

"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 —

"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power..." II Thess. 1:11

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GOD'S CALLING ON YOUR LIFE

If God has called you to be really like Jesus, He will draw you to a life of crucifixion and humility, and put upon you such demands of obedience, that you will not be able to follow other people, or measure yourself by other Christians, and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do. Other Christians and ministers who seem very religious and useful may push themselves, pull wires, and work schemes to carry out their plans, but you cannot do it; and if you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent. Others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing, and if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works. Others may be allowed to succeed in making money, or may have a legacy left to them, but it is likely God will keep you poor, because He wants you to have something far better than gold; namely, a helpless dependence on Him, that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day out of an unseen treasury.

The Lord may let others be honored and put forward, and keep you hidden in obscurity, because He wants you to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade. He may let others be great, but keep you small. He may let others do a work for Him and get the credit for it, but He will make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing; and then to make your work still more precious, He may let others get the credit for the work which you have done, and thus make your reward ten times greater when Jesus comes. The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or for wasting your time, which other Christians never seem distressed over.

So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. He may not explain to you a thousand things which puzzle your reason in His dealings with you. But if you absolutely sell yourself to be His slave, He will wrap you up in a jealous love, and bestow upon you many blessings which come only to those who are in the inner circle.

Settle it forever, then, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that He does not seem to use with others. Now when you are so possessed with the living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of Heaven.

G. D. Watson (1845–1924)

Selected by Luke and Kara Wolf

THE TESTIMONY

CONTENTS

FRONT COVER	1
GOD'S CALLING ON YOUR LIFE	1
EDITORIAL	3
FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS	3
GENERAL	4
A CHRIST-CENTERED COURTSHIP (PART 2)	4
BIBLICAL BEHAVIOR (PART 12)	10
LIVING IN LIBERTY AND PREVENTING OFFENSE	12
THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY BIBLE READING ...	14
HE WALKS WITH US	16
CLIMBING HIGHER.....	17
MEDITATIONS	18
QUESTIONS TO PONDER	18
GENERAL ITEMS	19
POEMS	20
OBITUARIES	22



**“...I also and my
maidens will fast
likewise; and so will
I go in unto the king,
which is not accord-
ing to the law: and if
I perish, I perish.”**

Est. 4:16

EDITORIAL

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The phrase “For Such A Time As This” has become more popular in recent years. We can find it printed on mugs or tee shirts, where it is often meant to mean *special*, *chosen*, or *royal*. We also hear ministers use the same quote, but with a different meaning—that for which it was originally intended for Queen Esther.

After the decree was given at Shushan the palace to kill all the Jews in the kingdom, Mordecai relayed that message to Queen Esther and charged her to make a request to the king for her people. Esther told Mordecai of the risk involved in approaching the king when not called. “Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king’s house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Est. 4:13–14).

To Queen Esther, this meant that God had placed her in that position to be an instrument used to save God’s people and that she may even have to sacrifice her life to do so. So why are we hearing ministers use this quote more often recently? The phrase has actu-

ally been applicable all down through the ages, but I believe we hear it more now because the times are changing. The world is becoming more like it was at the time of Queen Esther. Antisemitism is rising and the world is becoming more corrupt. It is interesting to watch the changes in the leaders of the world today. Just as Esther and Mordecai replaced Vashti and Haman in Esther’s time, the same changes happen today because “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”

This message was not just meant for Queen Esther. It applies to us today as well. God has placed us here for a reason. It is not to sit around and take life easy, even though our flesh wants to do just that. We have been placed in a land of freedom and abundance which makes it very easy to just enjoy life, but there is work for us to do. We are in the midst of a battle—not a physical battle, but a spiritual one!

We can learn some lessons from the life of Esther. She was willing to listen to the voice of her cousin, Mordecai, who was like a father to her. We, too, must listen to the voice of our Father and be willing and ready to serve as He directs us. Let us have faith, as Esther had, and be obedient when called, even though it may be difficult and seem risky. Esther did not

keep silent and wait for someone else to step into action, and neither should we.

For what service is the Lord calling you today? There are many different needs to be met everywhere—in the quiet country as well as in the busy city, for the rich as well as for the poor, for the healthy as well as for the suffer-

ing. The needs may be national, as it was for Esther, or they may be communal, congregational, familial, or personal. God has placed each of us here, in this day and age, for a purpose—for such a time as this. May we respond to His calling in faith and obedience.

Darryl Filbrun

GENERAL

A CHRIST-CENTERED COURTSHIP

Part 2

SATAN'S SNARES FOR
MALE AND FEMALE
Paul Hershberger

We discussed God's Plan for Male and Female in Part 1. The topic in Part 2, *Satan's Snares for Male and Female*, is not as enjoyable. And yet, to complete this series, "A Christ-centered Courtship," we need to deal with both because they're realities of life.

There are five goals for this series:

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

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

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

Goal #4. That each one of you young people would get a burden to seek after God, to find fulfillment and purpose in walking with God, and that 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.

SATAN'S SNARE FOR MALE AND FEMALE

God has a beautiful plan for male and female, and His plan brings blessings. But Satan's plan is to destroy God's plan. Fallen man has to deal with the carnal nature of the flesh. Satan would like to use the things of this world to destroy God's plan for each one of us.

A snare is a cable or a wire that has a little sliding loop on its end. The little loop has a lock that will slide only one way. When it flips, it locks into place. A snare will pull tighter on its own when pressure is applied. A snare must be concealed to be effective. If we see the snares our adversary sets for us, we're going to avoid them. It is designed to kill. Our adversary, the devil, intends to destroy and kill. He wants to ruin God's plan.

God has a holy plan for you, but Satan wants to defile your moral

purity emotionally and physically before marriage. After marriage, he tries to destroy the marriage relationship. Satan's plan is to destroy God's plan, but greater is He that is in us.

We want to look at five points out of I Thessalonians 4:1–8.

“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”

A LIFE OF SANCTIFICATION AND HONOR

Possessing our vessels in sanctification and honor is our protection from the snares the devil lays for us. We will overcome him if we learn to possess our vessels in sanctification and honor. “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan

under your feet...” (Rom. 16:20). It can happen over and over in our lives. We will be blessed if we follow God's plan. Living in sanctification and honor means walking in a way that will please God. The longer we walk this way, the more sanctified, holy, and separated unto God we will be. Young people, if you possess your vessel in sanctification and honor, you will walk in the fear of God. You will be concerned about the things God sees in your life. You will learn how to possess your vessel in a way that honors God in every way possible. Sanctification and honor are important when you start or are in a courtship.

In I Timothy 5:2, Paul writes that Timothy should treat “...the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.” Learning to walk in sanctification and honor will keep us from falling into the devil's snares. You need someone to give you direction, and you need the Spirit of God to help you. If the day comes to get married, you will need to know how to walk with God. Mom and Dad won't be there to guide you. Mom and Dad need satisfaction in knowing the Spirit of God is leading you.

