

"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 —

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt 16:26

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WHAT IS A MOTHER?

It takes a mother's love to make a house a home,
A place to be remembered, no matter where we roam;

It takes a mother's patience to bring a child up right,
And courage, and her cheerfulness to make a dark day bright.

It takes a mother's thoughtfulness to mend the hearts deep "hurts,"
And her skill, and her endurance to mend little socks and shirts;

It takes a mother's kindness to forgive us when we err,
To sympathize in trouble and to bow her head in prayer;

It takes a mother's wisdom to recognize our needs
And give us her assurance by her loving words and deeds;

It takes a mother's endless faith, her confidence, and trust
To guide us through the pitfalls of selfishness and lust.

And that is why in all this world there could not be another
Who could fulfil God's purpose as completely as a mother.

Helen Steiner Rice—Adapted

THE TESTIMONY

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EDITORIAL

THE WORTH OF A SOUL

Sometimes my heart grows heavy as I think of the state of the lost, and the prospect of eternal judgment. Even with all of the enjoyments of this life, and the laughter and legitimate pleasure that this life affords, our hearts are many times sobered, and it is easy to withdraw into somber meditation, as we think of where many are going as they leave this life and enter into eternity.

As children are brought into this world, and parents grapple with the issues of child-rearing; over it all is the ever-present question of where these children will spend eternity. It is on the heart of every godly mother. It is the concern of every godly father. It is the motivation for all of the honest efforts of parents to train up their children in the way that they should go. It is the impetus for the earnest prayers both day and night in the home. Questions often fill the hearts of parents: How can I best guide these little feet? Will my children spend eternity in Heaven? Is it possible that my children could be led astray by bitterness because of my failures? Am I being deceived into being satisfied when my children are having "fun"? Am I training them to follow after God? Am I following hard after God myself? Are they seeing that my *earnest* pursuits are *spiritual* pursuits? Do my children know how much I love them? Am I spending the time I should with them, and keeping their hearts?

The article "Five Minutes in Hell" that is being reprinted this month highlights again the sober issues that await every soul that leaves this natural life and enters into the eternal state. What an important event is the moment of death, when the final change is made, and the opportunity for repentance and turning is past. *"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still"* (Rev. 22:11). All of the goals and desires of this life will then suddenly be brought into clear perspective. The soul will know the value of eternal things, and the folly of vain pursuits.

A WONDERFUL ROLE

What a wonderful opportunity we have as fathers and mothers and as helpers of each other in the battle of life! What a role we can each play, in nurturing the souls of others, and in encouraging faith in God, both by our life, and by our words! There is nothing more important than assisting others toward God and His service and His praise! Yes, there is eternal judgment. But there is also the amazing message of Salvation, and the love of God to share with all. We can lift our gaze and look at the saving work of our God. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He wants all to be saved!

May we be overwhelmed by the worth of a soul! May our time and energy be spent in touching the lives of our children and those

about us with the love of our God, and the message of His grace. Yes, the certainty of judgment is sober, and causes our hearts to be heavy. But the opportunity we have to carry the message of salvation can give us purpose and cause our hearts to rejoice!

Be encouraged, fathers and mothers! Continue your earnest efforts to draw your children to the way of the cross. Keep eternity in view. Always abound in the work of the Lord. Your labor is not in vain.

Lowell Miller

GENERAL

FIVE MINUTES IN HELL

Philip King

A great-uncle of mine recently impressed me with a statement. Its seriousness and reality has occasioned the birth of this article. "Don't be afraid to tell the people about the bad place," he said.

Rather than take a verse by verse textbook approach to the subject, we wish instead to submit the parable of a man whose experience could someday be yours or mine. We feel the parable harmonizes with the Holy Scriptures. However, the actual state and sequence of events of the hereafter will without doubt vary from the illustration given.

The man knows that it will not be long now. The disease of his old age has weakened him to the point of death. By human standards he has lived a good life. There have been the usual trials, the normal frustrations, and those long, toilsome hours of early life to build that little empire. He has experienced the joys and frustrations of father and grandfatherhood. He has experienced the death of an unusually good companion, whom he had considered next to perfect if only she had not been so spiritual and so adoring of Jesus Christ, whom she called Lord. The children and grandchildren had suc-

ceeded as well as most folks for these times, some pretty good and others not so good. While readily admitting he did not have the faith of his deceased wife, nor ever feeling the need to have, surely he had not done too badly. With great respect to his wife, he had been baptized into her church a few years ago, and had made somewhat of an effort to follow its prescribed way of life. He had adequately provided for his family, given modest sums of money to the church, and now was leaving a sizable inheritance to the children. He could think of many, even now on his deathbed, who had done worse. So the man lay dying, with a certain assurance that the good he had done far outweighed the bad.

He regretted having to leave this life and everything he had lived and worked for, until he had made up his mind that since death comes to all, he would be strong and face it with pride and dignity. He would face death for what it was—the end—and not lean on the crutch of the simpler and weaker ones who cheered themselves with hope of a resurrection and a better life to come.

He regretted the day his wife had told him she wanted Jesus Christ to be the Lord of her life. Feeling somewhat jealous, he had

reluctantly but kindly consented, believing that if this would add to her happiness, he would let her try it. Her new life and faith had indeed inspired him, even to the point of true persuasion. But his pride, self-confidence, and intellect always won out. There were times when it seemed some oppressive force kept him from yielding to a full commitment. His baptism and attachment to the church had done little to increase his faith, but it had given his wife great satisfaction, and had stopped her periodic pleadings for him to make Jesus Lord of his life. Surely, though, if this talk of heaven and hell and of a resurrection should come true, the action he had taken would certainly be in his favor.

The doctors, nurses, children, and friends had given him their final assistance and comfort as best they knew how. And now as the hours slowly pass, the man, unconscious of his surroundings, lies waiting for that last final moment. His subconscious mind repeatedly casts away that nagging question—is death really the end?

Suddenly from deep down in his soul he receives a spontaneous urge to live his life over again. While before determined to face death with dignity, now he is completely convinced he does not want to die. Up to now he had been able to control and extinguish unpleasant, sobering thoughts, but now they linger with surmounting persistence. From somewhere within his soul his spirit prays, "Oh, let me live my life over again, or else let me die and remember no more forever!" The man senses the end is very near, and as his soul convulses with fear, he cries, "Wait, wait!" But the change has been made.

The man is aware that he has left the body, and a new fear stabs his soul as he realizes it is not the end. He senses he is confined to an endless chasm of blackness, and the loneliness of his state increases his anxious fear of what might lie ahead. He has no sense of direction or time; just the awareness of his troubled soul. The misty blackness is most oppressive, and all the emotions of fear, oppression, confusion, loneliness, and insecurity seem to be focusing themselves on the center of his soul.

