

"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

"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Song 2:3

Vol. XVI

June 2025

No. 6

HOME

While others may wander and others may roam
I am contented to just be at home.
Home amongst the common, the things I count as dear;
The comfort and security of loved one's cheer.
The serenity of the garden, the fallen leaves that blow,
The singing of the robins, the deep winter snow.

But e'en amongst the familiar, there is a distant void.
I seek a better city that keeps my mind employed.
I fix my eyes on Jesus, the source of truer joy
Than any mortal comfort, than any earthly toy.
There is a far-off beacon, beckoning more and more.
It shines with "come hither" to draw me to its shore.

A home with Thee in heaven, dear Jesus, I desire,
To shake off earthly comfort, a greater joy aspire.
The years pass by so quickly, as life ebbs like the tide
And thoughts turn to the celestial, glimpses of the heavenly choir.
Until the time appointed, before my days were set
I will occupy the "now," but think of the "not yet."

And fix my eyes on Jesus and the mansion on a knoll.
Yes, a home with Thee in heaven thrills my very soul!

Gloria Wright
Ellensburg, WA

THE TESTIMONY

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EDITORIAL

SUMMER FRUIT

June 20, 2025, on the calendar is noted as the first day of summer. This is the longest day or the shortest night in our Northern Hemisphere also known as the June solstice. Where do you look and what do you see? Everywhere! At everything!! For all of God's creation there is nothing as fundamental as length of day, more sunlight! The sun (or Son) is the true source of all light and warmth on God's created earth and world! God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5). In our Old Testament King James Bible the Hebrew word *qayits* is mentioned 20 times: nine times as "summer fruit," ten times just as "summer," and one time as a "summer house" in contrast to a winter house. In the New Testament, the Greek word *theros* refers to the season of summer also associated with harvest time and the warm season.

Another summer is coming and is here. Lawns are growing and the aroma of newly mowed grass is welcome after another winter. School is finished for the year. Vacation time, more family gatherings, garden work is happening, farmers are anticipating the promising crop of harvest, whether it be row crops or fruits and/or nut crops.

Summer Fruit is the evidence of God's provision for blessing HIS creation. In II Samuel 16:1-2 ESV, Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, sent gifts to King David. They included "a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred Summer Fruits, and a skin of wine." Fruits to be consumed by others. At some point in the past,

in this Old Testament account, there were crops planted, orchards and groves pruned, irrigation accomplished, and harvesting finished. We too, in our lives experience planting, watering, fertilizing, cultivating, and pruning, that we may be sanctified and be the Summer Fruit for our Master's use.

The Summer Fruit referenced in Amos 8:1-2 is a very negative illustration. "Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them anymore." The lesson is a definite end of blessing and the coming judgment. When crop production stopped God's care and protection for His chosen came to an end. Obviously the lesson in this is that God is blessed and glorified and we are blest when there is fruitfulness for Him and blessings for others.

Summer is the time and season for caring and gathering the fruit of summer. Proverbs 30:25 gives us a visual of ants recognizing and gathering Summer Fruit for the winter. "The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." Summer time is a preparation season gifted to us by our God of Grace for our blessing, busyness, fruitfulness, and enjoyment.

We are in the summer of God's Kingdom as it grows here on His earth. The church age, which is many times referred to as the age of grace, is the time of gathering up of God's grace and blessings all around us and within us and sharing them with others as we have

opportunity. Proverbs 10:5 refers to a lazy son who shames his parents because he doesn't gather in the summer.

New leaves, flowers, green grass, lush crops, singing birds, and all God's creation are for us to enjoy and bless HIM for His Glory and power. It's the time to point other people to the God of wonder and creation. The crop is fast ripening and the harvest is near and we are the messengers of Summer Fruit. It's the time to encourage other believers as we are at our vacations, group picnics, campouts, family reunions, etc. It's timely to share the lessons of God's handiwork in nature, or share the latest Bible verse that was impactful to you, or share a sermon or Bible study that inspired or convicted you. It's timely to stop and pray together with our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Summer Fruit is for God and blesses others. We live in a time of the great possibilities of the Sum-

mer Fruit. We have available to us the printing of God's Word, the Holy Bible. We have the availability of the Written Word in digital copies, computers, laptops, tablets, and cell phones. We have the blessing of communication with family, friends, our brothers and sisters, etc. We share blessings, sorrows, heartaches, pictures of children and grandchildren. The list is endless. We live in a "grand and awful time and to be living is sublime" (#519 in our hymnbook).

What is summer bringing in our lives? What will it bring this year? What are our plans? Are they fruitful? Will the Summer Fruit be for God and others?

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame" (Prov. 10:5).

Gather in your arms the Summer Fruit and generously share with others.

Blessings, Dean Kinsley

GENERAL

A CHRIST-CENTERED COURTSHIP

PART 3

The Preparation Sleep

Paul Hershberger

There are five goals for this series:

1. To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children.
2. To turn the hearts of the children to their fathers.
3. That parents would get a burden to lead their children into the perfect will of God for their lives.
4. That young people would get a burden to seek God, find fulfill-

ment and purpose in walking with God, and mature in their manners and character.

5. That young men and women would rise up to be godly fathers and mothers with a vision to raise another godly generation.

Today's topic is about waiting on God's timing and plan for marriage.

THE PREPARATION SLEEP

In Genesis 2:21, we read that Adam slept a deep sleep. God did surgery on him, and there was no anesthesiologist there to help with

the surgery. Adam just slept a deep sleep. We're not talking about a dormant sleep, where we are unaware of our surroundings, but rather a germinating sleep. Germination has two components. The first component is dying and losing our identity. The second component is springing forth a new life. Preparation sleep is a sleep that is willing to die to self and lose its identity and its agenda. And yet, through this dying process, a new life can spring forth. As Christians, we have the blessed opportunity to die to ourselves so that we can have fresh germination coming out of our lives. When we die to ourselves, new life springs forth.