How should single men and women relate to each other? Should you avoid talking to each other altogether? The answer is no. Do married men and women avoid talking to each other whatsoever? Obviously, no. Young men and women should treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ the same way that married

people do. We should all, married and unmarried, live our lives in sanctification and honor.

How much should a married brother talk with a sister other than his wife? How much would be considered ok? How would we feel if a married sister would talk with the same brother, other than her husband, every week at church services? Would we be ok with that? No, we wouldn't be ok with that. The same principle applies to single brothers and sisters. Walk in sanctification and honor in the way that we can be respectful to each other.

In the last issue, we talked about the innocence of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve had never seen another man or another woman. They were completely innocent and free, having never given their emotions to another. They were for each other! He was a one-woman man, and she was a one-man woman. You can have that, but you will need to guard your emotions. Learn how to possess your vessel in sanctification and honor in this area. Don't play with your emotions if you want to be like Adam and Eve.

How do I know if someone is playing with my emotions? Here are a few warnings:

- Beware if someone gives you frequent attention. Don't let yourself be drawn in.
- Watch for that light in the eyes. Someone trying to catch your eye, then just giving you that little smile. He or she is trying to draw your emotions.
- Perhaps you realize you are

being watched. When you look up, Mr. or Miss So-and-so is looking at you. You can't say, "Please look the other way." But you can talk to Dad about it, and Dad can go talk to his or her parents.

ABSTAIN FROM FORNICATION

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (I Thess. 4:3).

Fornication means "harlotry, adultery, and incest; moral impurity." Why do we even have to discuss this? These things have happened in the midst of God's people, so we want to sound the warning: "Abstain from fornication!" If you think you are above the possibility of it happening to you, perhaps you may get too bold and go places you shouldn't. You may do things you should flee from.

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (I Cor. 6:12–13). Your body is for the Lord, and you need to walk in sanctification and honor. You must allow your authorities to guide you. Allow the Spirit of God to guide you. Your "body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." It is not for fornication.

"Flee fornication" means to run from anything that is not sanctification and honor. Don't stand and try to face it. God says, "flee" for a

reason. If you guard your emotions, you will be able to discern those snares from Satan. He wants to scar and destroy your life.

THE LUST OF CONCUISCENCE

Another snare of Satan is the lust of concupiscence. "Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God" (I Thess. 4:5). The word "lust" here simply means "a passion." The word "concupiscence" is "a longing for what is forbidden." A passionate longing for what is forbidden. Many people in the world are ruled by their passionate longings, but God wants us to keep our emotions.

Young people, you are maturing into young men and women. Something is beginning to wake up inside of you that attracts you to the opposite sex. God created that attraction with a specific purpose in mind. God didn't create that attraction to freely indulge in, but this is what the devil would like us to do. If you allow Satan, he will destroy you. As you mature, it's important to learn to control your body, that is, developing into a young man or a young lady. Don't let your passions and longings go in lust of concupiscence. If you follow your passions, it will take you straight to the snares of the devil. Feelings start awakening in your body that you're not accustomed to. Talk to Mom and Dad about it. They want you to get through this time of change with purity, sanctification, and honor. Young people, you won't be able to handle these changes unless you're in love with Jesus, love your Bible, love to

pray, and your heart is passionate about God. It is possible to overcome those passions!

Another aspect of the lust of concupiscence is flirting.

Flirting means "to express emotions of love without serious intent; to play with love; to toy with love." You may not think you are flirting, but what is happening in your mind? The way you think affects you. Are you giving little looks that communicate? Maybe it's just a little look across the room that catches the eye. Both of you smile and look the other way. Nobody else saw it. That's letting the emotions go. Be careful! It's the beginning of the lust of concupiscence. I was filling up at the gas station when I noticed this lady. She was outside on her break, talking with a young man beside her. That young man didn't quit smiling at her from the time I arrived till I left. I don't wonder what was going on in his heart.

Mom and Dad, we know our children. Let's be honest and real with them. If there's too much boy-girl talk in the house, we need to talk about it. It's time for this to shut down. And yes, there is excitement, for example, when courtship is announced. Let's be careful where the boy-girl conversation goes.

Let's talk about dating. Specifically, dating without the approval from your authorities. I'm not referring to using the term dating in a godly way that has parental blessings on it. I'm referring to a temporary romantic relationship between two persons of the oppo-

site sex. Trying different partners in search of one you like. Letting your emotions go here, then letting them go there. You're just shopping around. How can a person expect to have a solid, committed marriage with that kind of an on/off relationship?

When a young couple starts courting, their relationship builds as they get closer to their wedding. This natural process is built on commitment to each other and to their relationship with God. But in this other dating relationship, emotions and commitments come and go. This is the lust of concupiscence.

We live in an era where it's popular in the world to be just casual friends. Nobody is serious, not looking to get married. And often, it's not just two young people; it's a whole group of them. They're just all together for the party of being together. Lots of time spent talking and interacting, playing, and hanging out. They are not serious but are independent and self-sufficient. We need to guard against this worldly spirit, walk in sanctification and honor, and live our lives with a purpose for God.

Beware of the snare of technology. There are many useful possibilities for technology. It's used to communicate, but there's an appropriate amount of communication. And with technology comes a challenge for parents to know who their children are communicating with. Text messaging, phone calls, and computers have been used by young people to be drawn into the world or leave home. Parents need

to know what's going on in their homes. Parents need to know the hearts of their children and stay connected. We won't make it if we're just trying to control technology. Young people, beware of slowly letting your guard down and letting emotions go when using your technology. It can be a snare of Satan to draw you into the lust of concupiscence.

DEFRAUDING

"That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified" (I Thess. 4:6).

Defraud means "to be covetous; to overreach." To be covetous is "to want something that is somebody else's, that is not rightfully mine." To overreach is "to reach beyond what is mine."

Defrauding is stealing a young girl's heart without the consent of her parents. Stealing a young girl's heart and causing her to do things she would never have done.

Defrauding is when a lady flaunts herself and causes men to lust after her. Young ladies, it matters how you carry yourself, how you dress, and how you walk. You can dress in a way that makes a man have to look the other way. That shouldn't happen in the church. You should have concern and ask your mom, "What do you see in me? What does it look like when I walk?" Those are practical matters of modesty. We are more modest than what is going on in the world, but should we measure

ourselves by the world's standards? We should measure ourselves by God's plan.

Defrauding means to overreach, to go beyond, to lead on. To deceive a person into giving up a valuable possession. On this topic, it's deceiving someone to give up their valuable possession, their moral purity. Don't let anybody get close to it. It's a prized treasure!