Suddenly from out of the darkness he sees a light. It gives him momentary relief. Had he not read testimonials of people leaving and returning to their bodies? Had they not described a tunnel of darkness with a light at the end which they assumed would have been their Lord? The man chides himself for being so fearful; everything was going to turn out all right after all. Maybe he too would re-enter his body.

Suddenly, just as the light blazes into full glory, the man does indeed reenter the body. Amidst mixed emotions of hope and surprise, he finds himself standing at a distance from a massive, dazzling throne of brilliant brightness. He finds himself silently surrounded by a huge sea of resurrected dead as far as eye can see. The vast multitude from all peoples, kindreds, tribes, and tongues stand silently captivated by the awesome grandeur of the majestic throne and of the Being that sat thereon, whose countenance is as brilliant as jasper. Of almost equal interest was the countless number of glorious beings surrounding the throne,

whom he correctly guessed to be the angels of God.

The man is still unaware of the movement of time. However, he is acutely surprised at how well he can see and feel. He is much bothered by the strange silence that exists. He senses he is a stranger and prisoner, confined to an ordered spot in the midst of this great ocean of people. Feelings of fear and anxiety creep over him as he realizes some compelling force is urging him and the multitude ahead of him closer to the base of the great white throne. The throne, massive and glorious at a distance, is now absolutely spell-binding as the man sees the angels of God ascending and descending the long, wide stairway leading to the glorious Being at the top of it. That Being, none other than the living God, sits far above and beyond the base of the throne. The multitude of resurrected dead are being ushered up and down the throne.

As the man is absorbed by the activity of the holy angels, the smell of heavenly incense fills his nostrils, a bright presence appears on either side of him, and the firm grip of angel hands clasp him around the arms. The first sound he hears is his own voice, "Wait, I'm not ready!" In spite of his fear and alarm, he is surprised at how clear and fresh his voice sounded.

"Come, sir," the angels urge, and the man feels himself propelled forward and upward along the stairway. Up and up they ascend, the man with ever mounting anxiety; the angels with faces sober and silent. Higher and higher they ascend. The man cannot bear to look up. He is overwhelmed at his own reluctance to move on,

and he begs the angels to stop. But still they ascend. He is now aware of time, as he realizes his time has run out.

"Please let me go!" wails the man. But higher still they ascend. Up, up, and up they rise. Higher, higher, higher. When the final plateau is reached, and the angels relinquish their hold on him, the man slowly opens his terror-closed eyes. He is shocked and delighted with what he sees. Feelings of ecstasy pulsate through him as oceans of heavenly splendor and panoramic beauty bathe his delighted eyes. Before him is the promised land of all promised lands. He can see so far; he can hear so well. The sweetest singing fills his ears; the most pleasant scenes overwhelm his eyes. Stretching before him is a gigantic, staggeringly beautiful city, with streets of pure gold lined with stately, heavenly mansions and springing fountains of living water. The city thrives with multitudes of happy saints and overflows with sweet singing and praise. The man never dreamed anything could be so lush and pure. He had never imagined anything so fantastic or real. Desire to walk the streets of the city is overwhelming. As he surveys one particular part of the great paradise, his gaze is suddenly fixed on one particular saint whose countenance glows with happiness, glory, and splendor. So angelic, pure, and beautiful was she, and yet so familiar. And then he recognized her; it was his loving wife. The man begs the angels to let him enter into the city. But as he does so the city itself slowly vanishes from view, and the man finds himself staring in the face of the living God.

The man stands like a statue, speechless and sober. The piercing, blazing eyes of the Almighty cut through him like a sword. How he wished he could escape, or run away and hide, or just close his eyes, but he could not. He stood, fixed and imprisoned by the penetrating stare of the Most High. The disappointed, hopeless feeling in his soul seems to be reaching the breaking point, and he has a strong urge to scream out with despair. It seems he has already spent an eternity looking into the overpowering presence of the Lord God. The man's desire to die and remember no more is exceeding great. How he wished he had never been born—had never seen life. How he wished this was just an ugly dream, and that tomorrow he would wake up and lay hold on eternal life and embrace and love the Lord Jesus Christ with all his soul and strength. As he continues to stare into the face of God, he sees the Lord Jesus in the bosom of the Father. The countenance of the Son of God is very sad, and the man knows it is because he has forfeited the salvation the Lord Jesus so freely offered. The man tries to cry out and beg for mercy, but his lips are sealed.

Then in a moment the great Creator speaks with a voice of thunder, authoritative and final, "Behold, I have made all things new. Heaven and earth have passed away, but My Word shall never pass away. It was appointed unto men once to die. Now this is the judgment. This is the day I appointed to judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom I have ordained to be the judge of quick and dead. It was My intent that man should not have lived by

bread alone, but by every word that proceeded from My mouth. It was My realization that all men had sinned and come short of My glory. Therefore I sent My only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have ever-lasting life. I did not send Him to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. It was My desire that whatsoever men should do in word or deed, they would do all in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to Me through Him. I watched as He Himself bore your sins on the tree of Calvary, that you, being dead to sin, should shower your love and affection on things above. I received Him back to My right hand after I had raised Him from the dead for your justification. I watched with joy as multitudes received Him as their Lord and Savior and lived, suffered, and died for Him. It was with regret that I blotted many out of the Book of Life because they went back and walked no more with Him. It was with sadness that I saw great numbers reject Him as their Lord and Savior and try to live in their own strength and self-will. Now in this, the day of revelation of My righteous judgment, I will render to every man according to his deeds. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life shall be cast into the lake of fire."

Horror stabs the man's soul like a dagger. The books are opened, and another book is opened, which is the Lamb's Book of Life. The man sees the written Word of God, and another book containing his every action, deed, thought, and motive—even every idle word he had ever spoken.

Eternity again seems to spend itself as each page of his life is explained in strictest detail. The man never realized until now just how vile he was in the sight of God. Even the many pages of good things he had done were considered dead works by the holy One because of his failure to give God the praise and allow Jesus to have the preeminence. Every commandment is slowly and precisely read from God's Word, and explained in careful detail. The man now sees with great clarity the absolute futility of any man thinking he could approach the Almighty without someone else being able to present him faultless before this great throne of glory. Never before had he realized just how much man needed a Savior.

The man is allowed to inspect every name written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The pain is exceeding as he realizes that not only is his name missing, but also the names of many of his children and grand-children. Envy envelops him as he sees names of those he did know—sometimes whole families. How he wishes he could go back and truly be the head of his household and provide the spiritual leadership God intended for him to provide. The name in the book that hurt him the most was the one to whom he had lived the closest, and yet had really never ever known, because her faith and trust were so far removed from his. Paradise had claimed the only person he had ever really loved.

The attending angels slowly scan the long list of names in the Book of Life page by page. Finally the last page is scanned, the Book is closed, and the angels solemnly

bow their heads. The man, well aware of the verdict, falls heavily to his knees.