"And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" (Gen. 2:19-22).

In Genesis 2:20, Adam became aware that there was no helper suitable for him. As all the animals went by, he began to realize his need. Each animal had a male and a female, but he was the only one like him. God's advice for Adam was, "You need to go to sleep." And as Adam slept that deep sleep, he was wholly yielded. As Adam slept, God prepared a help suitable for him. Adam did not interfere with this process. He wasn't giving advice: "Make her this way or that way." This was all God's doing, and Adam was yielded and in a deep sleep with no plan of his own. Today, this also applies to Eve. In Adam's day, Eve wasn't created yet. Today, Eve is alive the same as Adam is. In other words, today, we have males and females. If Eve doesn't go into this preparation sleep as well, Adam will have difficulty going into a preparation sleep if Eve tries to get his attention. Eve needs to go to sleep in the same way as Adam does.

Young men and women, it is important that you yield your future and marriage to God. If you try to take your future into your own hands, you will likely fail. God has a purpose and plan for each one of you. It is possible that God's plan for you is not marriage. But God does have a plan for you.

As we consider preparation sleep, let's look at the life of Jesus when He was young. We want to look at four points from His life and make practical applications.

JESUS WAS A MATURING, GODLY YOUNG MAN

“And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.” This was right after they had been at the temple. *“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Now, his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast”* (Luke 2:39–42). In this Scripture, Jesus is twelve years old. If you are twelve years old or older, I urge you to sit up and take note. Jesus was twelve, and here’s what it says about Him: *“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”* What an example of a maturing, godly young man. He *“waxed strong in spirit.”* That means the power of the Holy Ghost was strong upon Him. He was *“filled with wisdom”* that is to say, the wisdom of God! *“And the grace of God [the divine influence from God that helps one live a godly life] was upon him”* too.

Jesus began preparing for His life ministry at a young age. Sometimes, we think childhood is a time for playing. I’m not against children playing, but **youth must consider what life is about long before adulthood.** If you

plan to wait and get serious until the time for marriage, you’ve missed a tremendous opportunity. Prepare yourself for marriage so you are ready to be married when that day comes. Then God’s face will shine upon you and bless you, and your life will be fulfilled and fruitful. There’s a preparation that goes on during this sleep.

JESUS SENSED THE CALL OF GOD

“And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business? And

they understood not the saying which he spake unto them" (Luke 2:42–50). At twelve years old, Jesus was already deeply interested in the Word of God. The calling of God was very clear to Him. When His parents came looking for Him, He said, "Why did you look for me? Don't you know that I need to be about My Father's business?"

Young men and women, do you sense the calling of God? Is the Spirit of God speaking into your lives, moving, and giving direction? If we live a shallow Christian life, we won't sense the moving of the Spirit of God. But if we get close to God, the Bible says He'll draw nigh to us.

Do you understand the Bible, and can you give answers to what you believe? It is important to lay your own foundation. You can't build on Mom and Dad's foundation. If you grew up in a godly Christian home, you are blessed. But don't be lazy; develop your own convictions. Find out for yourself what the Word of God says. Talk to Dad or Mom if you don't understand something. Lay a foundation so you are ready to be married when the day comes.

JESUS WAS SUBJECT TO HIS PARENTS

"And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her

heart" (Luke 2:51).

The example of Jesus is clear: "I must be about My Father's business." But He laid down His will and waited. He went home with His parents and "was subject to them." He waited for eighteen years. Jesus continued actively pursuing His relationship with His Father in heaven in those eighteen years. He prepared for His ministry while He waited. Sometimes, we wonder why we have to wait. We can't see any purpose, and it feels like we're being held back.

But God works in our hearts while we wait and prepare for what's ahead.

JESUS CONTINUED TO INCREASE AND MATURE

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Waiting and "preparation" sleeping didn't hold Jesus back. As we consider His ministry and all the difficult things He faced, we know He prepared. How could He have such wisdom to have the correct answer to every question or give the right response? He prepared, and He walked with God.

LEARNING TO WALK WITH GOD

We, too, want to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God. To do so, we must learn to walk with God. We learn to walk with God by:

• Bible reading

Second Timothy 2:15 says, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* Constructive daily Bible reading is like constructing a building. It takes time. In the same way, we can’t become a Bible scholar in one year. We don’t read our Bibles just to survive for the day. If we’re reading to survive today, we are not laying bricks in our spiritual building. We need to lay some bricks. If we lay a few bricks every day, after some years, there will be quite a structure if we do it with a plan. Constructive daily Bible reading doesn’t need to be huge but should add up.

• Prayer

“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. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:1–4).

Pray and intercede for other people. Thank God for what He has done for you. If God answered specific prayer requests, thank Him for it. Pray about specific needs in your life. “Lord, what are areas of need in my life?” Take one

or two of these areas, and seek God for grace to overcome them. If you do this for several years, God will abundantly bless your preparation.

Take time to praise and thank God. *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name”* (Heb. 13:15). Thankfulness coming out of our hearts and lives is important. God inhabits the praises of His people. When we are downcast, one of the best things we can do is sing. Rejoice in the Lord; bless His name.

• Learn to hear the voice of God

Learn to discern God’s will and leading. Young people often struggle in this area. But as we learn to walk with God, we keep growing one step at a time. We read our Bibles, study, meditate, and memorize verses. We pray, fast, and seek the Lord. We praise Him and give Him thanks. We intercede for others and ask Him to help us. As we do these spiritual exercises, we begin to know the voice of God. He’ll begin to lead us in ways that we can understand. But we must take a step at a time and keep going. Don’t just aim at survival. Prepare for life.

