Sorrow for the Dead.

"THE sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal--every other affliction to forget: but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open--this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother that would willingly forget the infant that perished like a blossom from her arms, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender parents, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns? Who, even when the tomb is closed upon the remains of her he most loved, and he feels his heart, as it were, crushed in the closing of its portal, would accept consolation that was to be bought by forgetfulness? No! the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul! If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness--who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud even over the bright hour of gaiety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom, yet who would exchange it even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry? No! there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song! There is a recollection of the dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Oh the grave! the grave! It buries every error--covers every defect--extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb that ever he should have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him!"

"But the grave of those we loved--what a place for meditation! Then it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily intercourse of intimacy; then it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the parting scene--the bed of death, with all its stifled griefs, its noiseless attendance, its mute, watchful assiduities--the last testimonies of expiring love--the feeble, fluttering thrilling, O how thrilling! pressure of the hand--the last fond look at the gazing eye, turning upon us, even from the threshold of existence--the faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

"Aye, go to the grave of buried love and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience for every past benefit unrequited--every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being who can never--never--return to be soothed by thy contrition! If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow of an affectionate parent--if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured its whole happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth--if thou art a friend, and hast ever wronged, in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit that generously confided to thee--if thou art a lover, and hast ever given one unmerited pang to that true heart that now lies cold and still beneath thy feet; then be sure that every unkind look, every ungracious word, every ungentle action, will come thronging back upon thy memory, and knocking dolefully at thy soul--then be sure that thou wilt lie down sorrowing and repentant on the grave, and utter the unheard groan, and pour the unavailing tear, more deep, more bitter, because unheard and unavailing. "Then weave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the beauties of nature about the

grave; console thy broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret; but take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead, and be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living."--W. Irving.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-4 (1) A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.
(2) It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.
(3) Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.
(4) The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 (5) Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire

shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:
(6) Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.
(7) Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

"THE sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be separated. Every other wound we seek to heal--every other affliction to forget: but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open--this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother that would willingly forget the infant that perished like a blossom from her arms, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender parents, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns? Who, even when the tomb is closed upon the remains of him that she most loved, and she feels her heart, as it were, crushed in the closing of its portal, would accept consolation that was to be bought by forgetfulness? No! the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul! If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness--who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud even over the bright hour of happiness, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom, yet who would exchange it even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of jubilation? No! there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song! There is a recollection of the dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Oh the grave! the grave! It

buries every trial--covers every suffering--extinguishes every load. But from its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections."

"Oh the death of him we loved--what a place for meditation! Then it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily course of his intervening for God and family; then it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the parting scene--the bed of death, with all its stifled griefs, its noiseless attendance, its mute, watchful devotion--the last testimonies of expiring love--the feeble pressure of the hand--the last fond look at the gazing eye, turning upon us, even from the threshold of existence--the faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

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the beauties of nature about the grave; console thy broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret; but take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead, and be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living."

Jesus long ago spoke of a strait gate, Bro. Gene entered that strait gate and with diligence he walked in the narrow way, he put on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. I am reminded of Bro. Gene in the words of;

Psalm 116:12-17 (12) What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?
(13) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.
(14) I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.
(15) Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.
(16) O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.
(17) I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

We can find comfort in the memory that Bro. Gene presented his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service as well. Bro. Gene has taken that final step into the other realm, where all heavenly blessings in Christ will be realized as He said in;

John 14:1-3 (1) Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
(2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
(3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

I know Bro. Gene would want this heavenly blessing for one and

all, and I also know he would want you to earnestly contend for the faith as recorded in;
Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Let us pray; Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. We ask you Lord to ease our pain, help us through our grief and find sanctuary in thy being. We ask you Lord to be with the family of Bro. Gene through these dark days of grief and loneliness, and to realize that this step he has taken is what he longed for. Not that leaving his family and friends was his desire, but that being closer to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus was his ultimate goal. A goal we pray everyone should earnestly contend to take advantage of. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