"Please don't do this to me!" pleads the man. "Please give me another chance! Please! I confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," he cries, sobbing hysterically.

"Help me, Lord!" he begs while looking up and seeing the face of Jesus in the countenance of the Father. "Please don't let me perish! I've done many good works. Oh, give me one more chance! I believe now with all my heart. I was too proud to believe before. Please, Lord, please!"

The sincere outburst from the heartbroken man goes unheeded as the great Judge of heaven and earth solemnly declares, "Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life shall be cast into the lake of fire. Depart from Me, ye worker of iniquity, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The man, now too weak with despair to protest, does not resist as the angels carry him to the base of the throne. How he would like to get just one more glimpse of that beautiful city before his departure. But he is too blinded by his own tears to see it, even if he could.

He is astonished at the great strength of the angels as they cast him outward with terrific speed. Almost instantly everything is black—oppressively black—thick, misty black. There is not the tiniest ray of light—not even a flicker from the great white throne.

Already he must be an unmeasurable distance from the throne. He feels himself falling faster and faster. Down, down he falls, away,

way down.

"Please help me!" shouts the man into the oppressive blackness. "Please, please help me!" Silence follows for what seems like many hours, and the man continues to fall.

Again the man shouts into the darkness, "Is there no one here to hear me? Am I the only one here? Please, will someone stop me from falling?"

The man is instantly startled as the voice of a demon replies, "Welcome to outer darkness, fellow-heir of damnation. Prepare to stay awhile." New fear grips the man at this new realization of sharing this oppressive blackness with unclean devils.

"Move away from me at once!" screams the man in a thunderous voice that echoed on and on through the darkness. The demon does not obey. The oppressive spirit of the demon clasps itself to the man like a hungry parasite.

"We are going to hell together," whispers the demon. "It's a long journey, and we need each other."

"I need you not," convulses the man, thrashing and kicking wildly. "I need Jesus Christ. Oh, Lord, hear me now, and deliver me."

"How dare you mention His cursed name!" shrieks the demon in hysteria. "I hate it! I hate it! Don't let me hear you mention His name again, you hear?" The man convulses in pain as the demon twists his body and oppresses his soul.

"Free me, please!" pleads the man. "Have you no compassion?"

"Indeed so!" mocks the demon. "I am so greatly attracted to you. I want you with me always." The demon holds him closer.

The man fights for freedom, but

he does not prevail.

"Do you not remember the good times we had together on earth?" tantalized the demon. "I really enjoyed filling you with pride and stubbornness. I had you believing you were the most self-sufficient man on earth. When your wife nearly convinced you to surrender your life to that wretched Son of God (the demon vibrates with fear and hate) I was afraid I had lost you. How proud I was when I persuaded you to just pretend you believed! That was one baptism I thoroughly enjoyed."

"How dare you torment me this way!" screamed the man. "You are a low down, ugly, venomous beast!"

"And you are a fool, a stupid, ignorant fool," crackled the demon. "But I adore you so much." The man shuddered in pain as the demon embraced his soul.

The demon has an excellent memory, and for what seems like days and days he brings to memory event after event of the man's life, always claiming victory. The man hears again in detail about all the inconsistent things he did in life: the displays of temper, the pride, the selfishness, the unconcern for others, the gossip, the dirty jokes, the foolishness, and the revelry. Even if it was something that only happened once in his life, the demon would relate it over and over. He made light of the good things the man had tried to do. He called the man a myriad of vulgar names, but always assured him that he adored him.

All this while the man continued to fall in the dark, bottomless pit.

He seemed an infinity away



from the remotest hope. For days and days he falls, then it seems like months, and then years. Surely God will deliver him soon. The wretched demon is unbearable; the man begs him to kill him. But the demon assures him that he loves him too much to ever do that.

After many days, to the man's relief, the demon is strangely quiet and detaches himself from the body. The man sees a dingy, flickering, dim light in the far distance. The light by no means relieves his oppression. As the man smells the first putrid smells of burning flesh, he recognizes the flickering light in the distance to be the sulfurous flames of the lake of fire. Frozen with terror, the man grits his teeth. What he hoped was almost enough punishment appeared to be only the beginning. Heat waves blasted against his face and sulfurous smoke filled his nostrils. The voice of wailing fills his ears, accompanied by hollow moans and sullen groans and shrieks of tortured

ghosts. Worst of all was a loud, mysterious sound, something like a billion fingernails scraping across a giant blackboard.

"Isn't that a beautiful sound?" bellows the demon after a long silence. "That's the sound of gnashing teeth. Hold me tight, my beloved. We are approaching hell."

The man is now unable to see because of the thick smoke. The heat is unbearable. Every muscle in his body is rigid. His fists are clenched. His flesh feels singed.

"This is unbearable!" the man cries.

"You fool!" screams the demon, "We aren't even there yet."

Almost immediately this new terror is realized. The man shrieks with pain. The demon curses the Lord Jesus Christ with an oath truly fit for hell. As the man plunges into hell, surely a thousand swords must have sliced through every sinew of his body. The man shrieks, kicks, and convulses as every nerve and fiber is aflame but not consumed.

"Help! Help! Help!" gasps the

man. "I don't want to be in hell! I hate hell! I can't bear to be in hell! I'll do anything to get out of this hell! Please, someone, help!"

"You'll get no help, you chief of fools," snorts the tortured demon. "Unless good Lucifer can find a way out of here, we'll get no help. So just enjoy it and quit crying for help. You should have cried for help while you were yet alive. Then maybe you, your family, and friends would not be here screaming your souls out. But then, what else could you expect, being under the influence of a master deceiver like myself?" At this even the demon cries out in pain.

All conversation is stopped. The man joins the multitude in hell in weeping and wailing. The gnashing sounds of his own teeth seem louder than all the rest. He shouts and groans, twists and convulses in hopes of some relief. But no relief comes. His throat is as dry as powder, raw with pain. "Oh, wouldn't those baptismal waters feel good now! Those peaceful, quiet church services in the cool grove of trees off the side of the road a little ways—wouldn't they be refreshing now! Oh, how beautiful would be that singing, even if some of it was slow, off-key and out of time! Oh, what a pleasure it would be to be back home with all the children circled around, and the Bible and hymnal in hand! What a joy it would be to deny self and sing and teach and pray with the family in sincerity and truth! Oh, why was pride so important? Oh, why was self so big? Oh, why was earthly esteem of so much value? Oh, why did heavenly things seem so dry, unimportant, and insignificant? Why had he been so foolish to deny the glorious

resurrection? Why had the name of Jesus seemed just like another name? Why had those church ordinances just seemed like something you're supposed to do at church, and forget about the next day? Why hadn't he studied more? Why hadn't he listened more? Why hadn't he considered more? Why had he put so much emphasis on building projects, fund drives, and legal technicalities, and been so foolish as to forget faith, hope, and charity. The demon was right. He was indeed the chiefest of fools.