• Die to areas in your life

You need to die to your flesh so you can have that germination come forth into newness of life. Our flesh shrinks back from the idea of dying and says, “That’s not

pleasant. I don't enjoy that." Our flesh doesn't enjoy it, but dying to self brings forth new life. We can experience a springing forth in a new life as much as we are willing to die to ourselves.

• **Developing a Christlike character**

Developing a Christlike character can be one of those areas in our lives where we struggle the hardest. But let's not shrink away from it. We have the grace of God on our side, and he wants to give us inner strength so we can overcome areas of need in our lives.

Consider the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23. This is a good place to start developing a Christlike character. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. I still go back and look at that list, asking, "Ok, how am I doing?" If I claim to have the Spirit of God living in my heart, I should have these things coming out of my life. Let's keep pressing on into the Kingdom.

When developing a Christlike character, let's ask: What spirit comes from me? Do I have a loud spirit or a quiet spirit? A harsh spirit or a gentle spirit? A critical spirit or a forgiving spirit? A proud spirit or a humble spirit? A selfish spirit or a servant spirit? Unkind or kind? Crude or mannerly? Tough or compassionate? Rude or respectful? Do I need to work on my character?

• **Yield your life to God's service**

"Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you. But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (I Cor. 7:27–28, 32–34).

If you are unmarried, it may feel like "God has no purpose for me." God has a purpose for everyone. In fact, if young people cannot be content and fulfilled in serving the Lord as a single person, they are not ready for married life either. Contentment is caring about the things of the Lord. It goes with this preparation sleep. If your mind is focused on, "I've got to get married!" or "I wonder whom I'll get married to," you will be distracted and won't be able to prepare for God's plan for your life. These areas in your life need to go

to sleep. In God's timing, He'll cause it to spring forth in newness of life.

Find fulfillment in serving the Lord, walking with Him, and being content. Find contentment in serving others by starting at home. Also, find contentment and fulfillment in the church.

WHAT KIND OF PARTNER DO I NEED?

This may seem like a different topic, but this, too, is a part of preparation. Ask yourself: "What kind of partner do I need?" When considering a partner, you need:

1. One with a vision.
2. One that is virtuous.
3. One that has a godly character.
4. One that is under authority.
5. One who is in love with Jesus.

This is fairly broad and yet all-encompassing. This is the kind of partner you want.

Parents, talk to your children. Don't wait till there's a request from a young man. Or perhaps your son says, "Well, Dad, uh, I really sort of feel drawn to this girl." Fathers, don't wait, but prepare for it. Talk about it with your children. And yes, you may ask them to wait. You may want to help them go to sleep. Give them direction on it. This conversation needs to happen when they are a bit older. Maybe around 20 or 21, this conversation could begin.

Parents, pray about this matter. Sometimes, we clearly sense God's direction for our child in marriage. Other times, we may not be sure

and need to ask God for direction. Pray for your children before they seek marriage. We're not looking for them to just "fall in love" one day.

WHEN AM I READY FOR MARRIAGE?

Here are some questions to consider:

1. Am I mature?

Have I learned to walk with God? Am I steady and stable and established in the faith? Or do I have major ups and downs?

2. Do I have a godly character?

How do I treat others? How do I treat my parents and my siblings? How do I treat my coworkers? Am I quiet, gentle, forgiving, humble, a servant, kind, mannerly, compassionate, and respectful?

3. Am I under authority?

This one is important. Have you dealt with your strong nature? Are you willing to be compatible, like Ephesians 5:21 says about "submitting one to another"? Have you learned to honor and respect your father? Are you under authority?

4. Is Jesus my all in all?

Am I married to Christ? Do I find satisfaction in Him?

5. Am I content with my lot in life?

Am I willing to live with less than Mom and Dad have? You cannot start in the same place in life where your parents are today. Do I desire material things, always reaching for more?

YOUNG MEN**Study Titus 2:6-8**

1. Young men, can you spiritually lead a wife and children? Can you do what Ephesians 5:24-27 says about washing them with the Word and guiding a home spiritually?
2. Are you able to financially provide? Can you take care of the household? When you marry, it's not just yourself but your wife and children to provide for.
3. Are you an overcomer in moral purity? Are you walking in victory?

Selected by
Ken Hopkins

THE LITTLE BLACK PRAYER BOOK

As we entered the common area across from the nurses' station at a nursing home, we heard a weak, high pitched, quavering voice. It was a voice of song. It was the words of a familiar hymn. Across the room sat an aged sister bent forward in a wheelchair. She was singing, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus, and dwell with him above?" As she sang, her voice grew weaker. "To drink the flowing fountains of everlasting love." Here the words became barely audible. "When shall I be delivered..." She drifted off to her own thoughts, or

into sleep. The nurse attending her was visibly moved. "She has this little black prayer book, and we sing from it together sometimes. I know some of the hymns. There aren't any notes." And then she asked wistfully, "How can she sing those hymns without notes and sometimes even without a book?"

"She has heard those hymns since she was just a little girl." I said, "And now she is ninety-nine years old. They are just part of her."

The Little Black Prayer Book! I had never thought of it that way before. I began to study this little Prayer Book, so familiar to the Brethren for nearly 150 years. Some of the songs in this book are truly prayers. I wish we would sing "Amen" at the end of them.

The first 134 hymns in the book are about "God" and about "Worship and Praise." In reading them, we find there are three types of hymns. Most are truly prayers, addressed to God, our Lord, our Father, or with the pronouns "thee," "thy," "thine," and "thou." There is no question as to whom these prayer-hymns are being addressed. Of the first 134 hymns we consider over 100 to be truly prayers and, in our book, we have penned the word "Amen" after each of them. Then there are a few which I would also consider prayers because they address God

or the Lord but in perhaps one verse only. Then there are a few which are not prayers, as such, but are spiritual songs and hymns of praise. By now we have established in our own mind that our little hymn book is, in fact, a book of prayers. Toward the end of the book there are fewer prayers and more hymns of encouragement, edification, exhortation, and inspiration. It would be profitable for someone to study our hymn book further from this perspective.

