

THE TESTIMONY

...of thy mouth." Psalm 119:88

VERSE OF THE MONTH

"...A certain nobleman went into a far country...And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." Luke 19:12-13

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"Doe Ye Nexte Thyng"

(Do The Next Thing)

Mrs. George A. Paull

From an old English parsonage down by the sea
There came in the twilight a message to me;
Its quaint Saxon legend, deeply engraven,
Hath, it seems to me, teaching from Heaven.
And on through the hours the quiet words ring
Like a low inspiration: "Doe ye nexte thyng."

Many a questioning, many a fear,
Many a doubt, hath its quieting here.
Moment by moment, let down from Heaven,
Time, opportunity, guidance, are given.
Fear not tomorrows, child of the King,
Trust them with Jesus, "Doe ye nexte thyng."

Oh! He would have thee daily more free,
Knowing the might of thy royal degree,
Ever in waiting, glad for His call,
Tranquil in chastening, trusting through all.
Comings and goings no turmoil need bring;
His, all the future: "Doe ye nexte thyng."

Do it immediately, do it with prayer;
Do it reliantly, casting all care;
Do it with reverence, tracing His hand
Who placed it before thee with earnest command.
Stayed on Omnipotence, safe 'neath His wing,
Leave all resultings, "Doe ye nexte thyng."

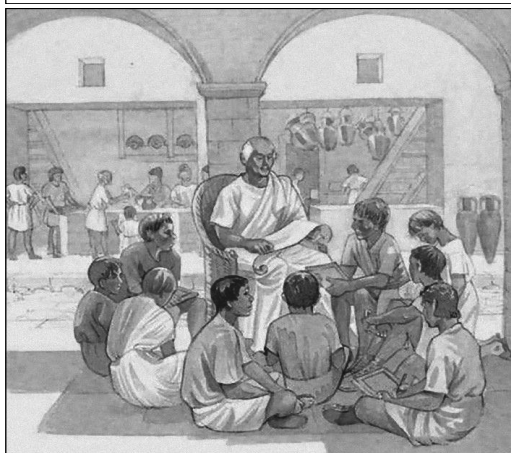
Looking to Jesus, ever serener,
Working or suffering, be thy demeanor;
In His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
The light of His countenance, live out thy psalm,
Strong in His faithfulness, praise and sing.
Then, as He beckons thee, "Doe ye nexte thyng."

Selected by Allison Markley

THE TESTIMONY

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“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.”

Col. 3:16

EDITORIAL

BACK TO SCHOOL

Summer break is now over. It's time to get back to school—a time of studying and learning, and a time of renewing friendships. Some are looking forward to returning to school, while others are not. When school starts, it's not uncommon for teachers to ask their students about their time off during the summer. Did they enjoy it? Did they take any trips? What did they learn?

The above refers to schoolchildren, but what about we who have graduated? Graduated? Have we really? No, our whole life is a process of learning, and we don't really graduate until our life is complete. Like schoolchildren, we can learn by applying ourselves to reading, studying, and listening, or our learning can come automatically by experiences and mistakes.

I hope that we have not taken a long summer break as schoolchildren have! Paul tells us in I Timothy 4:13, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." Occasionally we need a short break for rest and relaxation, but I trust that it will not be at the expense of our spiritual life and growth. Let's read and study the Scriptures every day! I pray that we will all have as much love and desire for God's Word as King David had. Multiple times in the Psalms, he said, "Teach me thy way, O LORD," and "...teach me

thy paths," and "...teach me thy statutes." He also wrote, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). What is the first and last thing we read each day? Is it God's Word, or is it the news, or some other book? "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

Sometimes, the best way we learn is through the "school of hard knocks." Hard times, difficulties, trials, and even tragedies, can teach us the best lessons. May we always look for the good in these lessons, grow thereby, and become better—not bitter. The lessons learned here usually are the easiest to remember.

Let's consider who our teachers are now that we no longer attend school. In our daily lives we have many teachers. They could be our parents, spouse, siblings, preachers, friends, co-workers, the author of a book, or others. Sometimes our own children teach us a lesson. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings..." can come some bits of wisdom. We need to be careful about the things we learn from all sources other than from the Lord and compare their teachings with the Word of God like the brethren at Berea did (in Acts 17:11). May Jesus be our main Teacher! His desire is to teach us, because He said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and

ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mat. 11:29).

Even nature is another teacher, as I Corinthians 11:14 says, "Doth not even nature itself teach you..." Job declares, in chapter 12, that God's creation also teaches us. "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee." David, too, tells us that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Ps. 19:1).

As we continue to learn throughout life, may our focus be to learn from the Lord! And as we learn from His Word, may we not only be hearers, but doers also. Knowledge alone is not beneficial. It must be applied to our lives and shared with others. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:1-2).

Darryl Filbrun

GENERAL

THE BOOK TO THE HEBREWS

TO WHOM WAS THE BOOK OF HEBREWS WRITTEN?

The Book of Hebrews was written with a Christ-centered message. It was written, of course, to all people. But there are features of the book which make us believe it was written with a special message to the Hebrews, to the Jews then and to Jews today. Written to the converted and to the unconverted Jews, it was intended especially for those Jewish converts known in the early Church as "Judaizers"—Jews converted to Christianity who insisted that Gentile converts must observe certain aspects of the Law. They held to circumcision, observance of special days as the sabbath, and certain dietary practices. It is also written to Jews today including Zionist Israel. The author was well versed in the Hebrew writings—

Torah, History, Poets, and Prophets. We count at least forty-four quotations in the book of Hebrews directly from the Old Bible, in addition to other references. The epistles of Paul, Peter, John, James, and Jude were written primarily to Gentile Christians. Hebrews was written to converted and unconverted Hebrews as well as to Gentile believers. This book was intended to be best understood by people steeped in the Law. We, as Christians today, are more or less familiar with Hebrew Scriptures. But in the time Hebrews was written, Gentiles were not so versed in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Book of Hebrews has a special message to Jews today.

One of the intents of the Book of Hebrews was to convince the Jews, both converts to Christianity and unconverted, that there is now a better way than the tradition they had received. There was a Better Revelation (Heb. 1:1-4), a

Better Hope (7:19), a Better Priesthood (7:20–28), a Better Covenant (8:6), a Better Promise (8:6), a Better Sacrifice (9:23), a Better Possession (10:34), a Better Country (11:16), a Better Resurrection (11:35). This better way is contrasted to the old Hebrew way, a way that the Jews in that day could understand, but which Gentiles then (and perhaps we as well) could not fully appreciate.