Young ladies, be careful about being covetous and over-reaching when thinking about life companions. I remember a time when there were three or four broken-hearted young ladies after a young man chose his life companion. These weren't ungodly young ladies, but they let their emotions wander too far. Young ladies, you must stay yielded when considering life companions. Don't be covetous, and let your heart begin to wander. Don't let your emotions go in your mind, thinking that this is the will of God. If you set your heart on a certain one, you're making yourself vulnerable to being hurt. If you have someone you admire, it is important that you surrender those thoughts to God. Remember, it is not confirmed as God's will just because you have feelings in your heart.

To parents of young ladies, there's a need for us to stay yielded right along with them. Don't assume anything until the young man has actually asked for your daughter. I know from experience that God will help us discern His will. We may find ourselves on our faces, begging God, "Please tell me what is right." But God will show us His will, one way or another.

Don't be covetous, letting your heart go in an area that's beyond your control.

NOT UNCLEANNESS, BUT HOLINESS

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thess. 4:7). Uncleanness is impurity. The Greek word for "sanctification" is the same Greek word as "holiness" in this verse here. Don't walk in uncleanness, but walk in holiness.

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit" (I Thess. 4:8). He that despises, doesn't despise man but God. Oh, the fool that would say, "I'm old enough to make my own decisions." Don't do it, don't go that way.

In conclusion, let's look at II Timothy 2:21–22. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11–12). Abstain from them! Run away from them! They war against your soul! They are Satan's snares for male and female.

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

Kenneth Hopkins

BIBLICAL BEHAVIOR

Part 12

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Tim. 3:15).

This is a continuation of a previous article. The purpose of this continued article is to provoke thoughts as to how we, as born-again believers, should behave. In doing so, it is not our intent to lose sight of the basis of behavior, which is belief. Belief dictates behavior. I offer the following axioms:

1. All behavior is based on a belief.
2. Lasting behavioral change always starts in the mind.
3. When people genuinely change, it's because their beliefs changed first.
4. Changing your behavior without changing your belief is not true change at all. This is why Paul says, “...be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

As we mentioned before, the apostles used the word “conversation” to describe behavior. In the Greek it is the word *anastrophe* which means “behavior.” *Anastrophe* is rooted in *anastrepho* which means to turn, or to turn oneself about. This implies that godly behavior is a turning away from a direction you were once going, and going in a different direction. This is the essence of repentance—a change of your mind and direction of your life—turning away from sin, self and the world, and turning toward Jesus,

the Holy Spirit, and heaven.

Because the Word of God is quick (living), we will, no doubt, only touch a fraction of the depth and meaning of the verses calling us to a godly behavior. The next verse we will consider is found in I Peter 3, verse 1.

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.”

Our verse begins with “likewise” which indicates the following instruction is to be similar to what has been said prior. Peter seems to make crucial points and then make application. In the middle of chapter two he begins instructing us in regards to submitting to authority. He mentions kings, civil authorities, employers, and loving the brotherhood. He then cites the example of Christ as the pattern to follow, and expects us to apply Jesus’s example both backward and forward. The “likewise” in our verse is flowing from this teaching on submission, of which Jesus models in perfection. The theme of submission is clearly evident, as Peter begins this verse instructing wives to be in subjection to their own husbands.

Our interest with this verse centers on the conversation, or behavior of the wives. To put this in context, Peter begins his epistle by addressing strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. This indicates his audience is largely Gentiles and it seems likely that as the Gospel of Jesus Christ swept through these regions, it

affected each individual differently, including married couples. This verse is addressing those couples who were not united in the faith of the Gospel. He gently teaches the believing wife to remain in subjection to her unbelieving husband, and that she place her emphasis on godly behavior rather than words or speeches, to win him to the faith. The theme of positively affecting an unbelieving spouse is also taught by Paul in I Corinthians 7. The apostles are clear, an established marriage prior to faith can remain intact, even if one is an unbeliever. This creates the potential for the unconverted to be persuaded by their converted spouse.

The behavior Peter is driving at is to be chaste and in connection with reverence. Chaste means clean, modest, and pure. Married men today, prefer modesty over immodesty for their wives. Rightly so, for a wife who dresses immodestly conveys a degree of unfaithfulness to her husband by inviting others to feast their eyes upon her body. Not only does an immodest wife sin against her husband, but she also places a stumbling block before others. Clearly this is in opposition to Gospel teaching. A Christian woman who is unchaste, is counterproductive in drawing an unbelieving husband to the Lord.

This chastity is to be coupled with an attitude of reverence and respect. A little later in this passage, Peter uses an Old Testament character named Sara to make his point, even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him "lord." As extreme as this may seem in our day, this is simply pointing to the respect and reverence Sara had for Abraham.

Using "lord" is allegorical, and the application for us today, is respect. Men may not be discerning in every category, but they have razor-sharp ability in discerning this. They know when a wife respects them, or not. Often, it doesn't take much to wound a man's self-esteem in this area. For example, a man may try to be a spiritual leader in his home, and if his wife finds fault, he may soon spiral into inaction, eventually turning the spiritual leadership over to his wife. A man may present an idea he has to his wife, and if she makes him feel that his idea is not a good one, he may begin to assume he has no contribution to make, and resort to a hobby or different interest, often outside the family. Both husbands and wives need to be encouraged in this equation. A husband needs to be respectable, making it easier for his wife to respect him. A husband should not be easily detracted from his responsibility. A wife needs to be mindful of her husband's fragility and encourage him.

To return to Peter's context, the behavior of the wife is to be appealing and winsome to an unbelieving husband. This principle can be expanded and applied to every believer. We need to take to heart this teaching and behave in chastity and reverence. This behavior will have evangelistic power to win the unconverted to the Gospel.

Until next time, may our behavior be chaste coupled with reverence.

Grant Fullmer

LIVING IN LIBERTY AND PREVENTING OFFENSE

We want to consider standing fast in freedom and liberty and yet realizing the responsibility that freedom and liberty have, in accountability.

Galatians 5:1 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

Galatians 5:13 says, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

*“Never offend nor grieve
Your brethren by the way,
But shun the dark abodes of strife,
Like children of the day.”*

LIVING IN LIBERTY

One definition of liberty is “freedom from restraint, slavery, involuntary servitude, or captivity.

Bondage is surely entanglement and being yoked in and to something that we do not desire.

We have been made free in Christ from the guilt of sin if we believe by faith in the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. God loved us and chose to redeem us, and provided Himself for our atonement, redemption and justification. God the Father saw us in Christ on the cross. And now in Christ, God the Father sees Christ in us as we live in obedience to Him.

We are free from the guilt of sin. We are declared righteous and not guilty. Now, we are free from ourselves, to follow Him in obedience. By choice daily, we are free from the nature to sin and free from “out of bounds” living.

We are also free from the excessive, ceremonial, religious obligations that men teach for doctrine but are not commanded by God.

Now, we are free to live voluntarily yoked to Christ, and free to learn His ways. We are free to live in the Holy Spirit and to walk in newness of life.

