

When Gussie Went Home

John 14:2, "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."

"I go to prepare a place for you."

January 7, 1995. A dear friend to family and friends alike, went Home to be with the Lord: Gussie Holston. In her lifetime there is no way of knowing how many people she led to the Lord and how many people she encouraged in the Lord. There are so many people she touched in her lifetime. I have noticed that there have been quite a number of young people that she has had a great influence upon.

At her memorial service, I noticed that there were parents there who were children when they met Gussie, and some of their children, also sat under Gussie's ministry. The Bible classes that she held for the young in her home, and other places, are still being used, as they have been put on tape and they are all over the world.

I had the privilege of performing her Home-going. I was instructed not to give an eulogy. Jim, her husband, reminded me that Gussie's wish was that I perform this service, which to me was a great honor, and Gussie left strict orders as to what I was to say at her memorial service.

There were three things she left instructions for me to express: One, to make salvation and the Gospel very clear, so that no one would leave without having an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Two, to give assurance of the fact that they have eternal life because they accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. Three, to give them comfort knowing that they are eternally saved. It was a difficult service because I knew Gussie and her family personally, and I must admit that it was with tear-filled eyes that I ministered to her family, loved ones, and friends.

One of the most difficult of all pressures in life is when a loved one departs to be with the Lord, and that relationship is now missing. I had a similar experience when my wife died of cancer and she went Home to be with the Lord on my birthday.

I thought that I would like to perpetuate that moment, that day, when Gussie left us and departed to be face to face with the Lord. I decided to try to put in words the thoughts that most of us thought that day.

For those of you who knew Gussie, or knew about her and couldn't attend the services, I have written this pamphlet in memory of her and her husband, and children, and grandchildren, and those of us who knew her.

At this very time I know of three or four women, like Gussie, and some of them that knew her, who are also suffering physical ailments. And I would like to include these ladies in Gussie's memorial service: Mrs. Mary Good, Mrs. Jo Hood, Mrs. Janelle Harvey, and Mrs. Mathiele McDaniel.

At the chapel service I used this passage of Scripture. See if you think I

fulfilled Gussie's departing wishes. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, "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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. 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. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: the dead in Christ shall rise first: 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

In these verses, I think you will see all the three points Gussie wanted me to present are all covered. The Gospel, the assurance, and the comfort.

When we went to the actual grave site, I was overwhelmed because usually most of the people leave after the chapel service and go home. But Gussie influenced so many people and she meant so much to so many, all of us. Therefore most of the people who were at the chapel followed us to the grave site.

And this is the passage that I used for her there. 2 Corinthians 5:1-8, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Then we prayed together and not many people left, we sort of just stayed there and it was as if we didn't want to leave her. Well, we never will, simply because we are family.

Ephesians 3:14-15, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in Heaven and Earth is named." The whole family of God, some are with the Lord and the rest of us are here. I opened the service with a poem that meant a lot to me when my wife died. Some people requested copies. I thought it would be appropriate to include it in this publication, honoring Gussie Holston.

This isn't death, it's glory!
This isn't dark, it's light!
It isn't stumbling, groping,
or even Faith, it's sight.

This isn't grief of having
my last tear wiped away,
It's sunrise, it's morning,
Of my eternal day.

It isn't even praying,
It's speaking face to face,
It's listening and glimpsing,
The wonders of His Grace.

For this is the end of pleading
For strength to bear my pain,
Not even pains dark memory,
Will ever live again.

How did I bear this earth life
Before I came up higher?
Before my soul was granted
It's very deep desire.

Before I knew this rapture
Of meeting face to face,
The one who sought me, The one who saved me,
The one who kept me By His Grace.

I remember Mr. and Mrs. Bum Phillips, close friends of Gussie, liked the poem.

John 14:2, *"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."*

I Go to Prepare a Place For You

Let's look at this phrase, which is often quoted by many people, which came from the very lips of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a part of what He thought and taught about the Word of God.

I Go to Prepare a Place For You

If all we had as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ was our earthly house, well it would certainly cause us some concern and leave us feeling hopeless. Like the Apostle Paul felt as stated in 1 Corinthians 15:19, *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."* Literally pitiful.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ." But thank God this earthly house is not all. It is just a prelude to an eternal Home towards which we are all moving day by day. Many people when faced with their departure or the departure of others, have the same question that Job had long ago.

Job 14:14, *"If a man die, shall he live again?"* But Job knew the answer to that question and in the same verse he answered his own question. Job 14:14, *"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."*

"All the days of my appointed time, will I wait, till my change come." Job knew that the Lord had a plan for his life, and he expressed it by saying, "all the days of my appointed time." And then he said, he would wait till his change came. And that was Job's confidence in his departure.

