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Treasures Among Us

Bernice Nelson

Bernice Nelson and her husband, Bill, both grew up in southeast Missouri near

Greenville. They met in high school, and Bill wanted them to be high school sweethearts. Bernice, however, was reluctant. Her reluctance didn't last long, and they were married almost 60 years by the time Bill passed away in 2009 at the Veterans' Home in St. James. Those 60 years and the adventures they enjoyed together are her favorite memories.

Bill was a career Army man, so their early years of marriage took them to many stateside locations and to Germany for three years as well. When they married, he was a Corporal; by the time he retired, he was a full Colonel. Later he was put up for One Star (Brigadier) General; but President Eisenhower's son was up for One Star at the same time, and he was selected rather than Bill. Bill served in combat in Korea during the early years of their marriage. She and the one daughter they had at the time lived with her mom while he was away. When Bill returned, they moved to Fort Riley, Kansas.

While they were in Germany, they and some friends went to Paris; and Bill turned the driving over to his friend. They got caught up on the Arc de Triomphe; and Bernice laughingly says that if a cop hadn't stopped all the traffic, they might still be going around in circles! They really enjoyed their time in Germany and found things to be very inexpensive there.

Bernice was a career homemaker for the family. They have two daughters, Missy and Debbie, both of whom live in the Rolla area. Missy and her husband live on the Nelson family farm south of Rolla. Debbie's husband is an attorney in Steelville, and she does private counseling now that she is retired from the St. James school system.

After Bill returned from Germany, he went into the Army inactive reserves. He also went back to college, got a degree in forestry and began a second career with the US Forest Service. They moved about every year with the Forest Service and were stationed in Rolla on a couple of occasions. They loved the town and the church; so when Bill retired from the Forest Service, they came back for good. Rolla, she says, is her favorite place.

Bernice was raised in the church and was baptized when she was 12-13 years old. She loves the 23rd Psalm because of what it says; and her favorite hymn is, "Be with Us Lord." Her mother helped establish the church near Greenville. Bill became a Christian and was baptized by Henry Mabry, a preacher from the Fredericktown area, after he and Bernice started dating. For a while, he served as a Deacon in charge of benevolence at Rolla Church of Christ.

After Bill's retirement from the Forest Service and their relocation to Rolla, Bernice began taking painting lessons from Joyce Carr. Since Mrs. Carr's death, she drives to Sullivan for lessons. She had never painted a thing in her life, but now enjoys it and does beautiful work on porcelain. Even though she does such beautiful work, she still takes lessons. Lots of her pieces decorate her home, and she nearly always donates a piece for the Little Prairie Bible Camp auction in October.

Over the years, she has taught Bible classes for elementary age children. She worked with Patty Rinehart in Day School; they were the snack ladies. She also taught one year of Day School with Joann Carney when Mike Knappier was the preacher in Rolla.

She has lived an interesting life and has traveled extensively through Bill's two careers. They lived in Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, Kentucky, West Virginia and Washington, DC, just to name a few locations. She is very thankful they were stationed here with the Forest Service because Rolla has become home. Now she is, "just glad to have a place to stay put." Nowadays, she and her little dog, a Scotty named Layla, keep each other company.

NOTE: *This is the thirteenth in a series highlighting noble Christian women in our congregation. We truly have many "treasures among us" in the women who exemplify Christianity in all its facets and have much to teach us all.*

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Snowflakes and People

The snow is beautiful, a blanket of finest satin covering the face of the earth. Snow is like people. Each delicate snowflake with elaborate detail is each one of us. No matter how big or how tiny, fragile or strong, young or old, every one of them serves a purpose, as each of us serves a much greater purpose. We are the snow. The snow is us. Every one of us is beautiful. We are one.

Macy Collier, age 10, Ellijay, Georgia
©August, 2014

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NEW BEGINNINGS

New Year's resolutions are usually centered on how we intend to improve ourselves. Instead, I purpose to create good memories for others, just as Mother did for me.