It has been said, "If you want to understand the doctrine of a church, look at its hymnal." It could be said as well, "If you want to understand the depth of the spirituality of the worship of a church, look at its music." Read the lyrics of its psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Look at the mood and movement of its singing, of the melody, of the harmony. Observe the evidence and depth of its emotion, whether it be reverential, worshipful, simple, humble, and whether it truly focuses all attention on God. Or does it focus on a few individuals, or on one. Is there participation of the worshippers, or are those in attendance merely an audience, or spectators?

Some hymns recorded in the New Testament were somber and reverential. In Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26 we read, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." I

wish I knew the words to that hymn. Perhaps it was one of the Psalms. I wonder if it wasn't sung to a "minor" tune. Very soon Jesus would experience great agony and, within hours, death on a cross. When Paul and Silas sang in prison, I suspect the words and tune were somber. In Ephesians 5:19 we read of "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." In Colossians 3:16 we read, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Yes, there is a place for exultant and joyful singing. But if you want to see the depth of the spirituality of the worship of a church, look at its music.

In I Corinthians 14 Paul says there must not be any confusion when we gather to worship. He likens language and speech to inanimate objects, "whether pipe or harp." He acknowledges that an inanimate trumpet may cause confusion, be off chord sometimes. In verses 7-10 we read, "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp [musical instruments], except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncer-

tain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification [every word has its own meaning].” Worship should be simple and understandable. It should be for both edification and praise. “...he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” Even the song service should include praise from the lips, and from the heart.

No one need be embarrassed by our heritage of “lining” hymns. It has been suggested (incorrectly we believe) that the customary “lining” of hymns arose from a lack of hymn books, from dim lamps, or even an inability of some to read the words even if they had a book. Instead, we consider the custom of “lining” a hymn to be an example of congregational responsive worship. The song leader reads the words, and the congregation responds in unison with collective praise. Psalm 136 is an example with the response “for his mercy endureth for ever.” Psalm 107 is another responsive Psalm in which a leader read the Psalm and the congregation responded in unison, “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his

goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” We think there is value in responsive worship and that we should consider well before discarding it as a useless tradition. By first reading the words, followed by responsive singing from the congregation, the words are more deeply impressed upon the mind of the worshippers, and perhaps also in the ears of God Himself.

Instrumental music in Hebrew worship was introduced about the time of King David before the building of Solomon’s Temple. After the Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. and Judah was taken into Babylonian captivity, the Synagogue became the center of Hebrew worship. We read that instrumental music was not used in the Synagogue from the Babylonian Captivity all the way through the New Testament church era. Instruments in worship were considered pagan even to the Protestant Reformation, even to the origins of the Brethren. Singing limited to a choir was reintroduced about that same time. Some Anabaptists and Restorationists yet today confess to be “non-instrumental” in worship.

Return to the sister in the nursing home, with that song engraved upon her heart from the “Little Prayer Book.” It is a custom among Brethren families to pre-

sent each child, at a very young age, with a little New Testament and the small Brethren hymn book. The boys carry their books like their Dads, and the girls put them in their purses. Can they read? No! Can they understand? Absolutely! They observe very early that their parents place great value on these two books. As they get older, they learn to sing before they learn to read. "There is a happy land far, far away..." Then as teens, beginning to learn the seriousness of life, they sing, "Oh, how happy are they who their Savior obey, and have laid up their treasures above..." In midlife, with the responsibilities of marriage, family, and occupation they realize the meaning of "Father, I stretch my hands to thee, No other help I know..." In old age, realizing how dependent man is on God, they sing of the promise, "And then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn, Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

Finally, we can sing that prayer with assurance, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus, and dwell with him above, to drink the flowing fountains of everlasting love..."

Marcus Miller

CATASTROPHE AND EUCATASTROPHE

A minister spoke a word recently, I'd never heard before, and explained it similarly as a massive turn of events from a seemingly unconquerable situation to an unforeseen victory, usually brought by grace rather than heroic effort.

Could we not say that a catastrophe of death, bondage, fear, and darkness, were changed to eucatastrophes of life, freedom, peace, and light, and hatred to love, sadness to joy, hurt to healing, sin to repentance, sorrow to forgiveness, condemnation to grace, and transgression to mercy, by our Savior's sacrifice for those who would accept that gift?

Then, ultimately hope for eternal life with Him by His resurrection, to which we can look forward.

Consider some of the following scriptural *catastrophes* and **eucatastrophes**, if I have hopefully, not taken Scripture out of context.

1. *Genesis 2:17* "...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

I Corinthians 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

2. *Genesis 6:7-8* "...I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth..."

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

3. *Isaiah 14:14* "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

John 12:31 "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

4. *Galatians 4:3* "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world..."

Romans 8:21 "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

5. *Matthew 12:35b* "...an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

Matthew 12:35a "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things..."

6. *John 10:10* "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."

"...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

7. *Matthew 6:23a* "But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness."

Matthew 6:22 "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

8. *Matthew 13:58* "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

John 6:47 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

9. *James 4:4b* "...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"

I John 5:4 "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world..."

10. *Ephesians 4:14a* "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine..."

Colossians 1:23a "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel..."

11. *I John 2:9* "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."

I John 4:7 "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

12. *Hebrews 2:15* "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

I John 5:11 "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

13. *Hebrews 11:6a* "But without faith it is impossible to please him..."