BY WHOM WAS THE BOOK OF HEBREWS WRITTEN?

It is commonly taught today that the author of the book of Hebrews is unknown. Though it is nowhere stated to be from his pen, it was formerly believed to have been written by the Apostle Paul. It has been suggested (by scholars of the Middle Ages but without substance) to be the work of Luke, Barnabas, Apollos, or Aquilla and Pricilla. It was, early on, placed among the letters of Paul, immediately after the letter to the Romans and just before the first letter to the Corinthians. Later it was moved to a more neutral position following Paul's letters and preceding the letters of James, Peter, John, and Jude. Christopher Saur (Sower), the early Brethren printer, stated in the first printing of his German Bible in 1743, "Written from Italy by Timothy. The end of the Epistle of S. Paul to the Hebrews." The KJV ends with the words, "Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy." Perhaps "transcribed by Timothy" would be better than the implied "authored." Later versions omit this statement altogether. We believe the predominance of

evidence suggests the author was Paul. Paul's letters all begin with a greeting including "grace," "peace," and usually, "mercy." The book of Hebrews includes this as a benediction (13:25) saying, "Grace be with you all. Amen." In further support, the author refers to his spiritual "brother" Timothy (13:23). It was probably written from Rome (13:24). The author may not have known Jesus himself. He states in 2:3, "...[which] was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."

A SYNOPSIS OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

In chapter 1:1–2 the author immediately refers to the Hebrew "fathers" and the prophets and identifies with his readership as "us." In the first chapter alone, he quotes seven times from the books of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets.

In the second chapter he identifies as "we" saying, "We should pay heed to the things that we have heard and not let them slip." He cites four Scriptures from the Old Bible in this chapter. He introduces Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God—Messiah, the "captain of their salvation [made] perfect through sufferings." In the sixteenth verse the author ties Jesus Messiah with Abraham, the one whom all Hebrews claimed as "our father Abraham." In the seventeenth verse he identifies Jesus with the priesthood, an office dear to all Jewry, identifying Him as the "...faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Jesus the carpenter's son, a High Priest!

In the third, fourth, and first part of the fifth chapters the author continues to quote freely from the Old Scriptures, here linking Jesus to Moses, and to the high priesthood of Aaron. Near the end of the fifth chapter he introduces Melchisedec, a mysterious individual from Genesis 14 and Psalm 110:4. We were recently introduced to the thought by a brother in his preaching that this High Priest Melchizedek might have been the appearance of Jesus Christ Himself in the same manner as that “man” which appeared to Abraham in Genesis 18, There “...the LORD appeared unto [Abraham] in the plains of Mamre...” There “...the men turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.” Such an appearance in the Old Bible of the person of the Godhead to men is called a “Theophany.” Perhaps the priest Melchizedek was the appearance of God, in person, to Abraham, here referenced in this book to the Hebrews. This priest Melchizedek “received tithes of Abraham” long before the Mosaic Law was established and long before the Aaronic and Levitical Priesthoods ever existed. Undoubtedly, the Hebrews reading this book understood exactly what the author was referring to.

Chapters eight and nine go into the Old Law in even greater detail—sometimes in ways difficult for the Gentiles of that day (and perhaps for us today) to fully understand. At the end of the ninth chapter (9:28) the author con-

cludes, “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” The priesthood, sacrifice, atonement, and salvation are all wrapped up in one Man—Jesus the Messiah.

In the tenth chapter the author confronts the imperfect priesthood, the imperfect sacrifice, and the imperfect Law. “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” He then clinches this claim by saying, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” And “In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.” And “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” And yet again, “...every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins...” The author is presenting to the Jews of his day and today the Better Way, by quoting from their own Scriptures.

The eleventh chapter is the Hall of Faith. In it the author shows how God developed a Hebrew lineage for Messiah. The author concludes, “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” He is telling

his fellow Jews (note “us” twice) that the Levitical high priest has been replaced by the High Priest Jesus Christ after the order of that mysterious Priest to whom their “father, Abraham” was subservient. The old veil of the temple had been replaced by the veil of “His flesh” (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38). The ashes of a red heifer and the blood of bulls of goats cannot take away sins—never could. Israel placed great stock in their lineage to Abraham. And yet “Melchizedek” (appearing to Abraham in the person of Jehovah) existed from eternity past. (Heb. 1:10).

In the twelfth chapter the author presents a powerful message to his Jewish readers by appealing again to that “great cloud of witnesses” in chapter 11. He goes back to before the beginning of creation, referring to Jesus the “author of our faith” (12:2, existing before the faith of their “Father Abraham”). Back beyond Sinai and back before the imperfect Law.

In the thirteenth chapter the author refers again to the appearance of the LORD to Abraham in Genesis 18, where he entertained strangers (see also Heb. 13:2) and refers back also to the bonds of those who suffered adversity, and to meats, and serving the altar and the tabernacle. Compare Leviticus 4:21 to Hebrews 13:11, “... the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.” The holy place, the tabernacle, the temple, even the holy city Jerusa-

lem were no longer of any avail. The True Sacrifice is the Lamb of God, the Better Way (13:12–14).

As was the practice of Paul in all his epistles, the early chapters of the Book of Hebrews focus on the background and setting of his message. Likewise, in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters he addresses the message of the Gospel with practical applications. While the first eleven chapters of the book were written primarily to the Jews (Hebrews) of that day, the last two chapters serve to bring Jewish converts to Jesus Christ and into the grace of God. “And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant...that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant...” Jesus is The Better Way!

DOES THE BOOK TO THE HEBREWS APPLY TO ISRAEL TODAY?

Certainly, it does! All Scripture is for all time. The Hebrews to whom this book was first written were having difficulty forsaking the Abrahamic/Mosaic covenants and embracing the Grace of God. Those were replaced by the death of Jesus on the cross. Paul, whose ministry was first to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46), also had a heart for his own people, Israel (Rom. 10:1). But in all his epistles to the Gentiles he warned of the dangerous doctrines taught by the Judaizers. In Hebrews Paul, out of love for his own people, tried to show them the Better Way. He may have known that, in their zeal for the Law, Israel would struggle for millennia to come—even to this pre-

sent age. And this is why the Book of Hebrews is so important to Zionist Israel today.