Oh, why, why, why?"

The man cannot believe that God would leave someone in hell so long. Surely no one was sinful enough to deserve to be in hell this long. Ages must have passed since those first flames pierced his body. The man has prayed over and over to be able to die and forget. But the demon reminded him that this was the second death.

The man suddenly shouts with all his might, "Oh, Lord, why do You punish us so long?"

"You miserable fool," gasps the agonized, tortured demon, "We've only been here five minutes!"

"Five minutes? You're a liar!" screams the man.

"I lie not!" shrieks the demon.

"Then how much longer?" pants the man in final utter despair.

No answer; just the crackling horrors of a flaming hell.

"I say, how much longer?"

Quoth the demon,

"Forevermore..."

Reluctantly but prayerfully submitted.

Selected by

Duane Bayer

BIBLICAL BEHAVIOR

Part 14

“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 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 the idea 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 II Peter 3, verse 11:

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness...”



As Peter wraps up his final epistle, he reminds us that as time goes on, many will lose faith in the teachings of the prophets and apostles. One such teaching that will be denied is the coming of the Lord. At this coming, He will appear suddenly, without immediate warning, and at His appearance heaven and earth will be destroyed. Peter tells us many will scoff at this idea. They will scoff because they deny the truth of God's watery judgment when He caused a worldwide flood on the earth. If the flood never happened,

they rationalize, a fiery judgment is not likely to ever happen either. Additionally, they will scoff because as time continues on, there is little indication anything will ever change. Peter explains this long time-span is actually the patience of God, which reflects His desire for souls to be saved. This is the backdrop to our verse at hand.

The terrestrial and the celestial as we know it, are going to dissolve. Dissolve in the Greek means "to loose." As of now, all things are being held together by Jesus Christ and by the word of His power. When this day comes the cosmos will no longer be held together. It will be loosed, or dissolved. Knowing this is the case, Peter says we ought to behave holily and godly? "Ought" implies we should do something that we may not be doing at the moment. If we are honest, there is often a difference between what we are doing, and what we should be doing. We must realize we have a position in Christ, reserved in heaven for us, and we have our condition in Christ, as we live today. When we get to glory, our position and condition will be identical. Meanwhile, our condition should be growing progressively closer to reflect our position in Christ. This understanding provides the resolve to live holily and godly. A life in Christ will serve as our escape from this destruction.

Just a few final thoughts on this

type of behavior. In a previous part of this article we suggested holy means to be separate. If we live holy, we are living non-conformed lives, that are separate and different from the rudiments and philosophies of the world, i.e., the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Peter describes it in another place as living as "strangers and pilgrims."

Living godly, is living devoted to God. Our devotion is proportional to our time spent with Him in prayer, with His word, and with His people. Godliness is thinking like God, talking about God, and acting like God. Godly living, by God's grace, will impact others around us that they may be saved from this coming apocalypse. May you never doubt the truth of the Lord's return, and may you behave holily and godly today.

We have worked through just fourteen verses over the last several months. Our desire resonates with Paul when he said, "...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." My prayer is that we would all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

May God richly bless you,

Grant Fullmer

APPRECIATION OF PLAIN DRESS

I appreciate our members' separation from the world, but I don't ever want to come off as thinking I'm better than others or as though I've arrived spiritually. I'm still learning every day and learning that I have more to learn about separation from the world in so many things. My deep desire is for others to see the blessings and testimony of so many of our physical customs of covering, dress, our nonpartisan ways in many things, and outward actions that actually cause the outside world to sometimes feel the need to reconsider their relationship to our Lord. You know when outsiders ask you to pray for them or seemingly give us extra mannerly expressions like apologizing if they say inappropriate words in front of us, or give us a friendly nod, or open doors for us, they are reacting to our outward appearance. And I feel a need, in part, because of these things, to constantly be realizing that my inward relationship to the Lord needs to be where it should be, to be available to give His answers to anyone who asks about my appearance, to point them to our Lord.

WHY I LIKE OUR DRESS UNIFORM— THE ADVANTAGES I SEE

1. Before becoming a church member, I did dress in a modest long dress and wore a white veil. Since becoming a member and wearing our uniform dress, I have had

many more people take notice and ask questions, giving me a greater opportunity to tell people about the Lord.

2. I feel we show nonmembers a unity of community, faith, values and thoughts by dressing in the same style of dress.

3. Since our dress is distinctive, it shows that we belong to a group that is dedicated to live for the Lord.

4. Our dress makes it easy to shop for fabric and know how much to get.

5. I don't have to search through pattern books looking for some new and different dress style to impress the world; instead I know that the world can focus on my smile and joy of the Lord.

6. I know that my dress is modest and I can wear it anywhere from a formal evening wedding to an outdoor barbeque

7. My dress pattern is customized to me and I don't have to wonder if the dress style I have chosen is going to fit or work for me.

8. I can recognize another church member at a distance and feel like I'm seeing a family member or close friend, even if I don't actually know who they are.

9. Other Anabaptist groups identify that we are part of a general Anabaptist community and acknowledge familiarity with us.

10. Our dress shows that I'm not swayed by worldly fashions, but I feel my look is timeless and feminine.

11. My dress reminds me that I am an ambassador for the Lord as

I go out even to the grocery store, and I try to be careful and considerate of what I do or say around possible nonbelievers so as not to be a stumbling block to them but a light to them.

12. I feel a close unity with other member sisters because we are agreed on our dress, faith, and generally have very similar practices and values.

13. I feel our dresses demonstrate to the world that we do believe the Scriptures about being separate from the world while being/living in the world to BE a testimony and a witness to and of the Lord.

14. I feel a greater sense of unity and community because I'm dressed in the same style as other sisters in our fellowship.

15. As I'm dressed distinctively, I feel an extra sense of standing firm in my faith and letting the world know who we are for the Lord in a humble way, knowing that He can use us if we keep our hearts and minds on Him and not be prideful or arrogant but meek and ever ready to give an answer for the hope that is in us.

**WHAT I HAVE SEEN FROM A NON-MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE
BECAUSE OF OUR DRESS**

1. Because of our dress, nonmembers recognize us as part of a group dedicated to the Lord.

2. Most nonmembers feel they can instantly trust us even though they don't know us personally.

3. Our dress uniform identifies us as part of an Anabaptist group that is known for being dedicated

to our faith in the Lord, hard-working, conservative, trustworthy, and family-oriented.

4. People see us and feel they can ask us for real prayer or honest help even if they don't know us.

5. When people see us and they ask questions, we have the opportunity to talk with them and point them toward the Lord.

6. As we have traveled several times around the country and here at home, some men and women have made comments to us like:

•"I love that you continue to wear dresses."