Job 19:26, 27, *"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."*

Job had a wonderful departure for it says, Job 42:17, *"So Job died, being old and full of days."* Being old is one thing, but that wasn't the reason for his departure. The next phrase, is not a repetition but something added. Full of days. The Hebrew word there is SABA. Which means satisfied. Job died satisfied.

During World War II, many times G.I.s asked the same question, "Does death end it all?" They hardly ever used the word death and actually shunned using it. One of them said, "If we go west, will there be anything more?" Or, "When we go over the top, will anyone ever hear of me again? Is there another land?"

This question is asked over and over again from one generation to the next. "If a man die shall he live again?" Now as Christians, and as Gussie knew and taught for many years, the answer to that question is ... Yes. Gussie is living now!

John 10:28-29, *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* John 11:25-26, *"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"* John 11:27, *"She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."* That is the true meaning of Christmas.

Now along with that question, there are other related questions that are asked. What kind of a land is it going to be? What sort of a place is it that we are going? Is there any description of it anywhere? Has any been given? Do we have any conditions describing it? What about that other land beyond the sunset, the night where we are going?

A great many questions have been asked through the years, and eagerly asked about the life beyond ... the land beyond the sunset ... beyond time ... the land eternal. What about it? Many, many have asked and are still asking

about it. Every pastor is bombarded with questions about the great hereafter, from sources that would amaze you. Hardly a week goes by that you are not asked, as a pastor, from people not even connected with the church, either by phone or letter or even in person, "What about the land beyond? I am not a member of your church but I hope to be some day. Can you give me any light or help about the land beyond or what happens to you after you die?"

Sometimes people ask, "How come Jesus Christ has not told us more about the hereafter?" He has told us some things and some things we wonder about. Why has He not told us more?

Well, for one reason, He didn't want to distract our attention from the importance of this life. We have as Paul said, a race to run down here. We have a mission to accomplish down here. We all have a niche to fill, a duty to perform, a burden or many burdens to bear, and Jesus Christ did not want to divert our attention from the importance of this earthly life. In this earthly life we have to make many choices. And especially one great choice that effects all of eternity. We must make many choices in this brief, fleeting, earthly life. Young people especially have to make a choice. Will I be a lawyer, a teacher, a business man, a pastor, a doctor, a vocation for life? And there are many serious responsibilities in these questions. We have important responsibilities that we face in this earthly life. The most important of all of all is the responsibility of our choice for a spiritual Guide, for our Divine helper. For our Guide over death and then beyond, forever. That choice has to be made this side of the grave. As the tree falls so shall it lie. He that is unjust let him be unjust still. He that is holy let him be holy still.

Revelation 22:11, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

This is the Word of Jesus Christ, when we face death and the grave, our destiny, eternity. This is determined in our little short journey here on the Earth. Now Jesus Christ has laid some great responsibilities for our earthly sojourn and pilgrimage here, and He did not wish to divert us from the importance of this earthly life. His teaching here is that we must walk by faith and not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7, "(For we walk by faith, not by sight:" Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him:" Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The Just Shall Live by Faith

This principle is so important for the Christian way of life that it is repeated four times, at least, in Scripture. The first one is in the Old Testament where we get the principle.

Habakkuk 2:4, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

Then in the New Testament we have it repeated three times. Each book in which it is repeated, it is repeated with an emphasis on the different words that

form the principle. Galatians emphasizes the living. Shall live.

Galatians 3:1, "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." Shall live.

Romans emphasizes the just, or justified ones, believers.

Romans 1:17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The just, or justified ones.

Hebrews emphasizes faith. Hebrews 10:38, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Hebrews emphasizes the faith. All along Jesus Christ teaches that we must walk by faith. And He never coerces faith, because faith is compatible with Grace.

2 Corinthians 4:18, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 1 Peter 1:8, "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:"

"Whom having not seen, ye love. In whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing." That is faith. Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Romans 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Genesis 15:6, "And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

The Pharisees, when Jesus Christ was here on this Earth, were always demanding that He show them a sign from Heaven. But He did not grant their request. That would have been a coercing of their faith. And a coerced faith is not a faith at all. Faith must be uncoerced. Therefore we must stand and take a stand forever for the doctrine of separation of Church and State. No church must coerce faith. And no state must coerce faith. Faith is the voluntary vote of the individual soul towards the Lord Jesus Christ. And such a vote must never be coerced. A free will decision.

John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Whosoever will.

Jesus Christ does not wish to draw our attention away from the reason why we are here. He does not want to divert our attention from the importance of the Christian way of life. Jesus Christ does not wish to divert from the importance of this earthly life. But He does tell us enough.

John 21:25, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." John 20:30, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book:"

Notice that Jesus Christ was selective. John 20:31, "But these are written,

that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name." 1 John 5:13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God."

In one of the most widely quoted passages of Scripture, we find that the Lord Jesus Christ does tell us definitely something about the land beyond. John 14:1, 2, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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."