In Hebrews 9:24–25 we read, “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands [tabernacle, temple, holy place, and holy of holies] which are the figures [only shadows] of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others.” Under the Better Covenant the temple, the holy place, and the most holy place were done away. There is no longer a need for a tabernacle or a temple. Those were “made with hands” (9:24). They were but figures of the True Temple which had now already come when Paul authored this book—a temple “not made with hands” (9:11). Paul was telling Israel then and now, that there is no longer need for the old temple, the old holy place, the old holy of holies, the old sacrifices.

The same verses speak concerning the priesthood. Paul is saying Christ is not of Aaron’s priesthood. Christ is of the tribe of Judah, not of Levi. Jesus is of an everlasting Priesthood from before the foundation of the earth. Furthermore, He is the perfect and complete sacrifice. Paul is saying to Israel, there is now no need for the rebuilding of a temple. There is no need to reestablish a priesthood. There is no need to reinstitute a sacrifice.

We must address the sacrifice itself. The Old Book describes sac-

rifice in great detail. The author in 9:13–15 and 10:4 refers to “the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer.” But he dismisses the sacrificial Law indisputably by simply stating “...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Today, we hear reports that Zionist Israel is seeking a pure red heifer for the atonement of sin. But “[Christ] taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” In the next verses the author states that the same old sacrifices “can never take away sins: But this man [Jesus], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God...” The Law is one of the things Jesus meant when He said, “It is finished!”

So, why rebuild a temple? The answer we usually hear is, “To reestablish the priesthood and to restore the sacrifice.” From Scripture we see that Christ is the Eternal Priest and He is the Complete Sacrifice. We do not doubt that zealous men may attempt to rebuild a temple. Zealous men even now may be doing DNA studies to reestablish a Levitical priesthood. Zionist Israel may be looking for a pure red heifer, one without a single white hair.

But we read in Romans 8:3–9, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit..." etc. Not after the Letter of the Law but after the Spirit of Grace.

We read in Hebrews 10:8–12, "Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not [God would not desire], neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all..." etc.

SOME SERIOUS ISSUES FOR ISRAEL CONCERNING LAW AND GRACE.

The message of Paul to Israel today is this, that by returning to the Law, and the priesthood, and the sacrifice, they make of no effect the commandments and promises of Grace. But worst of all, they defile the blood of Jesus's sacrifice on the cross. Paul states to the Hebrews (10:28–29), "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

We do not claim to be gifted in understanding prophecy. Blessings on those who think they are

so gifted! But consider that Paul says in Hebrews 4:14–16, "...we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God..." etc. With that, consider the Revelation 21:22, "...the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of [the Holy City]." We are assured by Hebrews 10:10 that "...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 8:1–2 reads, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest [Jesus], who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens [the Temple]; A minister of the sanctuary [the Priest], and of the true tabernacle [where sacrifice is made], which the Lord pitched, and not man." Then in the Revelation there is the promise of blessings to those who believe and worship the Lamb. On the other hand, the Wrath of God is yet reserved for those who reject the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. In I Thessalonians 5:9–10 we read, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake [are raptured] or sleep [die and are resurrected], we should live together with him." Wrath is for unbelievers—Gentiles or Jews.

By far the larger part of the Revelation is filled with seals, and trumpets, and thunders, and plagues, and vials, and judgments. These represent the Wrath of God poured out someday on those who reject the "Spirit of Grace" (Heb. 10:29) and despise His sacrifice.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the sacrifice for every Hebrew and every Gentile. Israelites still deny Messiah, their Great High Priest, the Temple of God, and the Sacrifice of The Lamb on the cross. In I John 2:22 we read, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." (He who rejects Jesus rejects God Himself. See John 10 and 17 and other references.) In Colossians 3:6 we read, "...For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

There is a parenthetical statement in Hebrews 3:7–11 which speaks to unbelieving Israel at that time and today. "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness..." etc. I believe this applies to Israel today. I believe the Book to the Hebrews was written by someone with a special heart for the Hebrews. I believe the author was probably Paul who also wrote in Romans 10:21, "But to Israel [God] saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." The Book of Hebrews was written primarily to the Hebrews!

As to the fulfillment of prophecy, I prefer to leave that to God. But it seems to me that the Book to the Hebrews is prophetic, speaking much to the end times, and all readers would do well to heed its message.

The Bible is Truth for all time and for all peoples.

Marcus Miller

BIBLICAL BEHAVIOR

(Part 9)

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

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

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

As we mentioned before, the apostles used the word "conversation" to describe behavior. In the Greek it is the word *anastrophe* which means "behavior." *Anastrophe* is rooted in *anastrepho* which means to turn, or to turn oneself about. This implies 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 I Peter 1:15.

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation...”

This verse is nestled within a sentence that begins by exhorting us to have an eternal mindset. This mindset calls us from our previous, lustful ambitions, to a life of holiness. There is a sense of logic that is employed, that if we are called by a holy One, we should be holy as well. Perhaps this rationale comes from the idea of a rabbi calling disciples to follow him. This type of calling meant from that time forward the disciples’ lives would change. They would literally leave everything they knew and begin to follow their new teacher. Peter is calling us to this type of allegiance and change.

As we dig a little deeper into this behavior, I make three observations:

1. Not to fashion ourselves according to worldly lusts,
2. To be holy “in all manner” of behavior, and
3. To be holy because God is holy.

Peter makes the point that fashioning ourselves after the lusts of the world is a matter of absurdity. This is elucidated by Peter’s use of the word “ignorant.” I can’t say what all Peter had in mind as he used this word, but here are few ideas. Before we were saved, we

were *ignorant* of the real purpose of life. Before we were saved, we were *ignorant* of the hope of eternal life and all of its prospects. Before we were saved, *in ignorance* we chose to look away from the temporariness of this world. Before we were saved, we were *ignorant* of the blessings that ensue from living a holy life. Because of this ignorance, we focused on this world’s pleasures, since it was the only type of pleasure we had ever experienced. If we are honest with ourselves, we must acknowledge that fashioning ourselves after this world is really absurd. Even from the standpoint of the changing nature of styles and fashions—which drive the lusts and passions of the world—to try to keep up with it is foolish, not to mention that it will all pass away in due time. There are many testimonies of people, King Solomon included, who have tried every worldly pursuit to find fulfillment, only to come up empty. While Scripture does not always have to make logical sense to be accepted, I simply ask us to be sensible about this, and recognize the absurdity of such a quest. Fashioning ourselves after worldly lusts really is an exercise in futility and makes no rational sense.