•"I wish all women still dressed as modestly as you ladies."

•"You all look so feminine and nice."

•"I appreciate that you ladies are dressed modestly and not trying to be weird or draw attention to your shapes, but use your smiles on your faces."

•"I like your dresses, keep it up, we need more like you all."

•"I wish my wife would dress like you ladies" (this came from a man we saw at the Grand Canyon while we were in the checkout line).

•"Thank you for your dedication to show your faith to others."

7. Seeing our distinctive dress seems to cause some people to feel like they need to say something about their possible Christianity or cause them to think about the Lord in some way. They sometimes offer that they go to church or have been meaning to get back to church.

8. We have noticed that men have

rushed to hold doors open for us ladies. Many times they have asked if they could reach something or lift and carry things for us, showing extra manly manners.

9. Men and women usually give a cordial nice nod or say hello in town, and I've noticed that they don't necessarily give the same greeting to others.

10. Many nonmembers see us as part of a special Christian group that they admire.

All praise to God!

Charlette Lewis

HEBREWS: WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

For centuries, students of the Scriptures have posited their opinions as to who is the author of Hebrews. Unlike the Apostle Paul's first 13 epistles where he identifies himself in each epistle as the author; such self-identification is absent in Hebrews! Perhaps no one to date has provided such an exhaustive apologetic in defense of the proposal that the Apostle Paul is, indeed, the author of Hebrews, as Finis Jennings Dake (1902–1987), a Pentecostal evangelist who spent 43 years and 100,000 hours of his life in compiling his "Dake Study Bible."

This writing is given at the end of the Book of Hebrews and is simply titled "Summary of Hebrews."

It is reprinted here for your consideration.

1. The thoughts and reasoning are Paul's. Any difference in style is due to his writing to Jews as a Jew and not to Gentile churches as in other epistles. Furthermore, the translation of the book into Greek by Luke may account for some change in style.

2. Peter confirms the fact that Paul wrote an epistle to Jews (II Pet. 3:15–16).

3. The book of Hebrews is ascribed to him by over 100 ancient writers in both Greek and Latin, from 70 to 730 AD.

4. It was received as Paul's by the council of Laodicea (363 AD), by the council of Carthage (397), by the Syrian churches (370), and generally by the Greek and Eastern churches from the earliest centuries.

5. Paul is named as the author in the Alexandrian MSS [Manuscripts] (500 AD).

6. Some Latin churches questioned it only because Paul's name is not used in the introduction as in all his other epistles: but this was for two reasons:

(1) Eusebius, the father of church history, explains that Paul wrote the epistle in Hebrew, leaving his name off so that it would be read and received more readily by Jews who hated him and would not want to listen to anything he had to say. Luke translated it into Greek, hence it is similar to Acts in expression. See the Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 2, p. 579.

(2) In the oldest MSS the epistle follows Galatians, which with the

title "To the Hebrews," indicating that it was a part of the Galatian letter. If this be true, the authorship stated in Galatians 1:1 applies to both books. This would explain why Paul speaks of Galatians as a large letter (6:11). The Israel of God of Galatians 6:16 would be an appropriate introduction to the book of Hebrews.

7. There is nothing in the epistle contrary to Paul's authorship. The truth is there is much internal evidence that Paul is the author.

(1) Both books argue at length on the abolishment of the old covenant.

(2) Both anticipate the visit of the writer (Gal. 4:20; Heb. 13:19).

(3) Paul was the only writer of the New Testament who requested prayer for himself. (Cf. [compare] Heb. 13:18 with "Note d" of II Thess. 3.1.)

"Note d" of II Thess. 3:1 of the Dake Bible is reproduced here: "In conclusion, pray for us (v. 1-2):

a. That the Gospel may have free course,

b. That the Gospel may be glorified,

c. That we may not be hindered in work." Paul was the only New Testament writer who asked for the prayers of those to whom he wrote (Rom. 15:30; II Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; Philem. v. 22; Heb. 13:18.

(4) Many exhortations of Hebrews are similar to those of other epistles of Paul. Cf. Heb. 12:3 with Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:14 with Rom. 12:18; Heb. 13:1-3 with Eph. 5:2-4; Heb. 13:16 with Phil. 4:18; Heb.

5:12 with I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 8:1 with Eph. 1:20; Heb. 8:6, 9:15, and 12:24 with Gal. 3:19-20 and I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 10:1 with Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:33 with I Cor. 4:9; Heb. 13:9 with Eph. 4:14; Heb. 13:10 with I Cor. 9:13 and 10:18; Heb. 13:20-21 with Rom. 15:33, 16:20, II Cor. 13:11, Phil. 4:9, and I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:22 with Acts 24:16; etc.

(5) The author of both books wrote from Italy (Heb. 13:24).

(6) Paul was the only New Testament writer who wrote from prison and expected release (Cf. Heb. 13:19, 23 with Phil. 1:7-8, 13, 26; 2:23-24; etc.)

(7) No other writer of epistles mentions Timothy. Paul refers to him 20 times in his recognized epistles. When Paul mentions Timothy to others he always calls him brother. Cf. Heb. 13:23 with II Cor. 1:1, Col. 1:1, and I Thess. 3:2.

(8) The conclusion of the epistle is like others of Paul. Cf. Heb. 13:18-25 with the end of his other epistles.

Theme: To present Christ as God, and as better than all men and angels; to prove that Judaism and the Law have come to an end; to confirm Jewish Christians in the faith; and to set forth new covenant doctrines for all men.

Statistics: 58th book of the Bible; 13 chapters; 303 verses; 6,913 words; 17 questions; 270 verses of history; 9 verses of fulfilled and 24 verses of unfulfilled prophecy.

Everett J Cook

PERSUADING MEN

Alex was from New York, the Bronx. A big man with a shaved head and until you learned to know him, truly intimidating. I hadn't worked with him a week when he dropped by my room with a gallon of mavi, the Puerto Rican version of our cider made by the locals from the bark of the mavi tree. Having tried it once before, I knew this was a real honor seldom enjoyed by outsiders, and Alex had grown up in Puerto Rico until his mother left his father and took him away from his beautiful island to the big city. It had been so tough for him that his eyes got a little cloudy when he spoke of it.

He joined the Army. He met his wife of many years, also a soldier, and raised a large family. His childhood loss was so grievous that when he chose a wife, they both agreed she'd be the only one and he was faithful in spite of all the temptations of multiple tours of duty for both of them, never at the same time. I could tell he loved his family because, though mainlanders, they took good care of each other as extended families do where he came from.

I invited him in. I think he was a little surprised. He correctly put up his guard and sat in the only chair. I had a question for him.

"Alex, how do you get men to go above and beyond what they can normally do?"

"Well, if they think they can, they can. It's my job to persuade them."