How am I responding to this “liberty in Christ”? Maybe another way to ask this is, “Who is responding to this liberty in Christ?” Is my flesh and will, or the renewed spirit and life responding? Do I understand the responsibility in freedom and liberty? Am I abiding in The Vine?

PREVENTING OFFENSE

If “my liberty” is causing offense, unrest, tension, confusion, and affecting the peace negatively, considering the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is it of the Holy Spirit or otherwise?

Consider Proverbs 18:19. “A brother [or sister] offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.” Jesus shares His thoughts in Matthew 5:23–24, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest

that thy brother [or sister] hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." God wants us free of conflict and strife as we worship Him! Clear yourself at least if total reconciliation can't be obtained.

We want to prevent offense. Matthew 18 says, "If thy brother offend thee..." We each should seek to prevent offence as much as possible.

What is an offense? It means to miss the mark, sin, trespass, cause to stumble, to displease, affront, shock, wound, injure, disturb, or to hinder.

Jesus said, "Woe to the offender"! He said it would be better if we were drowned in the depth of the sea than to be guilty of offending.

Who can we offend? We can offend (provoke) God. We can offend (hinder or injure) our brother or sister.

How can we prevent offenses? By practicing the "golden rule." By loving one another as Jesus' disciples. By walking worthy and pursuing unity in the Holy Spirit. Judging ourselves by the perfect law of liberty—the royal law. Loving each other as Christ loved us!

Both Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8 discuss this. In the context we find strong and weak brothers and sisters in terms of faith and conscience. Knowledge and love are in the context. We find injuring a brother or sister is sin and

it's even a sin against Christ, as He died for both. We find a principle then, that "forcing my liberty" isn't charitable or loving.

True spirituality isn't in displaying my liberty. It's displaying the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Freedom and liberty mean I can decide my option. The true spiritual liberty restricts oneself; not doing what I could do because of love; valuing peace for all, and the good and edification of the Body. Paul says he wouldn't pursue his "liberty" if it caused another to stumble. Liberty carries with it responsibility and accountability.

NOT BEING EASILY OFFENDED

Psalm 119:165 says, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

Walking with God in prayer, being obedient to His Word, growing in Grace as we study His Word; these things will mature us into a peace that passes understanding. It will produce patience to pray for, love, mentor, and come along side someone that we may sense needs love and help. If it's sin, it needs attention, but in love, and humility. If it's immaturity or serving self, it needs love and prayer in humility and meekness. Paul says we should receive in love, respecting the weaker and not to argue and dispute, but to edify and build up.

Jesus commanded us to love. I Peter 4:8 says, "And above all

things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” Love is a decision. We choose to obey and love. Our emotions and feelings will eventually catch up to our obedience. This is the way of Jesus. We love one another. We pray for one another. We are an example for one another, and we try to help each other learn the way of Jesus together. We pursue peace and try to avoid offending another. We love and pray and do our part to avoid being offended. We exercise patience. In all of this we keep open, honest, and truthful communication, and genuine care for each other as we all grow and journey to our Heavenly home, being “...delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

In love for all,

Aaron Garber

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY BIBLE READING AND PRAYER

DEEP STUDY OF SCRIPTURE

Daily Bible reading and in-depth study of passages are crucial for spiritual growth. As the psalmist proclaims, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). Exploring Scripture with a focus on its

original language and historical context reveals layers of meaning that may be lost in translation. Understanding the Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic roots of key terms can enrich interpretation and help believers grasp the intentions behind God’s Word. Applying these insights in daily life transforms knowledge into action, fulfilling James’ exhortation: “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (Jas. 1:22).

DAILY PRAYER AS A LIFELINE

Incorporating prayer as a daily practice strengthens personal and family faith. Jesus modeled this discipline, as it is written, “And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed” (Luke 5:16). Just as a body needs sustenance, our spirit needs connection with God. Family prayer fosters unity and teaches children to prioritize their relationship with God. Solomon wisely instructs: “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). Studies show that it takes approximately 21 to 66 days to form a habit, so starting now and persisting is key. Just 30 minutes per day at the “Family Altar” will have profound effects on family dynamics. Individual prayer allows personal growth, introspection, and communion with God. As Paul reminds us,



“Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17).

PRAYER WITH A BROADER PURPOSE

Prayer should encompass intercession for the local church, family, community, nation, our leaders, Israel, and the world. Paul urges this in his epistle: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Tim. 2:1–2). Including prayer for the lost aligns with Jesus’ mission, as He declares: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). These prayers cultivate a heart aligned with God’s purposes and draw believers closer to His plans for redemption and restoration.

THE CHALLENGE

Begin today. Set aside time daily for Bible reading and prayer, modeling this for your children. Teach them the importance of spiritual disciplines, fostering habits that will anchor their lives in faith. Teach them to read, study, and pray on their own, following the command in Deuteronomy: “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deut. 6:6–7). Let this rhythm of devotion be a source of strength for your family and a light to others, fulfilling Jesus’ call: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid” (Matt. 5:14).

Tracy Beaver

HE WALKS WITH US

"...Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them" (Luke 24:15).

THE ROAD often leads through green pastures and beside the still waters, more often through long valleys, shadowless and deep, over mountains unsealable; but let us ask no questions concerning the road as we journey, for the road leads Home. He Himself walks with us.

We cannot see beyond the door,
We know not what He hath in store
For us;
We can but bow our hearts and pray
For strength to serve Him day by day,
And work and trust.

Pain, dread, and doubt do us pursue:
We wonder what He hath in view
For us;
And then by faith we pierce the haze
And on His face one moment gaze—
And love and trust.

We blaze our trail through desert sand,
We know there is a better land
For us:
Its fields and flowers we cannot see,
But Jesus promised it, and we
Just pray and trust.

Someday we'll reach the mountain height
And see the land that's ours by right
Through grace;
Then we'll praise God for desert sands,
For blinded trails and barren lands,
Before His Face.

Today is a slender bridge which will bear its own load, but it will collapse if we add tomorrow's. In every year there are 365 letters from the King, each with its own message: "Bear this for Me."

What shall we do with the letters? Open them a day at a time. Yesterday's seal is broken; lay that letter reverently away; yesterday's cross is laid down, never to be borne again. Tomorrow's letter lies on the table. Do not break the seal.

For when tomorrow becomes today, there will stand beside us an unseen Figure; and His hand will be on our brow, and His gaze will be in our eyes, as He says with a loving smile, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

The golden summary of our life is to be this:

- As to the past, a record of gratitude;
- As to the present, a record of service;
- As to the future, a record of trust.

—D. M. Panton

Selected by Mae Gish, Pasco, Washington

CLIMBING HIGHER

As we age, things seem to get a little more difficult, but I have not heard anyone tell me that. A friend said that her son asked, "Mother, don't you feel that Heaven is your home?" She said, "As we look at all of our faults, we ask ourselves, 'Are we nearer to Heaven?'"