John 14:3, "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 go to prepare a place. And if I go, and I do, and prepare a place, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself (the rapture), that where I am, there ye may be also."

Place, place, where I am, there ye may be also.

In this verse there is enough. This is not the only verse but scattered throughout the Word of God there are many references to Home. There is a wonderful comforting and encouraging verse found in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 21:4, "And 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." I can't tell you how many times my wife, in so much pain, was comforted by this passage and longed for the day when the pain would go away.

But this verse before us now tells us that Heaven is a place. I go to prepare a place, and if I go and prepare a place. There, where I am, that place, the third Heaven, ye will be also. Jesus Christ said Heaven is a place. To prepare, literally, to provide, to make ready. Heaven is a place as well as a state.

I read an interesting article one time where a friend was writing to a friend of his, in another city. The letter read like this: "You need not trouble to answer this letter, for I will be in Heaven I suppose before I could get your answer. He also added: I hope that our cottages will be close together up there, as we will have so much to talk about." Friends with a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Now this is not the only passages, this is spoken of elsewhere. For example: This is the passage that I used for Gussie at the grave site. In fact, this is the next thing in God's plan, and it can happen at any moment. Nothing has to happen in history, and there are no prophecies that yet have to be fulfilled before this promise comes true.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, "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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. 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. 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: 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Now based on this next current event, the question that comes to my mind is this: Will the Lord call for me like He did Gussie? Or will He come for me personally, when He descends for those who are alive at His coming in the air? ... Like us? Now you may have a choice, and I may have a choice, but the choice is the Lord's and He will make the right choice. He always does. We may be the generation that never experiences death but are changed in a twinkling of an eye. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

One of my dreams is possible, and the other one is not. When I was growing up many people groaned because of the lack of proper leadership in our country and the phase everywhere was, "You have to die and pay taxes." Well, on the basis of this passage, I may not die, you may not either. Now that is something no politician or educator can promise you.

With Gussie going Home, and with passages like this, we should be thinking more about Heaven than we do. Especially when we have loved ones like Gussie there now. When Gussie left, I don't know if you sensed it or not, but I did. When Gussie left a part of me left. When my wife left a part of me left. When my wife left, not only did a part of me leave, but I felt a void in our joint ministry before the Lord. I felt with her gone, I had to take up the slack for her witness, and so I thought I am going to see if there isn't more that I can do.

When Gussie left just recently, I felt the self same thing and I am asking the Lord to use me, knowing that I can't fill Gussie's shoes. Maybe now that Gussie has been taken up, we will look up more. Most of us are so busy with all the things that surround this earthly life and so weighed down with the burden and the battle for bread, food, and raiment, that we don't think enough about the land, and our Home which is in Heaven. We are all, as believers, heading Home. Some are closer than others. My prayer list includes some women I know personally, who are very close and they are suffering illnesses that may bring them Home to be with Lord.

Well, what kind of a land is it? It is land made up of only friends. Only friends of the Lord Jesus Christ get to live there. Only His friends go to Heaven. Gussie was one of his friends. Luke 12:4-5, "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him."

The soul is eternal. The physical body isn't. But no one can destroy your soul because it lives forever and we decide where it will live, friends. Notice Christ says here, "I say unto you friends." The word for friends here is one of the three words used for love in the original language of the New Testament Greek. The one we are most familiar with is AGAPE, which is simply a mental

attitude that is void of mental attitude sins. The other word is STORGE, which is talking about family, love of family. But the word that is used here is neither one of these two, but it is the word PHILOS, which is not only the mental attitude, but is a love that encompasses the total soul, this is the epitome of love, a total soul rapport. That is a description of our relationship with Christ and of our so great salvation. Friends. Friends are people who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. That is another title for a believer, like saint.

John 15:13-15, *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”*

“Lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends. Henceforth I call you not servants. For the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth. But I have called you friends. For all things that I have heard of My father I have made know unto you.”

A friend of Christ is a person who accepts Him as personal Saviour and takes in His Word. We know what our Lord is doing. So we are not slave and master in our relationship. Heaven is a land for the friends of the Lord Jesus Christ ... for those who are willing to accept Him as personal Saviour.

Acts 16:31, *“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,”*

That is the testimony and the heritage that Gussie has left us. The Lord changes us, He transforms us, He equips us for eternity. 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* Colossians 1:13, *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.”*

The word dear, is the other word for love, AGAPE. Literally, He has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. When our ministry is over, we will go to live with the Lord forever. That is where Gussie is right now. As a friend of God. 2 Corinthians 5:8, *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”* The word, “present” with the Lord is a Greek word, PROS, which means face to face, an intimate relationship with the Lord.