October 6, 2013, Bro. Jim Brown stood courageously before his home congragation to deliver a sermon, it would be his last. He brought with him a stool on which to rest, being unable to stand very long, but there he was, preaching on the last day he would be able to assemble with the Church. His topic was: THE COMING OF CHRIST. These questions were asked and answered;
(1) What will cause Him to come?
(2) When is He coming?
(3) Coming for what?
(4) What will we be judged by?
(5) What will be the sign of His coming?
(6) How will He come?
(7) Will we be able to visit our loved ones?
There were two more items, but were statements with explanations.
(8) The good news is-we can be ready.
(9) A solid foundation.
One week later on the Lord's day, Bro. Jim passed from this life prepared to meet his Saviour and King.
Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 (5) Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:
(6) Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.
(7) Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.
October 13, 2013, after a life of service to God, Bro. Jim passed from this life, the silver cord was loosed, strikingly exhibiting

the silver gray; and from its preciousness is said to be loosed; a few struggles more, and his soul was dismissed from its clay abode. Bro. Jim goeth to his long home and the mourners gather to pay their last respects. But there should not be any regrets if we remember the things Bro. Jim rendered unto the Lord. Reading from;

Psalm 116:12-15 (12) What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?
(13) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.
(14) I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.
(15) Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.
God regards it with special interest. It is of value or importance in such respects as it is the removal of another of the redeemed to glory - the addition of one more to the happy hosts above, it is a new triumph of the work of redemption to be revealed on that day.

1Corinthians 15:42-50 (42) So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
(43) It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:
(44) It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.
(45) And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.
(46) Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.
(47) The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.
(48) As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.
(49) And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

(50) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.
This fleshly body is composed of changing particles; to be repaired and strengthened daily; it is subject to decay, and wasted away by sickness, and of course it cannot be suited to a world where there shall be no decay and no death. Neither can that which is in its nature corruptible, be adapted to a world where all is incorruptible. A place where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Bro. Jim longed for that inheritance, incorruptible, reserved in heaven for him.
1Peter 1:3-9 (3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
(4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
(5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
(6) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:
(7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:
(8) Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:
(9) Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Ode to the Preacher, Bro. Jim Brown

I'm just a preacher, teaching it plain and simple
not of royal birth, but of water and spirit
not known for riches, but rather my Bible tattered and worn

I'm just a preacher, branded by His word
I know of drought and rain, of pleasure and pain
I know the good is in Christ, and the bad of the devil

I'm a man of emotions
a man who loves Christ's Church and the beauty of His word
I know of spring's fresh flow and autumn's golden glow
of a new Christian's jubilation and a sinner's destination
I'm just a preacher, teaching it plain and simple

I know of heavenly blessings and short waiting lines
that lead to Christ's love, and the long lines that wander
I'm just a Christian who loves his profession
and the life that I love is in Christ's instutition
I'm just a preacher, teaching it plain and simple

I'm a reaper in Christ's harvest
I'm a sower of His seed and overseer of His flock
I'm a man who works with God
I'm just a preacher, teaching it plain and simple

I know of planting His word and Christian's going astray
I labor to bring them back by showing them the way
I know I cannot succeed without His help
For you see, I'm just a preacher, teaching it plain and simple

Mark 8:35-37 (35) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.
(36) For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
(37) Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?
Bro. Jim lost his life for Christ's sake and the gospel's long ago, when he believed, repented, confessed Jesus is the Son of God

and then was buried with Him in baptism. It was there in that waterery grave that the old man of sin was crucified with Christ, planted in the likeness of His death, raised up in the likeness of His resurrection;

Romans 6:4-11 (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
(5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
(6) Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
(7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.
(8) Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:
(9) Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
(10) For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
(11) Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bro. Jim, we are going to miss you. We are going to miss your virtue and brotherly kindness, and the thousand encouragements lavished upon us out of God's word, almost unheeded, in the daily course of intervening; then it is that we may dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn tenderness of the parting scene--with all its stifled griefs, its noiseless attendance, its mute, watchful devotion--the last testimonies of expiring love--the feeble pressure of the hand--the last fond look from the gazing eye, even from the threshold of existence--struggling in the face of death to give one more assurance of affection!

Let us pray.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. We ask you Lord to ease our pain, help us through our grief and find sanctuary in thy being. We ask you Lord to be with the family of Bro. Jim through these dark days of grief and loneliness, and to realize that this step he has taken is what he longed for. Not that leaving his family and friends was his desire, but that one step closer to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus was his ultimate goal. A goal we pray everyone should earnestly contend for, to take advantage of. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

December 22, 2013, Jackie exchanged salutations with her brothers and sisters in Christ at her home congregation. She was so happy to be in attendence for worship services that sunday morning, however it would be her last, she passed from this life the following Lord's day.