We are to be holy in all manner of behavior. This would mean in our personal time, at work, at home, at church, with friends, yes, in every aspect. One fallacy we may entertain is, if I have done a pious act, I deserve a little fleshly indulgence. I am not advocating ascetism, for I know God has given

us all things richly to enjoy. However, we must never adopt a thought-pattern that says, "If I visited a widow and fixed her broken door, now I deserve to binge a little on my own lustful desires." I'll never forget years ago before I was saved, I did a chalk-talk for some young folks. It was filled with teachings of the Bible and wholesome encouragement. When I packed up my chalk and put my easel away, I met several older friends my age. That night we ended up on a country road, back a long lane, behaving in direct opposition to the encouragement I had just given to the young folks. Sad to say, I think this is that fallacy we must not adopt. I can't think of a better illustration of what not to do, in light of this teaching.

We are to be holy as God is holy. If we look at God's holiness, we must understand He is morally and purely perfect in every way. This holiness leads us to understand that His holiness makes Him separate from all others. That is why the term "holy" has come to be defined as separate or "set apart from." In the context of this passage, I believe Peter is calling us to be separate. We are to be separate from our pasts, separate from worldly lusts, or in brief, separate from sin. Since God is separate, we should be too.

Until next time, may your behavior be holy in every area of your life.

Grant Fullmer

A LESSON FROM THE KILLDEER

Most people have seen and heard a killdeer. The killdeer is a bird that calls its name as it flies over open country and farm land. This bird lives in pastures, lawns and fields. Many times they lay their eggs on gravel driveways.

When approaching a nest many people are surprised by the way this bird acts as if it has a broken wing. They are protecting the eggs or the small chicks by luring intruders away. They migrate to the South in the Fall and back North in early Spring. Incubation time is 24–26 days. The young birds look like a ball of downy fuzz and beautifully marked. They can run fast.

One early morning we looked out the kitchen window and saw two killdeer in the flower bed. They were making their loud noises when they saw us as danger. Then we saw three fuzzy baby chicks. One of the adult birds, probably the mother, immediately called out an alarming call. The small chicks ran to be completely covered and protected under her wings. Soon all the birds scurried away to safety.

What would have happened to the little chicks if they had not heeded the call of the mother bird. They may have met with a catastrophe, like the children of Israel did when they spurned Jesus's call.

We will be blessed if we accept the call from the Spirit. The Lord's return is drawing near.

Killdeer is of the plover species and has the ability to make it's

feathers rise up, making it look like a strange ball to distract a cow or horse from stepping on the nest. This is the way the adult birds protect their young.

The Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 22:6 says, "If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young."

The word "take" in the above mentioned verse is confusing and we suggest leaving them alone and let God take care of them.

Dear reader, what kind of bird do you think about that is spoken of in the Bible? Is it two small pigeons for a sacrifice? How about a sparrow that falls to the ground? Or an eagle that soars on high?

In the New Testament Jesus uses the example of a hen. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37).

So at Jesus's trial all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

We need to know Jesus and come under the shadow of His wings, for protection.

"Under the shadow of thy throne [wings], Thy saints have dwelt secure."

Marshall and Rosalene Dutter

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

Have you ever heard a matter and instead of passing judgment, as we are so often wont to do, thought to yourself, "There is more to this than I know or can see"?

The older one gets the more they see by experience that events are connected. The more "...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28), the more we understand there is a purpose.

At some point, if one continues along this line, when blessing or adversity strikes we are less likely to think "why me" and more likely to ask "Lord, what are you doing?"

What if next week you find yourself sitting in the doctor's office and the diagnosis is life changing. You have just been registered for a purpose, drafted for duty. Don't quake. If you are honest with yourself you're already going to know something is amiss. God will have prepared you that far and that's why you made an appointment to begin with. Your name is up; it is your turn.

But there you sit. While you're not going to suddenly drop dead you are facing the third leading cause of death known to man—cancer; sin being the first and heart disease the second. Combat in war is 29th. This author has seen people give and receive such news. Probably most of us have watched someone die. It's human to wonder if we'd fall apart or keep it together. You're signed up for

life, get your gear, and shoulder your pack. Doctors write orders and you just got yours.

Things get simply prioritized fast. The mind goes to what one wants to do and may not be able, and there is mourning. It thinks of cost and matters that need to be attended to in a natural way, and there is work. It considers who one may be comforted by and who should be told because it will affect others too, not necessarily in this order. There is another place the mind dwells. We've come to the conclusion that every person, believer or not, comes to this place. Some people barely give it a visit and some people make it a strong place of defense. Depending on prior life experience this may be the first place you find a person. We can determine how to comfort by knocking on its door. Well it is when they open it and we find them inside no matter their condition. The comfort is mutual even when we are met with fears and tears. Disconcerting it is when we find no one there and there is no answer. Quite often we find that person hiding in denial or delusion.

Let's go there. First, we want to say that the devil is lurking nearby. If he hasn't by now scared you with possible outcomes he will certainly try to dissuade you of resorting here. Ignore him. He's not omniscient and does not know how this is going to work together. He only knows it can be for good and doesn't want that to happen. Early on a friend sent his "life verse" in

a text, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." He knew my medical knowledge was at the moment acting more bane than blessing and I needed to consider that my understanding might not be God's plan. The devil has no power whatsoever to either kill or make alive. It is God, and only God, who controls our length of days. The devil can make them pretty miserable like he did for Job, but he cannot heal or comfort, so continue on.

There are many poetic ways to describe this place. There is *closet*, *shadow of His wings*, and other things we call that place, but it is where you meet with God. It's the place where you agree together, walk together, and commune together. This author doesn't remember not having such a place, and we associate it with survival. Others perhaps remember the day they discovered it. However it may be, the older you get, the greater the trial, the quicker you run to it.

We'd like to tell you it's a calm and peaceful place. Sometimes it's heavenly. Other times it is full of conflict and outright war between two parties, a very unpleasant place to be and neither giving an inch wrestling all night. The one unwilling to let the other go and the other standing ground, and you wonder why don't they just part ways? It's because they won't. There will be an agreement and one will come limping out with a new name and a blessing and the other will be his God. Once that is

settled it will never be quite that conflicted again. Thereafter when there is conflict it is more one sided, and we can guess who is doing the whining and sighing. Expect that to diminish and it will become more of a war council room than a battle ground.