Paul also reminds us that our citizenship is in Heaven. Philippians 3:20-21, *“For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.”*

The word, “conversation,” is POLITEUMA, citizenship, colony in Heaven. Now this is a great description, describing it as citizens of Heaven. And the prospect of the fulfillment of the promise is great. Surely we can say, one must be afflicted with spiritual stupidity or cursed with incurable insensitivity. Who has never thought of that state of which we may any day enter, nor

ever speculate concerning the conditions there. For our citizenship, our colony of Heaven, from whence we also look, for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change, exchange, our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

One great naturalist of the past was dying and a friend asked him, *“What about the next world?”* His answer was, One world at a time please. And that was not wise, because this life and the life beyond are not two lives, but one.

And Paul reminded us of this. 1 Timothy 4:8, *“For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”* Godliness is profitable unto all things. Having a promise of the life that now is. And of that which is to come. Profitable for time and eternity. But bodily exercise profiteth little. Only in this life and it doesn't prepare for Heaven. You will get a new body, a resurrection body, in Heaven.

There is an old stanza that needs to be sung often or quoted.

“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Eternal day excludes the night.
And pleasures banish pain.”

Now with Gussie having departed, we are reminded of friends and family. There is a part of our family now in Heaven, which Gussie represents and her husband and children who are here, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who are still a part of Gussie, not only as physical family but as spiritual family, and they are with us. Galatians 3:26, *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”* The Holston family reminds us of the body of Christ. Part of the family is in Heaven and part of the family is on this Earth.

Ephesians 3:14-15, *“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in Heaven and Earth is named,”* Gussie Holston is in Heaven, face to face with the Lord and she no longer has to walk by faith, she walks by sight, face to face with the Lord. Jim Holston and the girls and boys, and the rest of us are here on Earth, and we have to walk by faith. Because we are at home in this body and Gussie is absent from this body.

2 Corinthians 5:8, *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”*

Family in Heaven, Gussie. Family on Earth, the rest of the Holstons. Gussie reminds me at this time, when God told Adam it was not good for man to be alone, and He put Adam to sleep and took a part of him out. And designed his Right Woman. At this time Gussie is like the part that has been taken out of the man, Jim, and waiting to be put back where she was in the first place. Time after time as a pastor I have sat with those who are bereaved and broken-hearted, suffering and in pain, and you can often see a homesickness in their faces, and in their tone. You can almost see the longing. The long-

ing to leave here and go Home.

I was going up in an elevator in a hospital in Houston. I went to visit a lady who was about to depart from this life as a Christian. Her daughter rode up with me in the elevator and she said "Will you try to stop my mother from saying that she wants to go Home to be with the Lord?" And I said to her "Why?" and she said, "Because I don't want her to go." When we got into the room, her mother looked at me and said, "Buddy, why don't you tell my stupid daughter that I am going Home to be with my Saviour and I no longer want to be here." Well, she departed and her daughter was upset. She wanted her here.

I remember another incident, when I lived in Florida, I went to pick up a waitress to take her to work. When I got to her house, her little girl was about 8 or 9, sitting on the fender of a car in front of her house. As I walked up I said, "Hello, Honey." She said, "Buddy, I am going to see Jesus Christ." And at that time her mother walked out and said, "Stop saying that. I know you are going to see Jesus Christ after you are married, and have children and have lived a full life." And the little girl said, "No mamma. I am going to see the Lord now." Her mother said, "Stop saying that." The next day she departed for her Lord.

My wife was dying of cancer and she had been alert up unto the last couple of days. Then she went into a coma. And she was in a coma for a couple of days. And I remember one Saturday morning, on my birthday, as I sat there in the room praying and claiming the promises of God and quoting some of her favorite verses, I looked over at the bed, and my wife sat up. As she sat up, the nurse walked into the room at that very moment, and as I got up to walk over to her bed, the nurse was between us and my wife didn't look in my direction at all, but was focused on the nurse, who was the closest to her, and this is what my wife said. "Honey, I am going to go to be with my Lord now, and I want you to know that you can have eternal life by accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. Don't worry about me. I am leaving." Those were the last words out of my wife's mouth and she departed.

I tried to follow up on her witness. There were other people in the room and I told them that was for them. I remember talking with a gentleman who was 85, and he said, "Sir, I do not complain, but since the gentle one of my heart and home, went on, a little while ago, and since I have become so frail I cannot work, I would so love to go and join her in the eternal Home." He added these words. "I would welcome the summons today to go on to the Home above, if only I could have my way. But I do not murmur at God's way, I gladly yield to His way. His will be done."