Yes, our years tell us we are nearing the end of the path of life! So let us ask ourselves about our relationship with God. How is our Bible reading? How would we describe our prayer life? We have read that three-fourths of our prayers should be praising God! The second part of our prayers should be thanksgiving for our many "seen and unseen" blessings! And we find that Job sanctified his children, and offered sacrifices for all of his family, praying for them (Job 1).

As we look forward, let us drop our sinful thoughts. With His help, we can.

CLIMBING TO HIGHER JOYS

What brings us joy? We spent a little time thinking about the difference between happiness and joy. The dictionary definitions were about the same. Jesus said, regarding His commandments, "Happy are ye if ye do them." I Peter 4:14 says, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." I Peter 3:14 says, "But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye..."

But joy seemed to have more depth. Psalm 16:11 reads, "Thou

wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." And in Psalm 51:12, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

What did Jesus count for joy? Hebrews 12:2 says, "...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand the throne of God." There are things of happiness here on earth. But notice the Joy in following God! See James 1:2, I Peter 4:13, and Isaiah 35:10. And Isaiah 51:11 says, "Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

When do we have joy and peace here on earth? The hymn says, "When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll; Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well, with my soul." Even the times when "Satan should buffet..." we can have joy by looking beyond these things with a strong faith. This is finding joy and security in our Lord!

It is in "Looking unto Jesus" (Heb. 12:2). It is in looking "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

Then we can say, through our

own weaknesses, and His forgiving love, having our conscience "...purged from dead works..." and then can we feel, "It is well, it is well with my soul." We can't do these things, but He can!

We heard Sunday that the elderly can and should live out Psalm 1.

As we live in this New Year, we need to keep looking up and "watching."

"Faithful is he that calleth you,

who also will do it" (I Thess. 5:24).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power; both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).

Vicki Witmer

MEDITATIONS

God's in control when things happen. He's also in control when they don't.

Tell a lie for \$1,000, but it's still a lie when all the money's gone.

God's unconditional love requires unconditional obedience.

I may have to deny self in order to avoid offending.

To receive grace, we must extend grace.

Our God doesn't waste any pain.

Solitude is not loneliness.

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.

On the front page of this issue are thoughts concerning what our Heavenly Father may do for His chosen ones, if we are committed to *really walking like Jesus*, and living in full surrender to Him.

If these things be so, then we each are brought to a place of decision as we contemplate what kind of a "Christian life" we want to live, and at what level of surrender and submission to His will in our lives.

Consider some questions that we may want to ask ourselves as we consider God's calling for us:

1. Am I content to know that God may sometimes ask things of me that He does not appear to ask of others?
2. Do I value a close walk with the Lord much more than I value freedom to do as I wish?
3. Are the things that have given me "pain" just "bad circumstances"? Or are they a part of His plan for me?
4. When I try to draw attention to myself, am I departing from His calling?
5. Is He revealing little by little what my calling is for this stage of life?
6. Can I *live like Jesus* in this place?

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Dec. 15, 2024; Shenandoah, VA
Jasmine Peters

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

Dec. 13, 2024; Bear Creek, OH
Andrea Lahman

COMMISSIONS

Dec. 13, 2024; Dallas, OR
Clinton Knaus (with wife Jenni)
Called to the ministry.
Elijah Renicker (with wife Melanie)
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
May 10, 2025 Caldwell, ID
May 25, 2025 A.M., Cedarville, OH
Jun. 28, 2025 . Mission Valley, MT and
Mountain View, ID held jointly in ID
Sept. 27, 2025..... Pleasant View, OH
Oct. 11, 2025..... Lower Twin, OH
Oct. 11, 2025..... Zillah, WA
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
Nov. 27, 2025..... Pleasant View, OH

DISTRICT NOTICE

MOUNTAIN VIEW DISTRICT, IDAHO WORK DAYS APPOINTED

Lord willing, the Mountain View District located near Sandpoint, Idaho, plans for the summer of 2025 to be a memory-making season of building our meetinghouse. After many months of planning, we anticipate the on-site physical construction work to begin on May 1, 2025. We expect to have work days during the month of May to get the under-slab preparations completed, and then pour the concrete slab on or about May 19. We have scheduled a Love Feast for June 28–29, followed by a work week on June 30–July 5, 2025, for raising the meetinghouse. Our desire is that brethren from across our dear brotherhood will feel to come commune with us and then lend us a hand during the June 30–July 5 work week.

We cordially invite both skilled tradesmen and willing amateur workers to join us for the June 30–July 5 work week. You may contact our Building Committee Foreman, brother Jake Wray at (208) 610-9572, to learn more details or offer to help. You may contact our food and lodging coordinator, sister Rochelle Wray at (208) 610-8344, to offer to prepare food or to arrange for a place to stay for the work week.

Financial contributions may be sent to:

c/o Kyle Deaton
83 Julian Road,
Naples, ID 83847
marked "Building Fund."

On behalf of the Mountain View District,
In Christian love,

Wes Bauman

POEMS

**SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER
EPIPHANY**

John Keble

*Beloved, now are we the sons of God,
and it doth not yet appear what we
shall be: but we know that, when he
shall appear, we shall be like him; for
we shall see him as he is.*

I John 3:2

There are, who darkling and alone,
Would wish the weary night were gone,
Though dawning morn should only show
The secret of their unknown woe:
Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain
To ease them of doubt's galling chain:
"Only disperse the cloud," they cry,
"And if our fate be death, give light
and let us die."

Unwise I deem them, Lord, unmeet
To profit by Thy chastenings sweet,
For Thou wouldst have us linger still
Upon the verge of good or ill.
That on Thy guiding hand unseen
Our undivided hearts may lean,
And this our frail and foundering bark
Glide in the narrow wake of Thy
beloved ark.

'Tis so in war—the champion true
Loves victory more when dim in view
He sees her glories gild afar
The dusky edge of stubborn war,
Than if the untrodden bloodless field
The harvest of her laurels yield;
Let not my bark in calm abide,
But win her fearless way against
the chafing tide.

'Tis so in love—the faithful heart
From her dim vision would not part,
When first to her fond gaze is given
That purest spot in Fancy's heaven,
For all the gorgeous sky beside,
Though pledged her own and sure
to abide:

Dearer than every past noon-day
That twilight gleam to her, though
faint and far away.

So have I seen some tender flower
Prized above all the vernal bower,
Sheltered beneath the coolest shade,
Embosomed in the greenest glade,
So frail a gem, it scarce may bear
The playful touch of evening air;
When hardier grown we love it less,
And trust it from our sight, not
needing our caress.

And wherefore is the sweet spring-tide
Worth all the changeful year beside?
The last-born babe, why lies its part
Deep in the mother's inmost heart?
But that the Lord and Source of love
Would have His weakest ever prove
Our tenderest care—and most of all
Our frail immortal souls, His work
and Satan's thrall.