I John 5:4b "...and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

We could go on and on. but the new word coined by J. R. R. Tolkien in 1939 did bring into focus the interesting contrast from wrong to right, evil to good, and

death to life, all from our Saviour who left the throne in heaven, came down to earth, lived, taught, preached, healed, brought to life from the dead, then suffered horribly, both mentally and physically in the garden and on the cross, died and after three days, arose triumphant over death, hell, and the grave, giving us hope of an eternity with Him forever. That is a true account of catastrophe to eucatastrophe.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

AliceMae Haney

SEEDS

The seeds in our garden are very small, but can grow into a large plant with a root. Yet the seeds still need God to grant them food for growth.

The seed of an idea takes root also, but we must make sure the seed will fall on good ground and produce.

There are many kinds of seeds. Some are for food for us, and some are for animal food. Some are just simply for weeds!

Now in our garden tiny seeds like carrots, even though they are small, can crowd out others! Seeds do not like cold contrary winds. Yes, Satan wants to mar the growth of good seeds!

Do weeds grow faster than plants? It seems like it! And we

like to weed them out! But in the case of the tares in Matthew 13:30, Jesus said, "Let both grow together until the harvest..." Do the weeds make the plant grow stronger by what they choose to feed on?

Yes, as we garden, we are careful to choose the right seeds, and plant them in the right place. Would we plant wheat with radish seeds?

Consideration is always given as to where to plant seeds. Seeds among the rocks do not grow!

God wants His seeds to flourish! Psalm 92:14 says of His plantings, "They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." Old age is when everything seems to take more energy and effort. But in the spiritual life, even in old age, there are found the fruits of good influence, example, prayer, and love, along with many other promising seeds that have been sown.

We learned Sunday that the seed of an idea can lie in our hearts long before it becomes fruit!

Most roots cannot be established in dry ground. But Isaiah 53:2 says of the coming Messiah, "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." This was spoken of Jesus, and He is the Son of God!

We cannot take weed seed and

use it to plant, expecting good food! God has ordained that the Church help each of us be discerning about the purity of seed. Ephesians 4:11–16 says, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we 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: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

Growth is not very promising in cold weather. Seeds like a warm bed.

The seed (the Word of God) is good, so can we just grow, and not be feeding on harmful things, like doubt? We do want to grow in Him, so that our fruit will be good things, like faith, love, hope, trust, prayer, praise, and joy!

So if we want good fruit, let us

be careful what we come in contact with, and what we read! Too much of the wrong food will damage our growth, and destroy the fruit.

What do our ears enjoy hearing? There is much deception in the world. II Peter 2:2 says, “And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (II Pet. 3:18).

And may our trials cause us to grow, even if the moisture is from our tears.

Seeds also need the Sun. “He that hath the Son hath life. And he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

Vicki Witmer

26 *“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;*

27 *And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.*

28 *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.*

29 *But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come” (Mark 4:26–29).*

FINDING HOPE FOR LIVING

By Nathan L. Meyers

Hope is one of the most important things to the human heart. Hope gives us courage to live. We face the difficulties of life in the hope that we will overcome them. We endure the drudgery of life in the hope of something more exciting.

Hope is the expectation or anticipation that what is desired will come. No doubt you have some hopes for today, for next week, even for the years ahead. But a disappointing fact of life is that sometimes these hopes are never fulfilled. Earthly hopes are at best uncertain.

Hope is central to the Christian faith. When the Bible speaks of hope, it is not referring to something that might happen; it is promising something that will happen. Here is a fundamental difference between earthly hopes and Christian hope. Christian hope is not merely an uncertain feeling that we will get what we want. Rather, Christian hope is based on the unalterable promises of a God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). Christian hope is the firm conviction that what God has promised He will indeed do.

Maybe life for you has been a series of successes and your hopes are being fulfilled. Have you ever stopped to ponder the ultimate hopelessness of life? Or maybe all your dreams have been shattered and you are disappointed and hopeless. Do you know that there is a hope no one and nothing can steal?

1. The Hopelessness of Life

King Solomon was one of the greatest kings of ancient Israel.

The book of Ecclesiastes tells of Solomon's search for real meaning in life. He sought for something that would truly satisfy in this world "under the sun." The phrase "under the sun" refers to life on earth with little regard for the existence of an eternal world beyond the sun. One by one, Solomon exhausted every source of earthly hope.

a. Life is brief (Ecclesiastes 1:3-11)

First, Solomon came to the conclusion that life is much too short to truly satisfy. The natural world is an endless cycle of perpetual change yet everlasting sameness. The sun rises and the sun sets, only to repeat it all again. The wind blows, only to circle about and blow again. The rivers flow to the sea, only to evaporate and fall as rain into the rivers again. And human life is the same. One generation is born, only to die and be forgotten and be replaced by another.

In such a life under the sun, of what real value are all our labors? A man may meticulously care for a farm, but it is only to have his name in the registry of deeds replaced by another. A man may build a successful business but eventually someone else will run it. If there is no God and no life after death, as the atheist claims, then life is merely a journey from nothing to nothing; we come with nothing and we leave with nothing, many times not even with a lasting memorial of our labors. Life is much too short to satisfy.

The feeling of nostalgia captures the fleeting nature of life. Nostalgia is the remembrance of a happy time in our life and a longing to

return to that time. But that happy memory is mingled with pain because we realize we can never return to that happy time. It is gone forever. All earthly happiness has an end. The human heart longs for something more enduring—something eternal.

Certainly, it is not wrong to hope for earthly things. Many times earthly hopes are the gift of God. But all earthly hopes are uncertain and have an end. Death is a barrier beyond which no earthly hope reaches. Our hopes for earthly success are a fleeting hiccup in the span of human history.

b. Pleasure and riches do not satisfy (Ecclesiastes 2:1–11)

Solomon found that all the happiness we may hope for in this brief life does not ultimately satisfy. Solomon gave himself to the pursuit of pleasure. His pursuit was not the wanton, self-destructive greed of a fool. He sought to wisely satiate his passions. He gave himself to wine and laughter. He built luxurious houses surrounded by gardens and orchards. He accumulated great wealth. He sought pleasure in splendor, dignity, and the beauty of art and nature.