We have seen secret places where battle plans have been made. We have an enemy the likes of which we can't fully appreciate. We just don't understand although we know a bit of the events in heaven. It may be that the vast majority of people hardly even put on armor. We are lazy soldiers and we don't want to endure the hardness. We don't want to fight. We want God to do it all. We don't want to do our duty. We fear God, yes, we do. We don't want to go to hell. We'll keep some of His commands for we like the positive ones that are easy and leave us with a warm glow, but when was the last time you resisted the devil? I don't mean turned down a temptation. I mean really resisted; stood on his toes and said, "No, no, no, you will not do that, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, depart!"

We preach nonresistance and sometimes to the point that we fail

to even wage war on the enemy of God. It's all well and good to not consort with the enemy, but if you never resist the devil you can be sure he's not going to flee. He will sit right there and be a thorn in your side just like the heathen people that Israel was supposed to run out of the Promised Land. You need to be holding a council of war and whetting your sword. It should sound like Sunday morning when all the knees hit the floor in prayer.

We once heard a man pray who worked in a prison. He had been an offender himself and left that life for a better, more God fearing one. He concluded his prayer after "Amen" with "and kick the devil." We just thought that pretty bold, in fact we liked it. Right at that moment we were in a situation where we felt we'd lost considerable ground. The thought hadn't occurred to us to even put up a little resistance, much less how to go about it, but we sure felt like doing some kicking. We are simple and not finding any special battle maneuvers. We finally concluded that it was more about firm resistance to the devil—not the evil—and rebuke in the Lord's name. Certainly, one must be of a prayerful mind and sometimes fasting. "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). Of late when we just can't seem to make any headway and we hit a wall Psalm 18:29 comes to mind, "For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall."

More often I find myself saying, “Help Lord, I can’t get through the troop” or “I can’t get over the wall.” Then sometimes things part like the Red Sea and fall down like the walls of Jericho. It’s really pretty exciting and amazing!

I am reminded of a minister of another group who once asked this question. “What if God wanted to use you and you weren’t prepared and He had to go down the street to someone else? Wouldn’t that break your heart?” Would it? Are you willing to answer the battle call? Do you want to gain ground or sit cowering in your tent?

There isn’t any mustering out after four years in the army of the living God. You want that mountain? You’ll get to take it just like Caleb. Can you say, “As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in” (Josh. 14:11)?

I’ve known a number of veterans. Some of them, by their physical shape you would never guess. Others by the physical strength they have maintained are obvious.

There is one who has never seen active battle, is far past that age, yet keeps a weapon polished and can hit a tight target because he still practices. What happens when the Christian doesn’t practice and becomes weak? He is easily defeated and it becomes revealed.

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and

keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” If we ever expect to take out giants something needs to change. This defying God and paralyzing the army of Israel needs to offend you enough to do something about it. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

Today the Israeli Defense Forces would say that the army of Israel in the valley of Elah was suffering CSR—Combat Stress Reaction—and teaches commanders how to get soldiers back into the battle.

1. Establish initial contact—the commander is going to have the soldier look at him, hear him, and respond to him.

2. Emphasize Commitment—the commander is going to look at the soldier and make sure he understands “I’m here with you.”

3. Ask for facts—the commander will ask name, company, or platoon.

4. Memory Reconstruction—the commander is going to ask the soldier to tell him what happened causing him to lose strength then repeat it sequentially and fluently.

5. Give multiple choice tasks—the commander will give him some easy tasks: wash your face, clean your weapon, etc. and ask which one he chooses to do first. Doing these, the soldier will usually begin to recover enough to go back to duty.

Read I Samuel 17 and see how David did nearly the same. The

men of Saul's army had forgotten who they were because they were consumed with who Goliath was, a giant and they could well describe his armor. They had forgotten who was with them. Not David. "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." We read of David asking the men of Israel how the battle was proceeding. It wasn't. For 40 days, twice daily Goliath would come out and rattle not only his sword but the hearts and nerves of every Israeli soldier. Once was enough to light David's fire. "This uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." He could see why his elder brethren and their compatriots were disheartened. What he wasn't willing to do was let it infect him. There were 79, nay 80, causes to go after Goliath. Why hadn't they? He put on Saul's armor and he shrugged it off respectfully choosing the armor of the Lord, well proven.

Every war of weapons begins with a battle of words and there was a sharp exchange between the two men. Indignation and particularly the righteous and self-righteous sort can leave men bursting for a fight. "And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S and he will give you into our hands." We all know the outcome. Goliath fell, the Philistines fled, and men of

Israel and Judah arose, shouted, and pursued the Philistines to Gath and the gates of Ekron, possibly some 11 miles. They returned and spoiled the tents of the enemy.

What about CSR for us?

1. Look at the Lord, listen to Him, what is your name?

2. *Fear not I am with thee, O, be not dismay'd*

For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid

I'll strengthen thee, help thee and cause thee to stand,

Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

(Hymn 526)

3. What happened? Repeat it, in order, rapidly.

4. What does God want you to do now, and which are you going to do first?

Oh watch, and fight, and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er;

Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

(Hymn 490)

We have more history, more knowledge, but what is this, *less courage*? The only conclusion one can come to is that we are no better than Saul and his troops for the same reasons.

Hark! the onset! will ye fold your
Faith clad arms in lazy lock?

Up, oh, up! thou drowsy soldier;
Worlds are charging to the shock.

(Hymn 519)

Rachel Brubaker

HOME AND FAMILY

THE BLESSINGS OF HAVING A STAY-AT-HOME MOM

“And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2:18).

Greeting in Jesus’s Name,

The intention of this article is to encourage women who stay at home and work full time as homemakers. I did not have a full-time stay-at-home mom. In addition, I have never been a stay-at-home mom. Instead, I am called to be a nurse who works full-time. That is where the Lord wants me. However, I have had the opportunity to see the blessings a stay-at-home mom can be to her husband, family, children, and her church. This writing will attempt to communicate the blessings I have observed over the years and give encouragement to women who have chosen to stay at home and be homemakers. It is not meant to discourage women who have jobs outside the home to help meet family needs or supplement their husband’s income.