So be it, Lord; I know it best,
Though not as yet this wayward breast
Beat quite in answer to Thy voice,
Yet surely I have made my choice;
I know not yet the promised bliss,
Know not if I shall win or miss;
So doubting, rather let me die,
Than close with aught beside, to
last eternally.

What is the Heaven we idly dream?
 The self-deceiver's dreary theme,
 A cloudless sun that softly shines,
 Bright maidens and unfailing vines,
 The warrior's pride, the hunter's mirth,
 Poor fragments all of this low earth:
 Such as in sleep would hardly soothe
 A soul that once had tasted of im-
 mortal Truth.

What is the Heaven our God bestows?
 No Prophet yet, no Angel knows;
 Was never yet created eye
 Could see across Eternity;
 Not seraph's wing for ever soaring
 Can pass the flight of souls adoring,
 That nearer still and nearer grow
 To the unapproached Lord, once
 made for them so low.

Unseen, unfelt their earthly growth,
 And self-accused of sin and sloth,
 They live and die; their names decay,
 Their fragrance passes quite away;
 Like violets in the freezing blast
 No vernal steam around they cast.
 But they shall flourish from the tomb,
 The breath of God shall wake
 them into odorous bloom.

Then on the incarnate Saviour's breast,
 The fount of sweetness, they shall rest,
 Their spirits every hour imbued
 More deeply with His precious blood.
 But peace—still voice and closed eye
 Suit best with hearts beyond the sky,
 Hearts training in their low abode,
 Daily to lose themselves in hope to
 find their God.

Selected by,

Caleb Wagoner
 Grants Pass, Oregon

THE REAL JOY

In a world of "hurry or else!"
 Many feel they have to keep pace.
 But far above, God controls with ease,
 In quietness His Throne of grace,
 For Satan's hurls of "hurry so..."
 Just miss the joy of "Father's pleased!"

Satan knows his world's amiss,
 Though he would not have us to know!
 Jesus was born full of promise!
 For all who believe down here below!
 To all who know they're one of His,
 They have the promised afterglow!

There are things of "happy" here
 and now,
 But life's real promise is in the "way."
 We come before God's throne to bow,
 There's joy to him who kneels to pray!
 With a clear conscience, and that's how
 He responds to us without delay!

For in a manger born that day,
 God's Son was born to bring us joy!
 "No room in the Inn"? No room for
 His Grace?
 "No room in the Inn"? Is it full of toys?
 "No room in the Inn"? No room for
 His Peace?
 Only our Savior brings REAL JOY!

Vicki Witmer
 New Madison, Ohio

BAPTISM

Samuel Kinsey (1865)

We're not ashamed to be immersed,
 Christ went into the water first,
 The world may scorn, the devil roar,
 We'll only love our God the more.

Selected by

Alice Mae Haney

OBITUARIES

YOST — Janette Mae (Eller) was born on July 17, 1936, to Clarence and Lavina (Wagoner) Eller in Carroll County, Indiana. She was called to her eternal home on January 14, 2024, at Mulberry Health at the age of 87 years.

She and her husband, Gene Yost, were married on November 14, 1954, at her parent's home near Flora, Indiana; they were blessed with 69 years together. Dad and Mom accepted Christ as their Savior and were baptized together in 1961 near Flora, Indiana, by Clem Skiles. They fellow-shipped at Cutler Ridge near Cutler, Indiana.

Mom's love, care, and kindness toward others always took precedence over her own life. The cheerful disposition she displayed during so many hardships was an encouragement to many.

She will be missed and remembered by her loving husband, who faithfully cared for her through several years of debilitating Multiple Sclerosis; her three sons, Jim (Bonnie), Jerald (Margaret) and Greg (Leslie Ainley); eight grandchildren with their spouses and many great-grandchildren; one brother, Dr. Alvan (Arlene) Eller and one half-sister, Rebecca (Van) Taylor.

She was preceded in death by her parents; stepmother, Anna Belle (Shively) Eller; brother- and sister-in-law, Lowell and Berniece Yost and nephew, Dr. Doug Eller.

Funeral services were held at 10 A.M. on Monday, January 22, 2024, at the Cutler Ridge Old German Baptist Church New Conference near Cutler. The home brethren officiated.

Burial followed in the Musselman Cemetery.

The Family

BOONE — Ralph King of Modesto, California passed peacefully from this life into eternity on October 13, 2024,

at the age of 87 years, 4 months, and 11 days. He was born on June 2, 1937, the 12th of 13 children, to John and Alice (King) Boone.

His early years were spent on the family farm near Rocky Mount, Virginia. The large family didn't have many material possessions, but they had each other, and everyone was loved and cherished. They were deeply affected by their father's tragic death when Ralph was 8 years old. Two years later his widowed mother married Cephas Boone and they moved to Quinter, Kansas. Cephas had 6 children by his first wife, Nannie, and Ralph loved his step-siblings the same as his own brothers and sisters. The Boone family never seemed to tire of their letters, phone calls, and reunions. They just grew sweeter with the passing years.

Ralph started school in a one room rural Virginia schoolhouse. Then in Kansas he enjoyed a larger elementary school and a modern high school. In the sixth grade, Ralph was introduced to the game of basketball, which had a big impact on his life. His love of the sport led him to reserving the Modesto High School gymnasium for Wednesday night basketball that the men in our church enjoyed for many years. Ralph's grandsons remember being taught how to properly shoot a basketball by Grandpa Boone.

After high school graduation, Ralph moved to Ohio for a year or two and then came to California on his future wife's birthday in 1958. He attended Modesto Junior College with a major in pre-dentistry. This education was cut short when he became eligible for the United States military draft. He was sent to Camarillo State Hospital near Oxnard, California, for his two years of alternate service, working as a psychiatric technician. Once that obligation was completed, and realizing his need of a

Savior, he was baptized by Elder Dan Stamy on January 21, 1962. He became a member of the New River District of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church in Whittier, California.

Then on March 10, 1962, he married his sweetheart, Mary Huffman. They established their first home in Norwalk, California, where their first child was born in 1964. Ralph was elected to the office of deacon in March of 1965. He was already in the process of transferring his employment to Modesto State Psychiatric Hospital which was fulfilled in August 1965. He and Mary were attracted to the West Modesto Church District, where they labored together as long as Ralph's health permitted. In 2009 they became charter members of the New Conference.

When the Modesto State Hospital was closed, Ralph transferred to the California Youth Authority where he worked over 30 years, even continuing to work part time after retirement. He also had a weather-stripping business and later a pool service and repair business. His co-workers and clients appreciated his labors, integrity, and work ethics. Many became lifelong friends. His grandchildren fondly remember the good times they had helping grandpa with his "work" when each day started with an Early Bird Pancake Breakfast.