Yet all these hopes fulfilled left him hopeless. After Solomon had gotten all these things he said, “Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun” (Eccl. 2:11). We, too, may dream and plan and hope. But when our hopes are finally fulfilled, we find that we are not really satis-

fied. Still our life is empty and meaningless, and we are left hoping for something better.

Many times, when life is not going well, we think, “If only I had that, I would be happy” or, “If only this were different, life would be good.” But if such a hope is fulfilled, we find that we still are not completely happy and we still have troubles.

c. Wise living is pointless (Ecclesiastes 2:12–17, 9:1–18)

Solomon gave himself to wisdom and wise living. Indeed, Scripture describes him as the wisest man alive (I Kings 4:31). We might reason, “Yes, life is brief, hopes may be disappointed, pleasures may not really make us happy, but surely the best a man can do is live a noble and wise life and be satisfied that he has lived well.” Solomon did this but he found no hope in it.

Wise living is indeed much better than foolish living. But many times, the same disasters come upon the wise man as upon the fool. There are wicked men who prosper and there are righteous men who perish. Solomon observed, “All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean...as is the good, so is the sinner...” (Eccl. 9:2). That is, it appears that health and sickness, prosperity and calamity, fame and humiliation befall men without regard for their moral character. Indeed, many times the unscrupulous man gains more applause than the honest

man. In the years to come the wise man is no more remembered by posterity than the foolish man. And all the discipline and sacrifice required to live wisely is pointless, for both the fool and the wise man have the same end—death (Eccl. 9:3).

In Psalm 73, Asaph describes how he lost all hope in this world when he saw the prosperity of the wicked who increased in riches and power. He said of them, “They have more than heart could wish” (Psalm 73:7). Asaph lost hope because always doing what

was right had only earned him suffering and affliction. But then he went into the house of the Lord and pondered God and eternity. Then his hopes were turned away from this world and anchored in eternity.

Solomon found no real hope in this world because life is brief, pleasure does not really satisfy, and wise living is no guarantee of prosperity in this life.

Can there be hope?

To be continued...

Selected from Bible Helps #471

By the Editor

MEDITATIONS

If you see a smudge on the window, first check your own glasses.

Sin must always be addressed—whether open or hidden.

The head that hangs lowest bears the heaviest grain.

Don't slam the door. You might need to go back in.

Tolerance can be an excuse for almost anything.

The Spirit is a person. His first name is “Holy.”

Never be comfortable in the presence of sin.

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.

In all of the varied scenes of life, there is something for all to do. There are responsibilities that are ours, and we do well when we attend to that which is given to us.

Often we have had to be reminded, (by parents or others) that we needed to be more engaged, because *we were not doing our part*.

Questions:

1. In the home where I am living with my spouse, *am I doing my part?*
2. At my place of employment,

where there is so much help needed always, *am I doing my part?*

3. Am I often leaving the hard work for others to do?

4. In my large extended family, with relationships and good will to maintain, *am I doing my part?*

5. In the Church of God, where the direction and health of the flock is affected by that which every member does, *am I doing my part?*

6. In my weak and stumbling life, God has done His part. *What am I doing?*

GENERAL ITEMS

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

April 26, 2025; Sugar Grove, OH
 Dale Bowman
 May 3, 2025; Cutler Ridge, IN
 Daniel and Lisa Daughtery

Aug. 24, 2025.....Stillwater, OH
 Aug. 31, 2025..... Salem, OH
 Sept. 21, 2025Bear Creek, OH
 Nov. 27, 2025Pleasant View, OH

COMMISSIONS

Apr. 12, 2025; Living Epistle, NM
 Josh Bowman (with wife Layna)
 Called to the Ministry
 Grant Flory (with wife Melanie)
 Called to the office of Deacon
 Apr. 29, 2025; Lower Twin, OH
 Eric Brubaker (with wife, Missy)
 Advanced to the second degree of
 the ministry

COMMUNION NOTICES

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..... Columbia River, WA
 Nov. 1, 2025..... Kidron Valley, KS
 Nov. 8, 2025..... Covington, OH
 Nov. 8, 2025..... Shenandoah, VA
 Nov. 8, 2025..... West Modesto, CA
 Nov. 15, 2025..... Fall Creek, IN
 Jan. 31, 2026 Pinegrove, FL

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

DISTRICT NOTICE

Mountain View District, Idaho *Notice of 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. 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 (208-610-9572), to learn more details or offer to help. You may contact our food and lodging coordinator, sister Rochelle Wray (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

HOPE

hope

Hope has been fought for
(a brutal battle)

It does not flit about lightly as a butterfly. Suffering and endurance says there is nothing light or momentary about hope. To have confident expectation in the face of deep suffering in which you can barely stand let alone walk through, this is a tooth and nail fight. To stubbornly cling to hope in the middle of visceral heartache and pain—this is an abounding that does not look pretty on the outside.

There is dirt in our hair, scratches on our bodies, wounds which are not healed perfectly, and bruising which aches at the merest touch. It is pain that chooses trust.

Just as Jesus was marred beyond recognition and the Father looked on and saw Beauty; so I, too, look at that stooped, broken, bleeding body carrying a cross on which He was to die (and yet live again) and call Him Beautiful.

Only there can I trust the Father is doing the same for me. Trust He looks down at my broken endurance, the many times I've fallen (and don't want to get up), the dirtiest I feel, yet HOPE, scarred and glorious, sitting on the right hand of God welcomes me in and calls me Beloved sees resilience

for this
for Him

I glory back the renewed hope which fills me full to overflowing; it does not erase my scars, my bruises are still tender, I am likely to fall down again but Jesus that resurrected JESUS that glorious One who calls me and fills me and draws me onward, stumbling though I am...