All of us ought to think more about that land beyond, which Jesus Christ is preparing for all His friends. When we think of Heaven, certain great features stand out which we find scattered throughout the Word of God. Romans 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

If someone asked you today to give your concept of what Heaven is like, what would you say? What is the first thing that comes into your mind? It would be interesting to pass out a questionnaire and have everyone write down the answer to that question. We would probably have as many views about Heaven as there are people who would be filling out the questionnaire. If you were asked to give only one feature of Heaven, which the Bible has revealed to you, what one of the features would most appeal to you? Let us look briefly at some of the pictures that the Bible gives us of Heaven and think of this place where the Lord Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for us. To prepare a permanent place for us, with Him. For all of those friends, who have willingly accepted Him as their personal Saviour, of which Gussie is one, and a challenge to us. What feature of the heavenly Home most challenges you? Well, for one thing, Heaven is a holy place.

Hebrews 9:24, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." The holy of holies in the tabernacle and the temple were just a shadow of Christ renting the veil and entering into the third Heaven, which according to this passage before us and others is a holy place. Matthew 27:51, "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;" Nothing that defileth shall ever enter there.

Nothing which maketh a lie, shall ever enter that Home of love and light and life. Revelation 21:27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Heaven is a holy place indicated by the fact that Jesus Christ is there, and He is pure and holy and without spot or blemish, sinless. And how different that contrast is to down here. Nothing that defiles there, and everything that defiles here. No abominations there, and nothing but abominations here. No lies there, nothing but lies here. John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no Truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Heaven is holy but Earth is not. No matter how they try to clean up the environment, they will never make it holy.

1 Peter 1:15-16, "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." You can't pick up the newspaper or turn on the TV, or the radio, anywhere or at any time, you will be shocked with the most amazing revelations of human weaknesses and the manifestations of the old sin nature. Notice the current headlines:

4th murder-suicide in one week.

Man kills wife than shoots self as children sleep upstairs.

When parents snap anyone can lash out at children when stress and strain boil

over, experts say.

Man dies of self-inflicted wounds after 2 slain.

Punishment fatal to 4-year-old girl

Girl died Saturday night three days after she was wrapped in a comforter and stuffed under a water bed as punishment for cursing.

Accused child killer faces murder trial.

Wife's ex-boyfriend kills pair.

Serial rapists free to rape again.

No area of city is exempt as sexual predators average 5 victims.

I could go on and on. Every where we turn men mislead, decoy, deceive, and destroy and take all chances of death in doing so, for maybe just a few dollars. Men violate laws and despise morality and set themselves against any form of righteousness, for a few dollars that perish with the use.

Hebrews 12:16, "*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*" 1 John 3:12, "*Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*" Jude 1:11, "*Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*"

There is a battle here in this world, in the flesh. Galatians 5:19-21, "*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*"

That is the works of the flesh; verses 19-21. Notice the fruit of the Spirit, verses 22-23. Galatians 5:22-23, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*" Here is the battle: Galatians 5:17, "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*"

We are also involved down here, with a battle with evil. The prince of darkness fights every inch of the way with the prince of life and light. The evil one tries to circumvent and resist and overthrow and destroy to the very last limit of his power. Our journey through this world is a battle, it is a constant battle. It is a battle with the world and the flesh and the devil. But when we are absent from the body and face to face with the Lord there is no such battle. Evil cannot enter there. Old sin natures are not there. Nothing that defileth shall ever enter there.

James 4:1-4, "*From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the*

world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

Holiness, righteousness, purity, and perfect goodness shall everywhere reign. Why not seek an eternal residence in that blessed Home? Who would not wish to go Home and to be with Christ? We are not only to see the Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ, as He is, but everyone else who enters within that habitation is to be like Him forevermore.

1 John 3:1-2, "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.*"

We will see Gussie again, and our loved ones, who also like her, have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. These are the friends of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith in Him as Saviour.

Heaven is also a place that is exempt from any type of weariness. Now that feature should appeal to many of us. What a weary world this really is. Who cannot as we pass see the burdens which men and women and children are often called to bear, and not be moved with compassion for them? Especially when you see heavy burdens on the shoulders of the old and upon gentle women, who are called to bear grievous burdens that should never have been laid upon them. And who cannot look upon the young and see them working late and long that they may help get bread for themselves and others. A weary world is about us.

Isaiah 40:28, 30, "*Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.*" Even young people are weary and faint. The call from the Lord is always to those who are weary.

Matthew 11:27-28, "*All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" Job 10:1, "*My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*" Isaiah 50:4, "*The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.*" Now Heaven will change all that. There will be no weariness in your house of perfect rest and peace.

Revelation 21:4, "*And 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.*"

Just picture if you can some women who have children to take care of and are so busy sewing, that while you talk with them, they continue sewing and can't stop because of the burden they have for their children. And just ask the

same question to one of these mothers, what feature of Heaven appeals to you most? She puts down her sewing needle for the first time in the conversation and says, "Oh, sir, I will rest when I get over there. I am very tired and my babies must have my care all hours of the day and night. Their father is gone. I have to be the bread- winner. I have to be the teacher. When I have no work, I have to go from place to place to get more work. I am tired in my body and in my brain, and tired in soul, and tired all the time. The feature, sir, that most appeals to me is that I will rest up there." That poor soul, along with other poor souls, will rest up there.