You can help children get good spiritual learning memories from reading Bible stories to them or telling stories with lots of gusto and enthusiasm. Mother bought the 1948 book Beautiful Bible Stories by Charles Roney and Wilfred Rice. Before reading to me, she would open the book to the very first black and white picture of Jesus that had the caption, "Behold I stand at the door and knock". She would say, "Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart. Never ever turn Him away." The black and white pictures in each story imprinted the story in my mind; listening to Mother read imprinted it in my heart. The reading of Bible stories every day is an unforgettable childhood memory that should be passed on—or begun by you.

Teenagers tend to fill up their days with their own activities, but they are still memory impressionable. Going back to old-fashioned cooking is a good way to spend time with a teen. They need to learn how to cook anyway, be they boy or girl.

I began at age nine learning how to cut up a chicken. While I cut up the chicken, Mother would work on the vegetables. She would take the opportunity to say things like, "Look at this bunch of gloriously beautiful vegetables straight from the garden God blessed. Becky, never forget that everything you read, listen to, or watch is like food. If we eat garbage then it is 'Garbage in, garbage out.'" The memory from those days was the joy in learning skills, relating all activities to God and His bounty, and teaching me to think before making decisions. Until I left home at eighteen to go to college, Mother worked diligently on teaching while cooking and building everlasting memories.

Mother also taught me how to plant a garden and would talk about seeds, not only about planting seeds in the ground but also the memory seeds we plant in others. There is something powerful about garden memories other than the smell of rich dirt, holding fat wiggling worms, working up a sweat, or harvesting what's needed for supper. Adam and Eve heard the voice of Jehovah God Himself walking among the trees in the garden in the cool of the day. No wonder God started Adam out as a gardener. He loves what He made. We can pass a gardening memory on to others, even if it is only in a large pot. God is there, too.

Mother always had an older woman to visit and help daily until their children moved them to full-time care or they died. She found these ladies in the

neighborhood she lived in at the time. She baked them sourdough bread to go with the meals she prepared for them. Others see and remember those memories.

In addition to (or in place of) new year's resolutions, *purposely create good, lasting memories worthy of passing on.*

Rebecca Voraritskul, Khon Kaen, Thailand
©December, 2014

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TWELVE THINGS TO START IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

1. **Start reading your Bible every day.**
2. **Start smiling (laughing) more.**
3. **Start looking for only the good in others.**
4. **Start drinking more water each day.**
5. **Start going to bed early enough to enjoy eight hours of sleep each night.**
6. **Start doing regular breast exams.**
7. **Start going to every meeting of the church - and get there on time.**
8. **Start putting clothes away the minute they are taken off.**
9. **Start learning a new skill you have always wanted to conquer.**
10. **Start eating healthy—both in selections and quantities.**
11. **Start being a better listener.**
12. **Start a monthly draft to save for the future.**

Adapted from Christian Woman Magazine,
January/February, 2006

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SEPARATING GOOD FROM BAD

I was sent a video the other day of a guy using a water bottle to separate yolks and whites of eggs. (You can check it out on YouTube.) As a cook, I thought what a wonderful and genius way to do this frustrating task.

As a Christian, I wondered how this could be applied to my life—and then it hit me. It's kind of like the



Christians (yolks) and the ungodly (whites) are all mixed together in this world. When the end of time comes, God is going to separate the Christians

and ungodly the same way. Read the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13:25-30 and the meaning of the parable in verses 38-43.

We need to make sure we are the yolks and not the whites. This is just a thought for the day.

Susan Harmon, Tampa, Florida
©September, 2014

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LEARNING TO BE A GOOD CHRISTIAN

How can we learn to be a good Christian? God has a perfect plan for all people. As Christian people, we must show our love for Him and our love for unsaved people. We must be gentle and concerned and show them they are special. They have to see this in our kind actions. Christians are to be good examples to everyone.