I can remember thinking, "If I were a man like you with your authority as an Army drill sergeant I probably could too." We visited a

little longer, I thanked him for the mavi, and he went his way.

Many times I have thought of this encounter with a man I'll probably never see again. Just as quickly as he left, I began to consider the words of the Apostle Paul, in fact that was the reason for my question. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." (II Cor. 5:11). Alex just happened to walk into it and used the word I was seeking, "persuade"—to convince by sound reason.

We frankly can't understand why anyone would want to procrastinate. Partly, it is knowing "the terror of the Lord," and partly, it is a wonderment of God.

The walk is so wonderful; why wait? Yet we meet often with resistance. Resistance not only to the walk but the mode, and the method, and the reason, and the excuse. At some point you begin to think, "If the threat of death doesn't move a person, what would?" If they have a Bible and a 2000 plus year grace period, what more can be said or done? Watching a willful downward progression in drugs, drunkenness, lasciviousness, and black sin, who can be blamed for throwing up their hands?

A friend recently summed it up by saying, "People don't care." But if they are fearful of dying, we can't say that. They care so much they are terrified. I remember looking into the eyes of a woman with cancer ahead of me for radiation. She was so terrified she couldn't lay still on the table, which is a necessity, so they had to sedate. When her grandson told me she had been in denial to the point the family tried to convince her to see a doctor and she lied to them, they were dealing

with unreasonable fear. Her family cared. Her doctor and nurses cared. I cared and didn't even know her name. No, it is something else. And it is infecting all of us.

The American dream; job, car, house, spouse, children and all the niceties of life was the vision a generation or two ago. It has lost its luster. Why? We all know that "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." (Prov. 29:18).

If ever we lived in a day of grandiose vision, it is today. The moon is not enough; onward to Mars. Sit and read what men envision and it all makes sense; why not seek for smart cities, self-driving vehicles, a 4-day work week, swipe a card, etc.

But people aren't buying it. A generation has discovered that one can have everything their great-grandparents saved hard for and still not be as happy. There is a lurking suspicion that deficit spending has an end, and it won't be a good one.

The people are weary of bad decisions made generations back. They are tired of brokenness in the family. They live to retire, and that is empty. The ears itch, but nothing scratches them for long. All of this is merely a symptom of the rest of the verse in Proverbs: "...but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." No one is more miserable than a man who has done what is right in his own eyes, who has sown to the wind with nothing to show for it. It's not depression. It is despair.

Granted, the mountains have been climbed, the ocean valleys explored, but someone did a little figuring on how many people die each day worldwide. The sum was astonishing, even though a portion

were children. We certainly can't save the world, but we can care and not despair.

Are any of us procrastinating on the honey-do list? Do we put off a rather lengthy project because the end is near and we hope we can rapture out?

Do we make that dress last a little longer and find ourselves sewing one covering at a time? Have we slacked off in the garden and bought our "last" car?

If so, my friend, you have the "the end is near" focus. Oh, the Lord's return in the clouds may very well be near, but slacking is not stewardship. When was the last time you sang, "We'll work till Jesus comes..."? I feel safe in saying you should lift up your eyes, you should be watching and waiting, but you best "Occupy till I come" with your pound and talent.

There are some brethren who are recovering their vision. They have it all and it's not satisfying. It isn't that they are discontent or unthankful. It's that they want more! Not more land or more houses or cars. They have more than enough of this world's goods. They want more kingdom, the one to come. If you are puzzled, then ask yourself this question. What do I want now that will translate into the kingdom of Jesus for a thousand years?

Do you believe that Jesus is going to literally reign on earth for 1000 years? I'm hearing some doubt. I'm hearing some who think He already is. But no, the millennial kingdom is yet to come, when there will be no hurt nor destroy in God's holy mountain (Isa. 11:9). We are not there yet.

I'm thinking that the Apostle

Paul we will meet is going to be very different from the one we read about. He doesn't mince words. I can't even imagine what kind of an influence his words have had in nearly 2000 years, but I can see he will be one of the happiest people in the kingdom. The man didn't just work, he fought. He didn't just preach, he persuaded. How? He was "fully persuaded." "I am persuaded." "I know and am persuaded." "And myself also am persuaded." Those are just his comments in the book of Hebrews.

Do you know, are you persuaded, fully persuaded that there is no end and we need to be about our Father's business? The only end coming is the end of opportunity for salvation. The soul of man is eternal, and he gets to choose his future eternal destination.

*I know not when my Lord may come,
At night or noonday fair,
Nor if I'll walk the vale with Him
Or meet Him in the air.
But I know whom I have believed,
and am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I've committed
unto Him against that day.*

—Daniel Whittle

Rachel Brubaker

BIBLICAL BLESSINGS

This is a list of biblical blessings that I am so thankful for.

1. The first blessing is **to be allowed to read!** And to be encouraged to memorize, because the Bible is God's message to us! It is through reading that we can learn more about our Father in Heaven, and His will.

2. The second blessing is **Jesus, God's Son,** who died for us to give us the Gift of His Salvation! He is now our Mediator and our High Priest.

3. The third great blessing is **the Way to Heaven.** Jesus is that Way! He said, "I am the Way!" And He leads us!

4. The fourth blessing is **prayer!** Who am I to come before God, to speak? Yet God is always listening, always sees, and is always aware of our lives!

5. This blessing is **that we are not tempted or tested above what we are able.** There is always a way of escape (I Cor. 10:13). Many have prayed for help, and God has heard.

6. Another great blessing is **the Church!** These are our brethren and sisters! This is the family that we see today, and will see sometime in Heaven!

7. This blessing is **CHOICE!** No one forced you to choose. The choice is our own!

8. The next blessing is **NOW!** And **TODAY!** Time teaches us to be aware! And not to waste time!

9. My last blessings is **CHANGE!** But wait! We don't like change! But change teaches us to watch. It helps us to grow. Often it is called Opportunity!

Each of us can write our own list!

Vicki Witmer

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Apr. 6, 2025; Caldwell, ID
Mallory Hess

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

Mar. 13, 2025; Shiloh, OH
Mark and Kayla Haney
Mar. 23, 2025; Shiloh, OH
Gale and Shirley Turner
Mar. 30, 2025; Shenandoah, VA
David and Myrtle Montgomery

COMMUNION NOTICES

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
Jul. 19, 2025..... Olive Branch, OH
Sept. 27, 2025..... Pleasant View, OH
Oct. 4, 2025 Providence, IN
Oct. 11, 2025 Lower Twin, OH
Oct. 11, 2025 Zillah, WA
Oct. 18, 2025 Maple Grove, OH
Oct. 18, 2025 Clearwater, IN
Oct. 18, 2025 Western Kansas, KS
Oct. 25, 2025 Stillwater, OH
Nov. 1, 2025..... Bethel, OH
Nov. 1, 2025..... Kidron Valley, KS
Nov. 8, 2025..... Covington, OH
Nov. 8, 2025..... West Modesto, CA

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

COVENANT VALLEY DISTRICT DISSOLUTION

With the passing of Elder Leonard Hubbard this past December the Covenant Valley District near Roanoke, Virginia, has been dissolved.