I know that Gussie, and I know that my wife, are resting up there. And I know also that neither one of them no longer have the pain of cancer anymore. I also know as a husband, and with other members of the family who take care of those suffer, that we too become tired and weary and physically and mentally exhausted, as I was myself. Those of us who have had to watch loved ones suffer and felt helpless looking at them not being able to do anything for them to alleviate the pain, know how frustrating that is and how it just tears you to pieces to see a loved one suffer knowing you can't do anything for them. There comes to those who watch and wait a sense of relief when the Lord decides to take them Home. We know that their suffering is over, a suffering which we could not alleviate nor bear to look upon.

Romans 8:18, "*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*"

Our loved ones in Heaven know now that there is no comparison between their suffering and it is not even worthy to compare it with being in glory. They are experiencing what Paul was unable to communicate to us. 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, "*I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third Heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*"

Knowing that it is time for them to be with Him and that we can do no more for them as much as we would like, we know they are in good hands, the Great Physician's hands. 2 Timothy 4:6, 7, "*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*" God only picks corn when it is ripe ... a full age. Job 5:26, "*Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.*" When the corn is ripe, then God picks it.

Psalms 90:10, "*The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*"

There shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not one wave of trouble
Roll across my peaceful breast.

But Heaven means more than rest. It is not like some buddhistic nirvana where activity ceases, and where personality is obliterated.

No, Heaven is a place of active service. His servants shall serve Him. Revelation 22:3, "*And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him:*"

What this service specifically is we do not know. But the word for serve is LATREUO, which is used for the priestly service. And we know that all believers are priests. 1 Peter 2:9, "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light:*"

A royal priesthood. Revelation 1:6, "*And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*"

In our Father's house of many mansions, there will be given ample opportunities for all our powers throughout endless eternity. So we serve Him and we will serve Him there. Matthew 23:11, "*But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.*"

Then again Heaven is exemption from all suffering and pain, and from that grim enemy of life, which is death. There will be no more suffering nor pain, nor tears, nor death.

And that is the place where Jesus Christ has called His friends. And I am sure that that is one thing all of us are thankful for, because no longer is Gussie suffering the pain of cancer, which not only took a toll on her but on her husband and her family and friends. It is true when one suffers we all suffer and when one rejoices we all rejoice. 1 Corinthians 12:26, "*And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*"

We have suffered with her, while she was here, but now she is no longer suffering, she is rejoicing. So we have to shift gears. Rejoice with those who rejoice. Gussie would want you to. Philippians 4:4, "*Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*"

We live in a world where suffering is obvious all around us. No matter what direction you take, you always bump into suffering. You can't get through a day or an hour, without seeing some suffering. This issue of suffering confronts us day and night. Probably the grimmest of all sufferings is the suffering of death. While it is called death.

The Book of Revelation says this: Revelation 7:13, 14, "*And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they, And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

The words of the same Book of Revelation give us also these words: Revelation 21:4, "*And 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.*"

Now you can't read this passage without thinking that something has hap-

pened to death. What happened to death? Death was an enemy, an enemy.

1 Corinthians 15:26, *"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."* I spend a lot of time in cemeteries, and I am called upon many times to perform graveside services. In the springtime you can see the flowers and trees that are planted and the many flowers that are brought. The immediate area around the actual burial ground is always lined with green carpet and it always looks clean and neat. But it is still a grave. There is no such thing as a beautiful grave simply because death is an enemy and the last to be destroyed. One time in this world's history there was no death. There will be a time in history when death will take a holiday. So when we leave, we leave this intruder behind.

1 Corinthians 15:54-58, *"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."*

And so when we awake on the other side: Psalm 17:15, *"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."*

Why should we not want to go where there is no sickness? No doctors in Heaven. Only our Great Physician. Why wouldn't anyone want to go to a place where you will see no more suffering? I know I am tired of looking at suffering face to face for years, and I am sure that the Holstons are also. Heaven checks all tears and pains outside. If you have ever looked into the pale face of a loved one suffering from some horrible sickness, day after day, and then you realize that the next time you see them they will not look like the last time you saw them.

My wife was so eaten up with cancer, I don't want to describe it to you out of respect for her privacy. I had to remove all the mirrors and tear up all her pictures because she didn't want to be reminded of how poorly she looked and how beautiful she once was. No one in Heaven will have a mark on them except Revelation 5:6, *"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the Earth."* Literally having been freshly slain. Christ will be the only one who will bear the marks of His earthly life. A constant reminder, in case you forget.