Proverbs 31:13–24 says: “She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants’ ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins

with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.”

As you can see, Proverbs 31 states a Virtuous Woman can also be seen outside the home involved in commerce to supplement the household income by seeking and buying articles in order to make, deliver, and sell goods and services.

Genesis 2:18 states women are to be a help meet for their husbands. This means she is to be a helper suited to, worthy of, or corresponding to him. She is an extra pair of hands, and does what her husband cannot do without her. This would include bearing children, managing the household, and other duties too many to list.

Titus 2:4–5 states that young women should be taught by the older women, “That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste,

keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.”

This article is to highlight the blessings I have seen over the years from many different families who have a stay-at-home mom in our modern world where dual-income households have become normal and expected.

The presence of a stay-at-home mom can provide a multitude of blessings, influencing the family dynamic in profound and positive ways. These blessings span from the emotional and psychological well-being of children to the overall harmony and stability within the family unit.

EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN

One of the most significant blessings of having a stay-at-home mom is the emotional and psychological stability it affords children. The presence of a consistent caregiver provides children with a sense of security and attachment. According to attachment theory, children form stronger emotional bonds and a secure base for exploring their world when they have a primary caregiver who is reliably present. This secure attachment fosters trust, reduces anxiety, and encourages healthy social and emotional development. Furthermore, stay-at-home moms can offer personalized and attentive care that addresses the unique needs of each child. When mothers are available to engage with their children throughout the

day, they can more effectively monitor and respond to developmental milestones, behavioral issues, and educational needs, ensuring that each child receives the necessary support and guidance.

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANTAGES

The involvement of a stay-at-home mom in a child's early education can lead to notable academic advantages. Research has shown that children whose mothers are more involved in their early learning experiences tend to perform better academically. Stay-at-home moms have the flexibility to create enriching learning environments at home, introduce educational activities, and cultivate a love for learning. They can also volunteer in school settings, allowing for greater involvement in their children's education and a closer partnership with teachers.

Socially, children benefit from the guidance of a stay-at-home mom in developing essential life skills. The mother's presence enables her to teach and reinforce manners, social norms, and conflict resolution skills. By organizing playdates, activities, and family gatherings, stay-at-home moms facilitate the development of social skills and friendships in a structured and supportive environment. This active engagement helps children navigate social interactions more effectively and fosters a sense of community and belonging.

FAMILY COHESION AND STABILITY

The decision for a mother to stay at home can also significantly enhance family cohesion and stability. When one parent dedicates their time to managing the household and caring for the children, it can alleviate stress and balance family dynamics. Stay-at-home moms often assume the role of family organizer, ensuring that daily routines run smoothly and that all family members' needs are met. This organizational role is crucial in maintaining a stable and harmonious home environment.

Additionally, stay-at-home moms contribute to the emotional well-being of their husbands. With one parent taking charge of household responsibilities, the working parent can focus on their job without the added pressure of balancing home duties. This division of labor can lead to a more equitable and less stressful partnership, fostering a stronger marital relationship. The presence of a stay-at-home mom can also mean more quality family time, as she can coordinate family activities and ensure that time spent together is meaningful and fulfilling.

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

The long-term benefits of having a stay-at-home mom extend beyond the immediate household. Children who grow up with a stay-at-home mom often carry forward the values and skills imparted during their upbringing. They

tend to exhibit higher levels of empathy, responsibility, and social competence as they mature. The strong familial bonds and the nurturing environment established during their formative years lay the foundation for their future relationships and personal development.

Moreover, stay-at-home moms often serve as role models for their children, demonstrating the importance of selflessness, dedication, and the value of family. These lessons can inspire children to prioritize family and community in their own lives, perpetuating a cycle of strong familial and societal values.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the blessings of having a stay-at-home mom are multifaceted, impacting the emotional, psychological, academic, and social development of children, as well as enhancing family cohesion and stability. The role of a stay-at-home mom, though often undervalued in modern society, remains a cornerstone of nurturing and sustaining healthy, well-rounded individuals and harmonious family units.

God bless each of our stay-at-home moms and homemakers for your sacrifice and service to your families. May your children rise up and call you blessed.

Tracy Beaver

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

June 2, 2024; Cascade Valley, WA
 Theo Garber
 June 2, 2024; West Manchester, IN
 Grace Fingerle, Selah Fingerle
 July 11, 2024; Living Epistle, NM
 Marcus Miller
 July 19, 2024; Lower Twin, OH
 Ezra Brubaker
 July 20, 2024; Fair Haven, KS
 Kobe Wray
 July 24, 2024; Living Epistle, NM
 Celeste Flory
 Aug. 4, 2024; Modesto, CA
 Austin Skiles, Jackson Brubaker,
 Truman Long
 Aug. 9, 2024; Sugar Grove, OH
 Josie Boone

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

July 20, 2024; Shenandoah, VA
 Wyatt and Sheri Bowman
 July 22, 2024; Morning Star, OH
 Paul and Rozella Dickerson
 July 25, 2024; Sugar Grove, OH
 Chad and Deborah Miller
 July 26, 2024; Modesto, CA
 Jeremy Shuman, Brenda Shuman

COMMISSIONS

July 25, 2024; Shiloh, OH
 Jesse Turner (with wife Katie)
 Advanced to the second degree of
 the Ministry
 Bruce Meador (with wife Lindsey)
 Ordained to the Eldership

COMMUNIONS

Sept. 14, 2024..... Providence, IN
 Sept. 28, 2024..... Pleasant View, OH
 Oct. 12, 2024..... Lower Twin, OH

Oct. 12, 2024 Zillah, WA
 Oct. 19, 2024 Clearwater, IN
 Oct. 19, 2024 Western Kansas, KS
 Oct. 26, 2024 Maple Grove, OH
 Oct. 26, 2024 Stillwater, OH
 Nov. 2, 2024..... Bethel, OH
 Nov. 2, 2024..... Columbia River, WA
 Nov. 2, 2024..... Kidron Valley, KS
 Nov. 9, 2024..... West Modesto, CA
 Nov. 9, 2024..... Covington, OH
 Nov. 9, 2024..... Shenandoah, VA
 Feb. 1, 2025 Living Epistle, NM
 Feb. 1, 2025 Pinegrove, FL
 Feb. 22, 2025 West Manchester, IN
 Mar. 22, 2025 Sugar Grove, OH
 Apr. 12, 2025 Fair Haven, KS

HARVEST MEETINGS

Sept. 22, 2024..... Bear Creek, OH
 Nov. 28, 2024..... Pleasant View, OH

SUGAR GROVE DISTRICT NOTICE

Greetings to the New Conference members and friends.