HE IS HOPE

and therefore
"I shall not be shaken"

Psalm 16
Kara Boone

OBITUARIES

COVER — Leslie Eugene

Our precious Leslie, one of God's useful vessels, passed peacefully through the gates to his eternal home on February 7, 2025, while 4 generations of those he loved watched in wonder. He no longer needed the comfortable home he built for his family—he was going "HOME!"

Leslie Eugene Cover was born January 21, 1934 to Joseph Immel and Weltha Marion (Upton) Cover, completing their family of four boys and two girls. His early days were spent in pleasant rural activities in a happy home on a small peach orchard on Standiford Avenue, Modesto, California, during the Great Depression.

Leslie was 13 in 1947 when they moved to Mi-Wuk Village, California. He attended Sonora High and graduated at the top of his Class of 1951. Les began his 26 year career serving customers at Mundorf's Hardware, downtown Sonora.

Leslie answered his Savior's call, was baptized on December 23, 1951, becoming a lifetime member of the Old Brethren Church. He purposed to be in his place on the Lord's Day and was present on his last Sunday! His was a disciplined, daily, devotional desire to serve his Lord. "Out of bed, on your knees."

During the Korean conflict, he was granted CO status and served as an orderly at the massive Los Angeles General Hospital. For two

years he transported patients from the Emergency Department to their designated rooms on one of the 19 floors.

In April 1959 he brought his folks to Ontario, Canada, for a church weekend. It was the Baker's maple syrup season and he stayed on, beginning a friendship with Martha before he left. What followed was over five years of correspondence in an era before frequent travel and long distant phone calls. Recently he has re-read these precious letters aloud to Martha while she prepared their meals close by.

Leslie and Martha were married in the Cober Church near Maple, Ontario, Canada, on June 6, 1964, and settled at Rudy's Cover's Apple Ranch, Tuolumne, California. He built their home where they enjoyed their five children and welcomed guests from around the world. "Our lives are for others" became a family motto. Company shared our food and worship, singing hymns each evening.

Writing not only won the heart and devotion of his life companion but he was used as a dedicated editor of *The Pilgrim*, our church paper, for over 60 years, beginning in June, 1963. It was a monthly appointment throughout their marriage cultivating a unique, warm bond with the members.

The congregation elected Leslie to the ministry on October 29, 1971. This responsibly was not

taken lightly for the rest of his life. If he wasn't in his home pulpit he was usually serving in another, across the brotherhood and beyond. He considered it a blessed privilege to practice the Ordinances. His humility was a passport into the hearts, homes and pulpits around the nation. His sermons were convicting, anointed, simple. He was burdened for the lost and the young people, urging to holiness, pointing to Christ his Redeemer.

He left his secure job at Munderdorf's Mercantile in August, 1979, and became "Uncle Leslie" as he pioneered the one room Old Brethren Christian School in the basement of our Mi-Wuk Village Church. He was their bus driver for 18 of the 22 years that he taught Grades one through twelve. Daily devotions at school and the solid hymns will stay with our students for life!

This challenge won him a special place as speaker at school meetings around the country and after his retirement he was involved with Christian Light Education on tour visiting schools throughout Canada, the U.S., and Mexico, and five trips teaching pastors and teachers in Haiti. He was translated into at least five different languages as he ministered. He was on the Advisory Board for Christian Light Education, and compiled a history of our Brethren beginnings in Europe that is used as a high school elective.

Retiring from teaching he became a volunteer at the Long Term Care units, read to patients in the Cancer Center and was ac-

tive with the Spiritual Care Team of our local Adventist Health Sonora Hospital. His prayers included "...that they may come to know Jesus Christ." Frequently someone would mention to us in town that Leslie had read to them or their loved one when they were receiving lengthy infusions. He was playfully named "The Plant Manager," watering indoor plants throughout the hospital.

Few can say they heard him speak unkindly of anyone. Or mock another. He was kind to all. Milking his cow at the barn was a therapeutic reliever of the stress of teaching and pastoring.

The last several years have taken a toll on his hearing and memory. He was uncomfortable with Atrial Fibrillation and congestive heart failure. But he accepted this with grace and was always grateful and peaceful, like his best friend, Jesus. "How much I owe unending love!" His family honored him with loving support in his sunset years. On his last day he was praying, reciting Scriptures, and he sang with us. "May His be all the glory from our lives!"

Leslie is the last of his siblings to be gathered home: Rudy, Chester, Lois (Shirk) Mohler, Anna Bither and Joe. Going ahead are two stillborn grandsons, Enoch Cover and Ernest Martin. Those who miss him keenly are his wife, Martha; children, Rosanna (Sam) Royer, of Nappanee, Indiana, Ina (Kevin) Martin, New Paris, Indiana, Peter (Denita) Cover, Tuolumne, California, Sarah (Matthew) Martin, Hollansburg,

Ohio, and Rhoda (Philip) Huffman, New Lebanon, Ohio; 41 prayed-over grandchildren (who were all with us for his funeral!), and 27 great-grandchildren. In-laws are Carol Cover of Tuolumne, California, Paul and Mary Baker of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, David and Mary Ann Martin of Dalton, Ohio, and John and Elizabeth Drudge of Wroxeter, Ontario, Canada.

We are left with the challenge to carry on his ministry of love and unity. We have lost a fervent evangelist, a gifted teacher, a motivational speaker, a peaceful counselor, a man of prayer, and gentle friend. "It was the Master in the man." His living was consistent with the values he taught. "Thank you, Lord, for your mercy and grace" was a prayer on his lips. We can think of no greater memorial to Leslie than to have someone, or all, give their heart to the Lord he loved! *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."*

Funeral services were conducted February 14 by nephews, and he was gently laid to rest in the Wood Colony Cemetery, Modesto, California.