Leonard was 90 years old when the district was formed and brought peace, not only to the members he ministered to, but to all the Virginia brethren, along with our entire brotherhood.

Everett Wray

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE NOTICE

Date and Location: The date for Annual Conference is May 24–27 and will be held once again at Cedarville University, 251 N. Main St, Cedarville, OH 45314, Lord willing.

Worship Services: All are warmly invited to join us as we meet to praise our God together and to encourage one another. The first worship service is scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 24. There will be 1–2 hymns sung prior to each service to quiet and draw the congregation to their seats. We also look forward to holding a communion service for OGBBC—New Conference members on Sunday, May 25 at 4:30 P.M.

Registration Packets: Registration Packets for the conference have been distributed. If you are planning to attend and have not yet received a packet, please contact Sam Funkhouser at 540-333-0356 or see the www.ogbbc.org website. These packets are to be filled out and returned by May 1, 2025. If after this date you decide to attend, please submit the

packet as soon as your plans are known.

Check-in: Lodging committee will open on Friday, May 23, at 1:00 P.M. in the Stevens Student Center. All who plan to stay on campus, whether dorms or RV, need to report to the Information Center upon arrival. Additional info can be obtained as you check in.

Volunteering: There are still several different areas and committees in need of volunteers. Please see the SignUp Genius link on the ogbbc.org website for available opportunities to assist and bless others.

Awareness: For safety/liability reasons, Cedarville asks that NO ONE bring rip sticks, skateboards, roller

blades, bicycles, roller skates, etc. to Conference. PLEASE use caution and diligence around the POND, on the roadways, and around any active construction areas.

Call-in: The call-in number for worship services is 712-432-8773 and the Conference ID# is 201262#. This number is posted on the OGBBC website and in the Registration Packet.

May the Spirit of God move among His people as we meet together, encouraging the saints, convicting the unsaved, and bringing praise and glory to our Heavenly Father once again.

On behalf of the 2025 COA,

Christian Filbrun, Secretary

MEDITATIONS

The flowers in heaven are more beautiful than those on earth.
 You haven't listened to a heart until you've heard its hurt.
 Just remember, as you have sown just so you shall reap.
 Messiah came, was crucified, and is coming again.
 Christianity is the only religion to offer a Savior.
 This life on earth is the Springtime of Heaven.
 Calvary pleased God—sin was pardoned.

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.

No matter where we may be in life, or what our age may be, we are on the edge of eternity.

We are fast approaching the beginning of our existence in the realm that has no end. It is fast approaching. A few years from now, this present life will be past, with all of its joys and sorrows and memories.

This is not a light matter to consider. This should prompt sober thoughts and reflections.

Questions:

1. When my change comes (and it is fast approaching) where will I be?
2. Are my daily activities, focus, and priorities properly preparing me for this change?
3. Am I ready for the great Judgment Day?
4. Do I speak about this to others?
5. Am I at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?
6. Is my heart burdened for the souls of the lost?

POEMS

TEARS IN HEAVEN

They say heaven is a happy place
 Where tears are known no more.
 We're promised that there'll be no pain
 On that eternal shore.
 And yet, as I sat down to think
 I questioned just one thing—
 How could we sing and praise our God
 If one soul was missing?

I thought of all the lives I've met,
 The loved ones I held dear.
 I prayed they'd be with Jesus when
 Eternity drew near.
 I prayed not one would miss the call
 Before it was too late.
 I wished them all to be up there
 When I walked through the gate.

I also knew that Satan worked
 In many kinds of ways.
 He tried with zeal to win those hearts
 And lead them all astray.
 It seemed if one should not be there
 That tears would surely fall.
 It seemed essential that we heard
 And heeded to the call.

And so, as I resumed my prayer
 And laid my fears to rest.
 I prayed that God would move, and that
 My faith might stand the test.

Laura Alspaugh
 Myerstown, PA

GOD'S WORD AS WATER

John 4:10–13

Rain falls from heaven above,
 Entering the earth through pores.
 Going down into the depths
 Of the internal water stores.

It then comes forth as a spring,
 Starting down the mountainside,
 Creating a flowing stream
 In which some creatures will reside.

The streams then turn into creeks,
 Ponds and lakes they will supply.
 Flowing on as great rivers,
 Bringing life to that which is dry.

Ending up at the ocean
 Upon which great ships take course.
 Supplying God's creation,
 A much needed life-giving source.

We, like the earth, are vessels,
 The water is as God's Word.
 Entering the eyes and ears,
 Filling the heart where it is stored.

Then, from our lips, His Word flows
 As a spring in the mountains,
 Bringing hope and joy to those
 Who hear and drink from God's fountain.

That dry "lands" can be watered,
 Thirsty souls be satisfied,
 As the "Word" of life flows on
 Back to God who'll be glorified.

Winter Etter
 New Lebanon, OH

THE PATH AHEAD

I do not know, nor can I see What lies in store ahead for me,
If sunny skies, paths lined with flowers, Or overcast, or summer showers.

I only know that up ahead My Lord shall lead—He's always led,
And He shall all my ways attend And show what lies around the bend.

He's led me as a child and youth. He's taught me in the ways of Truth.
I haven't always followed well. He's sometimes raised me when I fell.
He's always near me to attend, To show me what is 'round the bend.

There is no need for me to fear. Because my Lord is always near.

From day to day my Lord will guide If I will still in Him abide.
I know not where my path may lie Nor what awaits above the sky,

But I am sure that if I trust In Him—and trust I must—
And as I yet in years ascend, He'll still be with me to the end.

Then at last when time and age Shall turn for me the final page,
And when I round that final bend And up that final ridge ascend,
I'll leave, at last this earth and time, To catch a view of heaven's clime.
And when I scale that last ascent, I'll view a scene, magnificent!

Marcus Miller
Pleasant Hill, Ohio

OBITUARIES

BRUBAKER — Gary L., 69, of Eaton, Ohio, passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 8, 2025. Dad was surrounded by his wife and children at Valley Hospital in Winchester, Virginia, after suffering a stroke while driving truck and fellowshiping with Brethren, both of which were highlights of his life. He was born on January 22, 1956, to Darrell and Yvonne Brubaker. On June 21, 1975, he was united in marriage with Pat Miller.

On July 13, 1975, they accepted Christ as their Savior, were baptized, and are members of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Dad and Mom were blessed with four sons and one daughter.

Dad enjoyed spending his time working in the family business and serving the agriculture community. He spent many hours driving truck and working in the fields yet always made time for his family and mentored anyone in need of a listening ear.