Ralph has now traveled to his Heavenly home and will be greatly missed here by his wife Mary, his four children: Marjorie and Joseph Rumble, Michael Boone, Julianne and Thomas Driver, and Jeanette and Dale Crawmer. He also will remain in the hearts of 19 grandchildren: Isaiah and Janelle Rumble, Gabriel and Julie Rumble, Timothy and Lisa Rumble, Samuel Rumble, Nathan and Kelly Rumble, Jonathan and Lexie Rumble, Peter Rumble, Christina and Clyde Layman, Faith and Stoa Brubaker, David Rumble, Stephen, Matthew, Andrew, Amy, Emily and Luke Driver, Brent, Jason and Justin Crawmer. He

also leaves 12 great-grandchildren and his brother-in-law, Alfred and Esther Huffman; and sisters-in-law, Betsy Boone, Carol Boone, Hazel Boone, and Karen Boone.

In addition to his parents, Ralph is pre-deceased by all 12 brothers and sisters; Anna and Elmer Divers, John and Gladys Boone, Jessie and Lester Sides, Tom and Geneva Boone, Rachel and Troy Johnson, Lucy and Clyde Johnson, James and Duane Boone, Pauline and Johnny Brooks, Robert and Bernice Boone, Claude Boone, Clyde Boone and Buren Boone. Also preceding him in death were his step-brothers and sisters, Ruby and Allen Yoder, Jesse and Edna Boone, James and Bessie Boone, Annie and Arthur Silvers, Aretas and Edna Boone, and Alma and Donald Brubaker. Also, his father- and mother-in-law, Charles and Ella Huffman.

Dad had a quiet and peaceful personality. His influence blessed others in many positive and spiritual ways. We enjoyed our family camping trips in the Sierra Nevada mountains with Yosemite always being a highlight. Dad took many special fishing trips with Michael, as well as other family and friends. He enjoyed spending time at the ocean, especially the Monterey and Pacific Grove area of the coast. Dad and Mom remained sweethearts throughout 62 years of marriage, reminding each other often of their love for each other and for their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we sorrow for our loss, we praise our God for the hope we have of being united together to praise our Creator throughout eternity.

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

Visitation was held Monday, October 21, 2024, from 4-7 P.M. and the funeral service was held Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 2 P.M., both at the West Modesto Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Burial followed at the Wood Colony Cemetery.

The Family

MOHLER — James (J.D.), the youngest son of David and Martha (Flora) Mohler, was born at home in Covington, Ohio, on April 4, 1943.

He departed this life for his heavenly home on Sunday, November 10, 2024, after being diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia in February 2024. He was a faithful Christian and was baptized July 29, 1962. He married his loving wife Gay (Bucholtz) on June 23, 1962, and God blessed them with five children. They moved from Ohio to Virginia in June 1967 where they spent their remaining years raising their family until retirement. After his retirement they moved to Lakeland, Florida, and lived there for 10 years before moving back to Virginia. While living in Florida they attended Pine Grove Church and later Clay Sink Baptist Church. They genuinely enjoyed their time in Florida and had a lot of special times with old and new friends.

J.D. always had a ready joke and could not wait to share it with everyone! He loved to make people laugh. He spent his life as a dairy farmer, electrician, small engine repair and HVAC installation, and truck driver. He loved spending time with his family, and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren brought him much joy!

He was preceded in death by his parents; stepdad, Wilmer Austin; brother, Lester and wife, Joann (Yoder); brother, Glen; sister, Ruby Flora and husband, Kenny; brother-in-law, Okey Bowman; two grandsons and one great-granddaughter.

He leaves behind his wife of 62 years; his children and their spouses, Kim (Kermit) Austin of Rocky Mount, Virginia, Dean of Peterstown, West Virginia, Dennis (Ellen Mason) of Sawyer, Kansas, Karen (Bob) Miller of Bedford, Virginia, and Kathy Hale of Rocky Mount, Virginia; 17 grandchildren; and 22 great-grandchildren; sister, Virginia Bowman of Callaway, Virginia; and sister-in-law, Lois Jean (Miller) Mohler of Pleasant Hill, Ohio, as well as many nieces and nephews.

The visitation on November 12 and the funeral on November 13, 2024 were held at the Shenandoah meeting house, where brethren Jimmy Bryant, Billy Boone, and Richard Jamison shared thoughts from J.D.'s note of: "Three Things You Can't Do Without":

1. Without the shedding of blood, there's no forgiveness (Heb. 9).
2. Without faith we can't receive and believe what God has revealed to us (Heb. 11).
3. Without Jesus Christ, our Source for bearing the fruit of the Spirit (John 15).

Hymns used were 483, 443, 459, and 455, 494 while viewing.

While being laid to rest at Franklin Clearview Cemetery, hymns "Blessed Assurance," "Amazing Grace," 539, 534, 451 were sung while filling the grave, followed by Brother Dennis Jamison sharing a message with encouragements, answers to questions, and the hope believers have in a resurrection.

The family would like to express its appreciation for the love and support of so many friends and family. A special thank you to Good Samaritan Hospice who provided such wonderful care and support during this difficult time.

The Family

MILLER — Charles David was born on September 24, 1935, in Lewisburg, Ohio, to Jesse Everett and Frances (Bitner) Miller. When Daddy was nine years old, his family moved to Whittier, California. On Wednesday, November 13, 2024, he peacefully changed time for eternity in Modesto, California, at the age of 89 years. We rejoice that he is now walking, and so pleased to see his family already in heaven.

At 16 years of age, Daddy accepted Christ and was baptized at the New River German Baptist Church in Whittier, California. On June 18, 1955, he was married by Orlando Blickenstaff to Leona Renicker. Their marriage was

blessed with one daughter, Marilyn, and one son, Dale. In June of 1956, they moved to Modesto, California, from Whittier, then to Tuolumne County in 1970. They enjoyed the quietness and peacefulness of the mountains and appreciated the closeness of God and His Creation.

Daddy had various jobs over his lifetime, always enjoying customer interactions and the opportunity to help people. His first job was distributing newspapers by bicycle at the age of 12. He worked at a car dealership in the Parts Department in Whittier, and then in construction with Jess Wagoner after moving to Modesto. For several years, he worked at Griswold and Wight Ford Truck dealership as a mechanic and later in the Parts Department. He operated several of his own car repair shops, opening "Charlie's Repair" in our garage on Blue Gum Avenue, then "R & M Repair" in Paul Balsbaugh's shop with Uncle Virgil, and finally a shop in Twain Harte, where the Twain Harte Pharmacy is located today.

Due to an aneurysm behind his knee, his leg was amputated at Sonora Community Hospital in 2008. Two months later, he surprised his surgeon by walking into her office with his prosthesis on and with no crutches or walker! He continued working at Orchard Supply in Sonora after his surgery, until he retired in 2010 and moved back to the valley to be closer to family.

Serving the Lord was a priority in his life. For many years, he planned to meet others at the precious feet of Jesus someday. That time has come for him, and we know that he would desire to see each one of his remaining family and friends in heaven when our time comes to answer Jesus' call.