The Sugar Grove congregation voiced to make some changes to our meeting schedule.

We will have night meetings on the third Sunday, of the odd months of the year (January, March, May, July, September, and November). We will continue to meet at 6:30 P.M. and have a snack/fellowship time in the basement afterward.

We also voiced to move our regular communion date to the weekend of the fourth Sunday in March.

You are always welcome to worship with us at any of our worship services!

On behalf of the Sugar Grove Congregation,

Rodney Sprenkel

2024 OGBBC—NC CONFERENCE

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance from 2023	\$16,892.98
Call for funds.....	\$321,000.00
Donations	\$15,822.16
Lodging Receipts	\$108,373.00
Total.....	\$462,088.14

Expenses

Insurance.....	\$2,235.40
Thank You Donations	\$1,750.00
Cedarville Food.....	\$159,628.97
YF and Preteen Food	\$25,387.50
Cedarville Facility Rent.....	\$28,992.00
Cedarville Services	\$21,924.08
Cedarville Lodging	\$99,549.00
Communion Committee.....	\$1,054.45

Food Committee.....	\$312.99
Lodging Committee	\$1,826.56
Transportation Committee.....	\$8,160.00
Nursery Committee.....	\$137.69
Usher Committee	\$290.00
Pre-teen Committee	\$0.00
Young Folks Committee	\$4,849.36
First Aid Committee.....	\$691.76
YF Kit Packing Donations.....	\$13,977.60
New Trailer for Supplies.....	\$11,475.00
Sign Up Genius.....	\$119.96
COA Committee.....	\$791.25
Total.....	\$383,153.57

Ending Balance\$78,934.57

—Troy Denlinger, Treasurer

MEDITATIONS

“Oh, when shall I see Jesus?” Lost souls sing only, “Shall I see Jesus?”

Did the couple at Cana know Who they had invited to the wedding?

Your church is bigger than the place you meet on Sunday.

The world is not falling apart. It’s falling into place.

When saying a prayer doesn’t work, say another.

Every relationship boils down to Trust.

Humility heals all hurts.

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.

II Timothy 3:1–4 says that “...in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God...”

In looking back through both secular and sacred history, it seems

that these conditions have always existed among men. This raises a question for the saints in the battle in this last day.

1. If all of these conditions have always existed, then what makes these last days more perilous?
2. God is still with us. Why are these days more perilous?
3. Is there an increase of this evil?
4. Is the evil more open or deceptive?
5. What has your observation been?
6. How shall we encourage one another in today’s environment?

POEMS

STILL WITH THEE

Still, still with Thee when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.

Alone with Thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The hush of nature newly born;
Alone with Thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.

As in the dawning o'er the waveless ocean,
The image of the morning-star doth rest,
So in this stillness, Thou beholdest only
Thine image in the waters of my breast,

When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eyes look up to Thee in prayer;
Sweet the repose beneath Thy wings o'er shadowing,
But sweeter still to wake and find Thee there.

— Harriett Beecher Stowe

I WILL TAKE THY HAND

The way is dark, My child! But leads to light:
I would not always have thee walk by sight.
My dealings now thou canst not understand,
I meant it so; but I will take thy hand.

The day goes fast, My child! But is the night
Darker to Me than day? In Me is light!
Keep close to Me, and every spectral band
Of fears shall vanish, I will take thy hand.

The way is long, My Child! But it shall be
Not one step longer than is best for thee;
And thou shalt know, at last, when thou shalt stand
Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand.

— Author Unknown

OBITUARIES

BASHOR — Myrtle Elaine (Wise) was born on December 16, 1939, to William and Ruth (Fisher) Wise, in Modesto, California. She departed this life for her heavenly home on January 4, 2024, at Hospice House in Hughson, California, at the age of 84 years and 19 days.

Myrtle had a happy childhood with her brother Marvin and many cousins and extended family members. She attended Ransom School just down the street from her parents' home and graduated from Modesto High School in 1957. She was united in marriage to William Michael Bashor on February 25, 1961, in Ceres, California. They shared almost 63 years of loving marriage together and were blessed with a son and three daughters. Myrtle was baptized on November 23, 1961, by her Uncle Howard Oyler and was a member of the West Modesto District of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference at the time of her passing. Myrtle's life changed course dramatically when their firstborn daughter Marcia became ill, soon followed by their son Michael. This illness led to both Marcia and Michael living in care facilities for the majority of their lives. Marcia passed away at age seven in 1971, and Michael at age 19 in 1984. Even though she suffered tremendous grief, she still had more love to give. In 1973 and 1979 she and Bill adopted two daughters, filling their home again with love and happiness.

In addition to being a loving mother to her children, Myrtle also enjoyed working at Salas Brothers Funeral Home alongside close family friend and cousin Lowell Beachler for 17 years. She was an amazing cook and baker and kept her home immaculately decorated for each season. Her grandchildren have many cherished memories of holidays, shopping dates and tea parties with grandma. Myrtle spent many hours relaxing along the coast, her special place to enjoy God's creation. She also treasured her dinners and weekend trips with a group of special friends. In the later part of her life, Myrtle suffered from the effects of dementia but always maintained her cheerful spirit and beautiful smile. In recent years, she spoke often of her loving parents and looking forward to seeing them again. The family would like to thank Susan Kelley and Lissa Holder for their loving care of our mother.

Myrtle will be missed and remembered by her husband, Bill; and two daughters, Melissa and husband Jon Brunk and Michelle and husband Adam Wilkinson; four grandchildren, Darcy Brunk, Clay Brunk, Tori and husband Alex Bowman, and Alexa Brunk; sisters-in-law, Peggy Wise, Betty and Henry Walker; brothers-in-law, Jim and Connie Bashor, Tom and Jeanie Bashor; a host of cousins and friends and beloved dog Sami.

She is preceded in death by her parents, parents-in-law, William

and Verta Bashor; brother, Marvin Wise; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Martha Jean and Dan Skiles; and two precious children, Marcia and Michael Bashor.

