer trip, it was his way of being refreshed, spending time with family and friends who also rode, and seeing God's beautiful creation. Tom also enjoyed history, both biblical and

world history, especially World War II era.

Shirley shared how he had a soft spot for those who were facing hard times. He was very private in this, but whether it was buying a meal for a homeless person, helping someone with their vehicle, or having a conversation with someone struggling, he cared and wanted to help. He looked for opportunities to bless others.

Tom had a special bond with his youngest daughter Dana in their fight against cancer. His 17-year battle and her 4-year fight both ended within 9 days of each other. Over the final months of their illness, they would visit each other, sitting and talking about going to heaven, walking the streets of gold, and being forever healed in the presence of Jesus. Just 5 days before Tom's passing, Dana and her family made it to the ranch for a special evening of fellowship with the entire family. We will never forget Tom and Dana sitting on the back porch, sharing one last conversation about life, family, and going home to be with the Lord. I recall him saying to Dana, "It won't be long." The last time Dana saw Dad, the night before he passed, she sat by his side as the family sang hymns and reminisced. None of us imagined they would be called home so close together, but the Lord, in His Sovereign plan, knew the timing.

Tom's life will be remembered by all who knew him for his unwavering faith, dedication to his family, and the countless lives he

touched through his work. While our family is going through difficult times, we lean into our faith, assurance, and hope that we will see both him and Dana again in heaven, with Jesus. Tom has finished his life here on earth, but has just begun his life in eternity.

The Family

BOWMAN — Eldon Lee, was born January 16, 1949. He departed this life on November 15, 2024, at 75 years 9 months and 29 days. He married Brenda (Jones) on January 18, 1969, and they had almost 56 years together.

After getting married they lived in Hagerstown, Maryland, where he served two years doing his C.O. service. They then returned to Franklin County, Virginia, where they raised their family and dairy farmed until his retirement. Then he patiently endured cancer and dementia the last few years of his life.

Surviving are his wife, three sons, Benjamin and Karen, Amos and Danelle, Ivan and friend Casey Young and her son Dean; one daughter, Heather and Morris Bowman; 12 grandchildren, Darien and Hannah Bowman, Cody Bowman, Torie Bowman, Lee and Madeline Bowman, Tyler and Jamin Bowman, Kaylan and Sheldon Reece, Tess and Joshua Crews, Alaina and Trenton Landes, Belle Bowman, Pearl Bowman, Skyler Bowman, and Payton Bowman; two great-grandchildren, Wesley and Willow Bowman; one sister,

Wylenia and Wayne Layman; one brother, Galen and Vicki Bowman; two sisters-in-law, Catherine Bowman and Virginia Bowman; one brother-in-law, Lewis Brubaker; and many nephews and nieces.

He was preceded in death by his parents James Ezra and Annie Mae (Montgomery) Bowman; his in-laws, Casey and Nadine Jones; his two brothers, Elwood and Okey Bowman; one sister, Rebecca and Randolph Brunk; three sisters-in-law, Diane Brubaker, Sandra and Doug Laprade, and Janet Jones; two brothers-in-law, Henry and Sarah Jones and David Jones. The family would like to thank everyone for all the love, support, and prayer during his illness. A graveside service was held on November 19, 2024, at the Oak Hill church cemetery, near Boones Mill, Virginia.

The Family

YODER — Doloris, our dear mom, 92, formerly of Covington and West Milton, Ohio, quietly slipped away on Saturday evening, November 16, 2024, at StoryPoint Senior Living, Troy, Ohio.

She was born on December 8, 1931, near Brookville, Montgomery County, Ohio, to the late John D. and Pauline (Cripe) Garber. Her growing up years were spent in Preble County, Ohio, on a farm with her siblings and many cousins nearby. She graduated from Lanier High School, West Alexandria, where she enjoyed school, excelling in math and literature

and developing a life-long love for learning. She married Omar I. Yoder on August 18, 1951, sharing a rich life together with two daughters, extended family and friends. She retired from the Milton Union Public Library after working for 20 years with her librarian friends. Later in life, Mom and Dad volunteered at the local hospital in Troy and enjoyed many travels across the U.S.A.

Our mom was an excellent seamstress and pattern drafter, a knitter of many sweaters, a lover of flowers and gardening, an excellent cook and hostess, and a student of the Bible. She taught us well and loved us well. She was a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren—New Conference in the Sugar Grove congregation.

She was preceded in death by her husband in 2018; her older brother Robert (Bob) Garber; her younger sister Betty and her hus-

band Irvin Jackson; three grandsons, Ted Rogers, and Travis and Benjamin Lynch. She will be missed and often remembered by her daughters Junell and Mike Lynch and Bonita and Kenny Dale Rogers. Her grandchildren are Megan and Bronson Koffer, Jared Rogers, Josie and Lee Angle, and Tyler Lynch; along with nine great-grandchildren, Banks, Avery, Hollan, Boston, Quincy Koffer, and Cooper, Braxton, Taylor Jo, and Ritter Angle. A sister-in-law, Phyllis Garber also survives her.

Viewing and visitation with her family was on Saturday, November 23, from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 noon at the Old German Baptist Church on Farrington Road, Covington. A funeral service began at noon at the church with burial at the Highland Cemetery, Covington, Ohio.

The Family

Terms

Subscriptions should be made through the congregational contact or through *The Testimony* office. Subscription price is \$30.00 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.

Contributors

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.
New Paris, OH 45347-9102

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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