Praying is very important; we need to pray every day. God does answer prayers but maybe not in the way we think. There are times when He answers, and it is a lot better than we thought. God knows what we need before we pray. He wants us to talk to Him like He is our Father in heaven. He gave the Lord's Prayer to teach us how to pray. We can be Christians for years, but we have a lot to learn and there is a lot to thank God for. Lots of times I think we pray more for "wants" than thanking God for all He has given us.

One thing we have is the Lord's Supper (Communion). We should not take communion if we haven't repented and been baptized, thereby being born into His Kingdom. During communion, we remember Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and God raising Him from the dead.

The New Testament gives the following passages showing the purpose of baptism:

1. To enter the Kingdom (John 3:5)
2. To contact Christ's blood (Romans 6:3-4)
3. To get into Christ (Galatians 3:27)
4. For salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)
5. For remission of sin (Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16)
6. To get into the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:23)

Other things we can do are: try to be nice to the ones who have done us wrong. We need to put the people we come in contact with before ourselves. Before judging and criticizing someone, we need to look for the good in their lives. We should be more interested in their feelings and in things they do instead of putting them down and hurting their feelings. We should have patience and compassion for everyone. You will want to go that extra mile with people in need,

be there for them to talk with you. Sometimes I need to talk to someone, and it helps me out a lot. Christian people need to take time out to listen to others, be there for them; and if they choose me, that would make me so proud to think they trust me. Trusting someone is very important, and Christian people have to be trustworthy. They can tell by our kind actions. That makes me have a good feeling in my heart. It is not on the surface. I am very grateful to God who gives me such special Christian friends.

Shirley Isbell, Rolla, MO
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Brevity of Life

"For what is your life? You are but a vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes away." James 4:14

This scripture is so true. Last Sunday morning on our way to worship, we of a horrible accident. It looked like a pickup truck had turned directly into the path of a semi tanker truck. The back end of the pickup truck was several feet up in the air. It looked as if the tanker driver had no chance at all to react because he was still perfectly in his lane. Sadly, the young man driving the pickup truck lost his life as a result of the accident.



A few days later in a neighboring town, a woman and her four-year-old son were swept away in flood waters. The little boy's body was found soon afterwards, but his mother's body was not found for several days

Just a few days later, an elderly lady I had known when I was just a child passed away. At least two generations of her family and mine had been close friends in New Mexico. She and I had reconnected many years later in Missouri, and now she is gone.

Life was brief for all these individuals. The little child, his young mother, the young driver and my elderly friend—though there were vast differences in their ages, their lives were brief in the grand scheme of time.

We might be inclined to think the child, the young woman and/or the young man died way before their time. But perhaps that is not the case. We can see it only from our earthly perspective. God sees it from His eternal perspective. Maybe it was the right time after all, but we just don't understand it.

Can you imagine living in the earliest days of Bible history when people routinely lived to be several hundred years old? Did they also think life was brief? What of Caleb who undertook a real leadership role among God's people at age 85? The Bible tells us that his eyes had not dimmed nor had his strength diminished.

How often do we recall some event from our youth or our young adulthood and wonder where all the years have gone? My husband and I look at our grown children and think we are far too young to have children this old! Indeed, where did all those years go?

"Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; **Surely every man at his best is a mere breath.**" Psalm 39:5

My dad used to tell me that once you reach the top of the hill (of age), the downhill side goes much faster than the uphill side went. I remember being 13-14 years old and suddenly realizing that I could remember things that happened a whole ten years before. In a panic, I thought I was getting very old! Little did I realize then how young and naive I really was; nor did I have any comprehension of just how brief life is.

Whether our years be many or few, Solomon summed up life in a very brief statement. **The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.** Ecclesiastes 12:13.

Evelyn Waite
©August, 2013

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Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by Kathy Webber and Evelyn Waite, members of the Rolla Church of Christ. If you would like your sisters in Christ or your relatives, friends, co-workers or neighbors to receive it, you can share your copy with them. If they would like to receive it, please send their email addresses to evelynwa@fidmail.com. *Sunrise* may also be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveandlove.org>. Once there, click on Resources, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

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