Daddy was preceded in death by his parents; one brother, Harold, in 1948; and one sister, Janice Baker Roth, in 2017; sister-in-law, Mary Renicker; and a special first cousin, Keith Hootman. He is survived by his loving wife of almost 69½ years,

Leona; his daughter, Marilyn, and her husband, Bill Miller, of Modesto; his son, Dale, and his companion, Paula, of Mi-Wuk Village. Also surviving are four grandsons, Jonathan (DaNee), James (Laurel), Matthew, Andrew (Stephanie); nine great-grandchildren; brother-in-law, Virgil Renicker; Terri Miller, and Iris Hootman, along with nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and co-workers.

The funeral service was held on November 25, 2024, at the Wood Colony Hall. Burial was in the adjoining Wood Colony Cemetery, Modesto, California.

The Family

GISH — Roger Lee, son of John W. and Dorothy (Bowman) Gish, was born August 21, 1928, in Modesto, California. He passed away November 26, 2024, at the home of his daughter near Twain Harte, California, making his sojourn here 96 years, 3 months, and 5 days.

Dad confessed his Savior and was baptized into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church June 29, 1947. He was married to Mary Alice Balsbaugh on May 14, 1950, and they established their home in Modesto. They were blessed with four children. Dad and Mother were called to the deacon's office in 1962, and to the ministry in 1964. They affiliated with the New Conference in 2009.

Dad shared memories of a happy childhood, though it took place through the depression and hard times. When he was 19, Israel became a nation, which sparked the love he always had for prophesy.

After he was in the ministry, Dad was privileged to visit the Holy Land with four other brethren. This trip took place just two weeks before the 1967 War. One highlight of the trip was hearing their tour leader, who knew Hebrew, read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah from the Dead Sea scrolls. In following years, Dad was blessed to be

a part of several additional Brethren Holy Land tours.

Dad was interested in Brethren history, and joined Elder Willie Miller on a tour to Germany, where the Brethren originated. Dad was a strong defender of our Anabaptist doctrines and heritage.

Dad was actively concerned about the spiritual wellbeing of the young people; encouraging Bible studies, young folks camp, and other church activities.

Dad was raised on a farm and was always a farmer. Beginning with a goat dairy when he was married, he went on to work with poultry and farming almonds. Dad was always thankful for the Lord's provision. In later years, he was able to travel with Mother in their motor home each year to annual meeting, visiting family, friends, and brethren along the way. After 70 years of marriage, Mother passed away on September 29, 2020, while they were visiting their daughter in Montana.

Dad's ministry was characterized by a love for the Lord and for his brethren. He appreciated people. He really had no hobbies but studying the Word. He loved to preach prophecy and the coming of our Lord Jesus. In later years he enjoyed apologetics and had a list of reasons why Darwin's theory of evolution is impossible.

Dad put a lot of emphasis on prayer. His last written effort was recently published in *The Testimony*. The family and many others relied on Dad's intercessions, prayers, and giving of thanks for them. We all appreciate the influence of his life of prayer.

He received much comfort from the anointing before his heart surgery in 2020, and again, five days before he passed.

Left to mourn his passing are his children, Jordan and Carol, Joyce Miller, Dale and Twila, and Joanne and Ben Selby; 24 grandchildren; 113 great-grandchildren; 22 great-great-grandchildren; 3 sisters-in-law, Mari-

lyn Balsbaugh, Janet Balsbaugh, and Loveda Balsbaugh; brothers, Marvin, and Phil and Mary Ellen; a brother-in-law, Dennis Wyatt; and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends.

Preceding him in death were his wife; parents; parents-in-law, Lloyd and Ruth Balsbaugh; son-in-law, Ronnie Miller; brother, Ed (Barbara); sister, Donna Wyatt; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Joyce Gish, John (Mildred) Balsbaugh, Esther (Carl) Kretzler, Ray (Grace) Balsbaugh, Carl (Barbara) Balsbaugh, Doris (Norman) Boyd, Vernon Balsbaugh, Hubert Balsbaugh, and David Balsbaugh; grandson, Caleb Gish; and great-grandsons, Micah Gish and Benedict Bowser.

Funeral services were held at the Modesto meeting house on December 3, with elders Mark Grover and David Rumble officiating. In hope of the resurrection, Dad was laid to rest beside Mother in the Wood Colony Cemetery, with a service following by Dale Gish and Phil Gish.

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:25-26)

The Family

HUBBARD — Leonard Samuel was born December 23, 1927, in Roanoke County, Virginia, to Clarence and Cassie Hubbard. He passed away peacefully on December 12, 2024, at the age of 96 years, 11 months, and 20 days.

Dad was a farmer, gardener, and many other things. He and his wife Zelma loved spending time in sunny Florida for over 30 years. From Zelma's passing in January 2018, he longed to join her in the heavenly kingdom that he had fervently preached about many times. Leonard was convinced that the Lord's return was imminent and loved to preach and share prophecy. Anyone that knew him, and heard his ministry, easily understood that his theme and pas-

sion in ministry was the wonderful inheritance of the saints, of what God has prepared for those that know and follow Him.

Leonard was baptized on August 3, 1948, and became a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. In 2009 he became a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren—New Conference, in which he remained faithful until his death. In the fall of 2017, he was part of a second district of the New Conference formed in Virginia called Covenant Valley. He was 90 years old at that time, and ministered faithfully to the small group even after his eyesight failed and he did not have the ability to read anymore.

Leonard and his wife Zelma were called to the office of deacon in the Peters Creek district near Roanoke, Virginia in 1961, and to the ministry in 1971. They were advanced to the full ministry in 1983.

On July 19, 1947, he married Zelma Divers, and they shared 70 plus years of marriage until her death on January 13, 2018. To this union were born five children: Gerald and Carol Hubbard, Glenn and Susan Hubbard, Marlene and Mark Bryant, Ray and Lor-

raine Hubbard, Barbara and Jimmy Bryant; 17 grandchildren; 54 great-grandchildren; and 21 great-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; great-grandson, Ross Evan Hubbard; and great-great-grandson, Heaven Lane Hubbard.

Leonard's viewing and funeral were held at the original conference Peters Creek meeting house. Visitation was from 2 P.M. to 8 P.M. Monday December 16 and the funeral was at 10 A.M. on December 17, 2024. Interment followed at Mountain View Cemetery in the town of Vinton, Virginia beside his beloved wife, Zelma. A meal followed at the Peters Creek church in the basement and was hosted by the Shenandoah district along with the Peters Creek members.

These are a few short words to describe a loving father and a man of God whom we respected and cherished. It was our joy to care for him in his final days as he changed time and life "under the sun" for his long sought eternity with the "Son Jesus Christ" and the Father God of creation.

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15).

The Family

Terms

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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

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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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