Dad will be missed and remembered by his loving and devoted wife of 49½ years; his children, Roland and Marla, Reuben and Beth, Ryan and Bethany, Jake and Rochelle Wray, Rex and Molly; 36 grandchildren, Lynelle (Jeremy), Lauren (Patrick), Layna, Lyndon, Layton, Dinah (Matthew), Abigail (Andrew), Korissa, (Scott) Makayla, Myrah, Matthan, Andrew; Zimrah (Triston), Zaide, Asher, Aizen, Kidron, Kezia, Ty-

len, Talia, Shira, Selah, Jubal, Jansen, Micaiah, Mayah, Jasmine, Chloe, Aliana, Danika, Kyler, Vienna, Raelyn, Mariah; Tysen, Sky-lie; and 3 great-grandchildren. Three brothers and their wives, Galen and Connie, Greg and Becky, and Gene and Jenny; brothers- and sisters-in-law: Gene Miller, Don Wilcox, and Darryl and Gloria Denlinger.

Preceding him in death are his parents; parents-in-law, Robert and Martha Miller; and sisters-in-law, Marcia Miller and Carolyn Wilcox.

The funeral service was held February 14, 2025, at the Upper Twin Old German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse. Burial followed at the Fairview Cemetery, West Alexandria, Ohio. We will all strive to meet our husband, dad, and grandpa in the heavenly land, knowing our loss is his heavenly gain.

The Family

MILLER — William “Bill” Charles was born on January 29, 1951, to Ralph and Pauline Miller. After several months of being in and out of hospitals he peacefully passed away surrounded by his family, on February 20, 2025, at the age of 74.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents; his sister, Deanna Newton; his brother, Bob Miller; and fathers-in-law, Herman Coning and Ralph Brunk Sr.

On March 20, 1976, he was married to Marsha Coning and they

were blessed with 48 years and 11 months. In 1978 they moved to Modesto, California, where Bill continued his career as a machinist at H.J. Heinz. They had one daughter, Jaime, and two sons, Nicholas and Dustin. In 1988 Bill gave his life to Jesus and was baptized on Saturday of Annual Conference in Indiana. Even though they enjoyed living in California they moved back to Indiana in the spring of 1995 to be closer to family. Bill continued as a machinist at Zimmer and later as a driver, and enjoyed being in his truck and on the road. He spent lots of hours listening to the Bible as he traveled. He also enjoyed time spent with his family camping, fishing, riding ATVs, and making annual trips to Florida in February and March, and being creative for his children and later his grandchildren by building a backyard zip-line, waterslide, and endless rides on his tractor and golf cart.

Bill is survived by his wife, Marsha; his children, Nicholas and Kelsey Miller, Jaime and Trent Martin, Dustin Miller; 7 grandchildren, Isabella Miller (Seth Gaerte), Connor Martin, Olivia Martin, Avah Miller, Madalyn Martin, Norah Miller, and Jonah Miller; mother-in-law, Phyllis Coning Brunk; two brothers-in-law, Randy and Darlene Coning, Ron Coning; and one sister-in-law, Janelene and Jim Hufford. Also many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Bill will be greatly missed and we take great comfort in knowing he is in heaven. Visitation was

held on Monday, February 24, 2025, from 2–5 and 6–8 P.M., and the funeral was 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, all at West Manchester Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference in North Manchester, Indiana. The burial was at the Old German Baptist Brethren Cemetery in North Manchester, Indiana.

The Family

MOHLER — John Martin, 71, of Yakima, Washington, began to breathe the air of Heaven on March 23, 2025. He was born on December 21, 1953, to Daniel Weston and Miriam Amy Mohler in Modesto, California. He was the youngest of four children.

His childhood on the family farm was filled with many memories, many of which included hospitality and singing. He was raised in a Christian home, where he was taught about God's grace and having a personal relationship with Jesus which he saw vibrantly displayed in his parents. John publicly professed his faith in Christ on May 20, 1973.

He married the absolute love of his life, Barbara Jean Hoblit, on July 10, 1976, and together they walked the journey of life, faithful to each other and the Lord. They enjoyed serving as Deacons in the German Baptist Brethren Church and the years of friendships and fellowship that last even through today. During their marriage, they

lived in California, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington, where they enjoyed so many wonderful memories with people from all walks of life.

John worked as a regional sales manager, selling church furniture throughout the northwest. He thoroughly enjoyed the many relationships that his profession brought, connecting him to various denominations within the family of God.

Their marriage was blessed with two children, Amy Arlene and Jamin John. He was an excellent dad! He always made time for his family, making many memories in the ordinary days of life. John was the biggest cheerleader a child or grandchild could ask for. He loved his family well. He instilled a strong work ethic, uncompromising integrity, and an unwavering love for Jesus in his family.

Most recently he enjoyed serving families with his son, Jamin, at the funeral homes. Assisting at funeral services, operating the crematory, running errands, or just being "Dad" to the staff was a highlight in his later years. After retirement he enjoyed making new friends at Rexford Manor, where he and Barb were currently living.

He enjoyed singing, baseball, traveling, and each moment he could spend with his family. His desire was to be an encourager. He was a positive and enthusiastic person who always saw things from an optimistic perspective. He was known for his smile and genu-

ine care for others. John lived his life for his Savior and wanted others to know the good news of the grace of Jesus.

Thankful for the life they lived together are his precious wife, Barb; his children, Amy Mohler and Jamin (Kara) Mohler; and his grandchildren, of which he was so proud, Mahala Joy (Daniel) Rumsey, Abigail Raeanne (EJ) Morga, Jaron John, Maizie Jo, Hadassah Mae and Judah Nole. His siblings are also surviving, Suzanne (Durand) Overholtzer, Sharon Burrage, Tom (Laurie) Mohler, Sr. He is also survived by Barb's siblings, Bruce (Carla) Hoblit, Becky Hoblit, Bart (Lisa) Hoblit, as well as many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, which he longed to see since his mother's death in 1988 and his dad's death in 1996, as well as his parents-in-law,

Ralph and Marcella Hoblit; and two precious grandbabies.

Visitation was at Shaw and Sons Funeral Home in Yakima on Saturday, March 29, 2025, from 3:00–7:00 P.M. The Funeral Service was Sunday, March 30, 2025, at 11:00 A.M. at The Yakima Convention and Event Center followed by a light reception. The Graveside Service followed at 2:00 P.M. at the Cascade Valley Cemetery (230 Tozer Rd, Ellensburg, Washington).

John's family gives very deep appreciation to the staff at Brookside Funeral Home and Shaw and Sons Funeral Home. You have done an exceptional job of serving our family, grieving with us, and supporting us through these last few years, and most especially in preparation of honoring his life and legacy. He loved you all dearly and is very honored by each of you. Thank you.

The Family

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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.
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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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