Acts 4:12, *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* Isaiah 53:5, *"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."* 1 Peter 2:24, *"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."*

We know that at the Second Advent of Christ He will still bear the marks that identify Him as our Saviour.

Zechariah 12:10, *"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of Grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."*

"And they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced." Which means in Heaven and for all eternity, He will be the only one marred, and we will know that He took all our sins and infirmities upon Himself and with His stripes we are healed.

That is not all. Heaven is a place of knowledge. 1 Corinthians 13:12, *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."*

Some teacher said, "I hope I will have something to do when I get to Heaven. I hope I will be able to teach there. I like teaching." Heaven is a place of the enlarging of knowledge. Here we get fragmentary parts of the real meaning of life. Here we are baffled all the time. You never stop studying and growing and you never reach the saturation point.

There are always some staggering problems, which we may know the general principle, the overall concept, but never get to the exact reason of why this or that happened. We are going to a place where there are no whys. All will be thoroughly explained. The Lord is His own interpreter. He will make things plain.

Genesis 40:8, *"And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you."* Job 33:23, *"If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:"* John 13:7, *"Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."*

When we get to Heaven, Jesus Christ will tell us the meaning of every tear. Psalm 56:8, *"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?"* He will tell us why and we will be finally satisfied. It will never be James 1:22, *"But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."* It will never be 2 Timothy 3:7, *"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth."* It will never be 2 Timothy 3:5, *"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."* But it will be 1 Corinthians 13:12, *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."* Hebrews 5:12, *"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat."*

A young man loses his wife and he is left with a child to raise. Why? It may be a question about some heart-breaking sorrow. Why, why this or that? We live in a world where there is always that probing. A young girl loses her baby who died in the crib. Why? We can only go back to God's essence and know that god is fair. When He decides to take someone with Him, it is the

right time.

Peter got into the problem. John 21:20-23, *“Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?”*

When He takes one of our loved ones with Him, than that means that they are far better off with Him than being here.

A child, for example, goes to be with the Lord before the age of accountability. Well, they are in a safe condition, they have never had a chance to reject Him. He may take a young person Home to be with Him who is a believer, and He is delivering them from this world and the world system. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are positive to His Word and living the Christian way of life, we will come to a full age. Full age doesn't mean old age, but full for you, complete.

Genesis 25:8, *“Then Abraham gave up the spirit, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.”*

David is an example of that. David came to the same conclusion. David prayed that the Lord would send back his son. 2 Samuel 12:16-23, *“David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”*

There is still another feature to Home-going and or Heaven. It is a comforting thought, it is your final Home. You won't have to move anymore. We have been pilgrims and sojourners, and now we have our final Home.

John 14:1-3, *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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. 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.”*

Now when you use the word, “Home” it falls like God's Grace upon our ears. We are talking about Divine Institutions. We are talking about marriage and family, which are Divine Institutions. When the word “Home” is mentioned, in a moment we can go back over the years. And at that moment we have the same homelike feeling we always had. Now when a member of your family departs, there is an empty place at the table and they are missed, and Gussie will be missed in that way. Now it is not the size of the house or the location, a house is not a home. A home is where you have Right-Man, Right-Women, and you have children. That is a home.

Proverbs 31:10, *“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.”*

Notice what a home is. Proverbs 31:15, *“She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.”* Proverbs 31:27, *“She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.”*

Her household. Proverbs 31:21, *“She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.”*

Her husband. Proverbs 31:11, *“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.”*

Her husband has confidence in her and he respects her. Proverbs 31:23, *“Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.”*

He is prominent. And that is because of her. Proverbs 31:28, *“Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”*

Children call her blessed, and her husband praiseth her. Now notice the key to the whole thing, the home, the household. Proverbs 31:30, *“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”* “A woman that feareth the Lord.” A woman who loves the Lord, respects the Lord, and stands in awe of the Lord. Now that is a home and that is Gussie.

Proverbs 12:4, *“A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.”* Proverbs 31:10, *“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.”*

The Hebrew word, “virtuous,” is not what we call virtue. This word means a force. A force in life. She adds strength to the family. And that is Gussie.

Proverbs 14:26, *“In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.”* Proverbs 18:22, *“Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.”*

Literally, obtaineth Grace from the Lord. A woman like that is a Grace gift. Song of Solomon 8:7, *“Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.”*

Home means love. Home means happiness. Home means friendship. Home means confidence. Home means intimate relationships.

Psalms 144:12, *“That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:”*

“Amid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam, be it ever so humble,

There is no place like home.”