Psalm 116:12-15 (12) What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?
(13) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.
(14) I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.
(15) Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.
(16) O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

Jackie was well aware that these benefits consisted of the blessings of nature and providence; His being, and the things that sustain life on earth, food, raiment, &c. But more importantly, the blessings of grace; spiritual blessings, all

things pertaining to life and godliness, sanctification, adoption, pardon, justification, and the end of her faith, even eternal life. Jesus died to offer salvation to all, He accordingly has therein declared all men without distinction, who through faith, as obedient children, heed, follow, and practice what faith contains, to be His children and lawful heirs; thus excluding no one from the precious inheritance of eternal salvation, except the unbelieving and disobedient, the stiffnecked and those stubbornly resistant to moral influence, who despise faith, and incur this through their own sins, thus making themselves unworthy of eternal life. He, therefore, who neglects the life of the soul, casts away his present good; he who refuses to live to God, squanders all he has. Jackie accepted the burdens of a Christian life, mindful of the grace extending from the hand of God. And being obedient to the faith, she became partaker of the cup of salvation, enjoining deliverance from sin and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Jackie was also mindful of the end of man. She was in poor health the last years of her life, but now she is not in pain. It may be difficult to understand how the death of His saints is precious in the sight of the Lord, but considering this fleshly body is composed of changing particles; to be repaired and strengthened daily; it is subject to decay, and wasted away by sickness, and of course it cannot be suited to a world where there shall be no decay and no death. Neither can that which is corruptible, be adapted to a world where all is incorruptible. A place where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Who would want to bring her back? We should not sorrow for her, but be glad.

1Thessalonians 4:13-18 (13) But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

(14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
(15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.
(16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
(17) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
(18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
But it seems to be the nature of mankind that the sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be separated. Every other wound we seek to heal--every other affliction to forget: but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open--this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where are the parents that would willingly forget the child that perished like a blossom, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender parents, though to remember is but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns who hath gone on to his long home? To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die, and tho it be a time of sorrow, it is expressed in such beautiful language from the word of God, observe;
Ecclesiastes 12:6-7 (6) Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.
(7) Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.
A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. December 29, 2013, Jackie

Brown passed from this life unto the great beyond. She no longer has need of that tired body riddled with sickness and pain. There is something better. The enmity existing previously, resulting from the fall of man, rendered reconciliation necessary. Therefore Christ died to save us, not in our sins, but from our sins. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, of which by necessity, there must be a resurrection.

1Corinthians 15:42-50 (42) So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
(43) It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:
(44) It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.
(45) And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.
(46) Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.
(47) The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.
(48) As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.
(49) And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
(50) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Luke 9:23-25 (23) And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.
(24) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.
(25) For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

He who cannot bring himself to surrender the one for the sake of the other shall eventually lose both. If a man prefers this shadowy, quickly passing earthly life, he will assuredly lose the substantial enduring heavenly life. If, on the other hand, he consents, "for Jesus' sake," to sacrifice this quickly fading life on earth, he shall surely find it again in heaven, no longer quickly fading, but a life fadeless, eternal, a life infinitely higher than the one he has for righteousness' sake consented to lose here. Sister Jackie lost her life for Christ's sake and the gospel's long ago, she believed, repented, confessed Jesus is the Son of God and then was buried with Him in baptism. It was there in that waterery grave that the old man of sin was crucified with Christ, planted in the likeness of His death, a new man raised up in the likeness of His resurrection;
Romans 6:4-9 (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
(5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
(6) Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
(7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.
(8) Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:
(9) Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
We have gathered here for a little while to remember Jackie, who she was, what was important to her. As a mother she must have been spectacular. Her son, Dustin, is an outstanding young man. He is a hard worker, a provider for his family, of a kind spirit, and a Christian. Their bond was a special one, unchanged by time or distance, and the purest love unconditional and true.

The bond between a Mother and Daughter creates a support that is constant while everything else may change. It is a friendship based on mutual love, respect, and a genuine liking of each other as a person. It is knowing that no matter where you go or who you are, there is someone who truly loves you and is always there to support and console you. The bond between a Father and Daughter is a gift held in the heart and in the soul, and it cannot be taken away or exchanged for another. To possess this love is a treasure that makes life more valuable. Jackie has left, she entered the door unto the other world, but these things remain for her family to treasure.
Let us pray;
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Lord we want to thank you for Jackie and for the life you have given her. As we come to you Lord in this time of sorrow, help us through this grief and may we find sanctuary in thy being. We ask of you Lord to be with the family of Sister Jackie through these dark days of grief and loneliness, and to realize that this step is one step closer to her long home. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Lord, may we be ever be consoled by thy spirit and wrapped in the warmth of thy love. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.