The Family

METZGER — Ellen Josephine (Barnhart), was born on August 5, 1947, in Greenville, Ohio, to Roy and Ola (Brubaker) Barnhart. In the fall of 1951 she moved to Cedar Creek, Kansas with her family. On December 24, 1967, she

committed her life to the Lord and was baptized by Clyde Hirt, becoming a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. She moved back to Ohio in 1969 to the Upper Twin district. During this time, she met her life companion, Mark Metzger and they were married on September 25, 1971, at her parents' home in Kansas. Mark had previously begun his alternate (non-military) service in Pennsylvania and she moved back there with him, to finish his service. Mark's commitment ended in November of 1972, after which, they moved back to Ohio and settled in the Lower Twin district. Their marriage was blessed with one daughter and two sons. They lived 33 years on the farm until moving to their current home. They had another 20 years together until Mom's passing from this life into eternity on March 8, 2025, in their home, at the age of 77 years, 7 months and 3 days.

She was preceded in death by her parents; parents-in-law, Dennis and Leah Metzger; brother-in-law, David Hirt; grandson, Jordan Metzger; great-granddaughter, Adelyn Bowman.

She is survived by her husband; her children, Carrie (Robert) Bowman, Jonathan (Melanie) Metzger, David (Nikki) Metzger; grandchildren, Dakota (Alyssa), Brandt (Miranda), and Colton Bowman; Megan, Brendan, Logan, Tyler, Carson, Bennett, and Landon Metzger; Kynlee, Kamryn, Kiptyn, and Crosby Metzger; great-grandchildren, Beckett and Oakley Bowman, Sadie Bowman;

brothers and sisters, Carol (Dean) Brubaker, Erma Hirt, Richard (Linda) Barnhart, Linda Barnhart, Janet (Terry) Kellerman, and Daniel (Judy) Barnhart; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Marvin (Sharon) Metzger, Merlin (Mary Ann) Metzger, Marilyn (Ronald) Brubaker and Melvin (Rebecca) Metzger.

Mom cared deeply for her children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and many friends. She made lots of phone calls and sent many cards, often including a bookmark, to show her love and care. Before her health began declining in 2013, she enjoyed cooking, sewing, art, and various other activities. She always liked traveling with husband/family and singing was a favorite, even to her last hour.

Considering Mom's Alzheimer's diagnosis along with congestive heart failure, we count it a blessing that God chose to call her Home, in His perfect time. With her passing, God has closed a chapter in our lives, and she will be greatly missed, but we are so thankful for the hope we have, that she is in heaven with her Savior.

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

The funeral service was held at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at the Lower Twin Old German Baptist Brethren Church meeting house, Preble County, Ohio. The burial followed in the adjoining church cemetery.

MILLER — Curtis Lynn, age 88 of Troy, Ohio, passed away Wednesday, March 19, 2025. Curtis was born in Logansport, Indiana, on December 20, 1936, to the (late) John and Orpha (Jones) Miller. He was a graduate of Waverly High School, Indiana, Class of 1954, and was a member of Covington District, Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Curtis was a lifelong farmer, who enjoyed being outside and working with his hands. He especially enjoyed spending time with his family.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Bonnie (Kitchel) Miller in 2014; and grandson, Austin Miller.

Curtis is survived by his nine children, Emily and Dave Wirick of Union City, Ohio, Colleen and Roger Holsinger of Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky, Rachel Miller of Richardson, Texas, Neil Miller of Jacksonville, Florida, Molly and Russ Garber of Edgewood, Texas, Mark Miller and Heather of Covington, Ohio, Matt and Sarah Miller of Greenville, Ohio, Carrie Miller of Terrell, Texas, and Adrian Miller of Troy, Ohio; 12 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; half-sister, Rhoda and Dennis Bowerman of Bradford, Ohio; step-sister, Lisa and Mike Downham of Logansport, Indiana; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Funeral Services were held on March 24 at the Covington District, with Ministers Randy Garber and Steve Kingery officiating at the church and Gary Stull at the grave. Interment was in the Sugar Grove Cemetery near Pleasant Hill, Miami County, Ohio.

HESS — Rachel Mae (Buckingham), was born October 14, 1966, in Hart, Michigan. She was a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church at the Walnut Creek District. On January 20, 1996, she was united in marriage to Tommy Hess. This union was blessed with five children. They enjoyed 29 years together starting in the Falling Spring district in Pennsylvania, and then in 2012 moving to the Walnut Creek district in Missouri.

Two days before Thanksgiving in 2024 we learned of stage four cancer through the body. A week and a half later she called for the anointing service which brought her much comfort. She died peacefully at home on April 11, 2025, making her sojourn 58 years, 5 months, and 4 weeks.

Left to mourn her passing are her husband; four children, Kevin (Sharon), Ryan (Kaitlyn), Jason, and Katelyn; three grandchildren, Jasper, Becca, and Tadd; mother-

in-law, Naomi Hess; also her siblings, brothers-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were an infant son, Aaron Paul, her parents, Wayne and Cheryl Buckingham; a sister, Leah (Mike) Heisey; a brother, Aaron Buckingham; father-in-law Lloyd Hess; brother-in-law, Daniel Hess, Sr.; and a grandson, Xavier Hess.

She deeply loved and served her family and will be missed by all.

A viewing was held at brother Michael Berry's home in Chillicothe, Missouri, and then a viewing and funeral at Falling Spring Meeting House, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. She was laid to rest in the Old Brown's Mill Cemetery near Kauffman Station, Pennsylvania, next to her infant son, Aaron.

"The LORD giveth, and the LORD taketh away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."

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

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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