Visitation was held Thursday, January 11, 2024, from 4–8 P.M. at the West Modesto Old German Baptist Brethren Church in Modesto, California. The funeral service was held Friday, January 12, 2024, at 2 P.M., led by the home brethren of West Modesto. Burial followed at the Wood Colony Cemetery.

The Family

ANGLE — Opal Leota (Blocher) was born July 21, 1930, to James D. and Stella M. (Brubaker) Blocher at their home near the Eel River, Laketon, Indiana. She was the second of her parents' two children—a sister, Carmen, and an older half-sister, Janet. She married Clinton Edward Angle on December 2, 1947. After a brief stay near Covington, Ohio, with Amos and Effie Montgomery, their first home was made on a small farm near Mexico, Indiana.

Mom and Dad accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of their lives and were baptized by Howard Flora on Good Friday, March 26, 1948, and became members of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church in the Mexico District.

In February of 1954 they moved to the farm on Sugar Grove Road, Covington, Ohio. Six children were born to Opal and Clint: James Clinton (friend Mary), William Thomas (Marla), Reynold Jay

(Sue), Pamela Sue Bowman (Larry), Kenneth Eldon (Sherry), Lisa June Peters (Wayne). They also have 20 grandchildren and 57 great-grandchildren.

Mom was a farm wife and homemaker. In June 2018 Mom and Dad moved back to Mexico, Indiana.

Mom was preceded in death by her husband, Clint; parents, James and Stella Blocher; sister, Carmen Skiles; half-sister, Janet Laing-Meason, and daughter-in-law, Marilyn Angle.

Mom passed to Eternity the exact moment that her work on earth was done, on Thursday morning, June 6, 2024, at her home. The funeral was held on Monday, June 10, at the Covington meetinghouse and conducted by the home brethren.

Interment was in the Sugar Grove Cemetery, Miami County, Ohio. Precious and sweet are the memories!

The Family

FILBRUN — Rex Alan, 62, of Laura, Ohio, exchanged his time here on earth for eternity on June 27, 2024. Born November 1, 1961, to Melvin and Mary Filbrun, he spent his formative years on the farm and continued the legacy of stewarding the land throughout his adult life. Rex married Janet K. Shoup on September 10, 1983, and a few years later their son, Dustin was welcomed with joy.

Recognizing their need of a Savior, Rex and Janet were baptized September 12, 1984. He was a

member of the Old German Baptist New Conference and served as a deacon since elected, June 28, 1995. Rex was a quiet man with an extremely kind soul, loved all things related to flying and farming, and delighted in his son, daughter-in-law, and grandsons.

He is survived by his precious wife, Janet; son, Dustin; daughter-in-law, Stacy; and two grandsons, Landen and Levi Filbrun; his father, Melvin Filbrun; mother-in-law, Bonnie Shoup; four sisters, Renee and Mike Brubaker, Richelle and Alan Wolf, Roberta and Aaron Huffman, Rebecca and Reuben Brubaker; one brother, Rob and Alicia Filbrun; a sister-in-law, Norma June and David Brubaker; two brothers-in-law, Doug and Lorene Shoup, Gale and Deb Shoup; many nephews and nieces.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Mary Filbrun; and father-in-law, Norman Shoup.

Rex was diagnosed with multiple myeloma cancer in 2017, but he continued his quiet and formidable strength with his ever-loving wife by his side as they set a wonderful example of devotion. Wishing to reaffirm his relationship with Jesus, he received the peace of an anointing service May 4, 2024.

A funeral service was held on Monday, July 1 at Salem Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Services were conducted by the home brethren. Some verses used that were suggested by the family are Genesis 8:22, Ecclesiastes 3:4, and Job 1:21. "The LORD gave and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Burial followed at Bethel cemetery where he was lovingly laid to rest to await the resurrection morning.

The Family

SWEARINGEN – Jerald J. of New Carlisle, Ohio, passed away peacefully at home on June 28, 2024.

He was born May 28, 1939, the son of the late Brenner and Vanise Swearingen. Jerald committed his life to Christ on August 31, 1957, and was a member of the Maple Grove Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference.

He was an avid outdoorsman, including many activities such as hunting and fishing. He spent many hours at woodworking, and carved beautiful ducks and birds for his family and friends.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Bonnie; children, Jill (Wade) Renicker and Brent (Libbey) Swearingen; grandchildren, Erika (Tony) Brubaker, Neil (Mandalyn) Renicker, Bryce (fiancée Danielle Hom) Renicker, Shelby (Tyler) Watson, Abigail Swearingen, Addison Swearingen, and Alena Swearingen; great-grandchildren, Oliver, Flora, Ned, Gretel, Hugo, Toby, and Winifred; and several nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Jerald is preceded in death by his parents and brothers Dale (Joan) Swearingen, and Richard (Delma) Swearingen.

The visitation was held Wednesday, July 3, 2024, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. at the Maple Grove meeting house. Burial followed at the Ma-

ple Grove Cemetery. Brethren Dave Swearingen and John Sink gave the message at the funeral, and Dean Kinsley at the cemetery.

*We wait in hope on the promise given,
We will meet up there in our home in Heaven!*

The Family

DEATON — Rita Sue, daughter of Omer and Esther (King) Deaton, was born on October 25, 1963. She peacefully departed this life at the home of her sister Linda and Glen Dale Knaus on July 7, 2024, to her heavenly home at the age of 60 years, 8 months, and 12 days. Rita was one of God's special children, born with Down Syndrome. She was greatly loved by her family and brought them much joy. In her later years she was very concerned about her mother passing and we feel she may have died of a broken heart. When mother could no longer care for her she made

her home with her sisters, Linda and Glen Dale and Barbara and Dennis Brunk.

Rita was preceded in death by her parents, a brother Sheryl; a sister-in-law, Linda Deaton; and two great-nephews, Jonathan Strike and Connor Frantz.

She is survived by siblings, Lloyd (Karen), Lila (Sheryl's wife), Linda (Glen Dale) Knaus, David, Barbara (Dennis) Brunk, and Gerald (Bonnie); 19 nieces and nephews, 56 great-nieces and nephews, 20 great-great-nieces and nephews; along with many special friends. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The funeral service was held in the Upper Twin meeting house on July 11, 2024, with the home brethren officiating. Words of comfort and encouragement were taken from Psalm 23. She was laid to rest at the Sugar Grove Cemetery, West Alexandria, Ohio.

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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