But Gussie provided even more than that. More than a home. What could be more than a home? It was a classroom. She held Bible classes in her home for years. She came under principle found in Titus 2:4-5, *“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.”*

Her home was more than a home. It was a Church in the true sense of the word. Most churches never teach the Word of God like Gussie did. She would be following the principle also found in Romans 16:5, *“Likewise greet the church that is in their house.”*

She would follow the principle in the way that Timothy was raised. 2 Timothy 1:5, *“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”* 2 Timothy 3:15, *“And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”* Philemon 1:2, *“And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:”*

Gussie fulfilled the principles of the early Church meeting in homes, etc., not having any church buildings. 1 Timothy 5:14, *“I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”* 1 Peter 3:7, *“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the Grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”*

Yes, Gussie was a testimony for the Lord and it gives us an opportunity and a challenge to carry on her ministry in our lives, and reflect on those women who are mothers, and wives, and sisters who stand in the gap with the Word.

Sometimes people ask the question, Will we know one another in Heaven? Will we recognize Gussie and others that have departed to be with the Lord? The answer is yes. We will have more knowledge in Heaven than we do here on Earth. If you knew Gussie here on Earth and she knew you, well you will know her in Heaven. Immortality of the soul is both personal and conscious. Just as Jesus Christ is and was. We get a glimpse in that question on the mount of transfiguration. Matthew 17:1-3, *“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him.”*

Notice that Jesus Christ was there and Moses and Elijah. They did recognized all of them. We are sure to know one another in our Father’s house above. There is another passage that gives us some light on this subject. Matthew 8:11, *“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven.”* David as we mentioned when he lost his son, said this, 2 Samuel 12:23, *“But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to*

him, but he shall not return to me.”

There was a young man who was seriously ill in the city. As he became aware that he was getting closer and closer to his departure, he said, I would love to die at home, on my mother’s bed. So his father came to take him home. The boy was grateful, because he was going home. And as he began to approach his home with the trees and the flowers, he was so overcome with happiness he shouted for joy. Two or three days later the Lord took him.

When our day is done we will go Home. Who is afraid to go Home? I read of a man who said, I am the only one of eleven children and ten of them are gone and they are all Christians. And then he said with a light on his face that you had never seen on land or sea, “Won’t I have a great time when I see them all over there? When I see Father and Mother and all the boys and girls from school, but above all when I see my Divine Lord and Saviour?” We will see our loved ones, Gussie, my wife, and especially those who have suffered. Remembering the last time we saw them, with the pain in their eyes and the ache in their bodies. No longer needing cobalt treatments, but bearing the reflected glory of the Lord Jesus Christ with a new resurrection body. Some of our loved ones are already Home. There are some that I know, that I am thinking of right now. They are in our prayers and they are also suffering with various physical illnesses.

Our loved ones in Heaven no longer bear the marks and scars of this life. The only Person that is marked in Heaven is the Lord Jesus Christ. This distinguishes Him from all the other members of the human race who are with Him. There is no mistaking ever who the Saviour of the world is. He bears the marks of dying for the sins of the whole world. Throughout all eternity He will bear those self-same marks.

Zechariah 12:10, *“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of Grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”*

“They shall look upon Me whom they pierced.” This is at the Second Advent and this prophecy of piercing was fulfilled.

John 19:37, *“And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”*

David had a very interesting thing to say about his concept of his departure. 1 Samuel 20:3, *“And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found Grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.”*

“There is but a step between me and death.” Just another stride. No one can steal his way into Heaven. No one can buy his way into Heaven. No one can work his way into Heaven.

I know of four ladies at the time of this writing that have serious illnesses, and it is possible they won’t be with us at the end of this year. They may be a

step away as David said, but they, like Gussie, have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and when they have finished their testimony and have reached a full age, they also will be absent from the body and face to face with the Lord. Upon arrival they will be in the presence of the Lord, and Gussie. The Lord Jesus Christ stood up when Stephen was martyred and welcomed him into Heaven. I don't know if He will stand up for these ladies, but I would. To the families and friends of these loved ones, we join you in prayer and hope that they experience the Grace they tasted in living and they experience also God's matchless Grace in dying, living in Grace, and dying in Grace.

Mrs. Mathiele McDaniel, Mrs. Jo Hood, Mrs. Janell Harvey, Mrs. Mary Good.

The Lord may summon you Home one at a time, or He may just come for all of us at once. Whether He comes for us one at a time or if He comes for us all together, we will be with the Lord forever. There is joy in Heaven and in the presence of the angels when believers have lived their life claiming the Word of God. There is a cheering section. There are angels applauding the believers at Homecoming, which is of interest to the angels, because of the angelic conflict.

Luke 15:7, *"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that changes his mind, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no change of mind."* Luke 15:10, *"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that changeth his mind."*

In order to get Home, to get into Heaven, it is simply accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour from one of the following passages. Ephesians 2:8-9, *"For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Romans 4:5, *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* Acts 16:31, *"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."* John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

See you soon, Gussie.

January 7, 1995 The Home-Going of Gussie Holston

Buddy Dano, Pastor,
Anderson Bible Church
527 Woodlawn
Anderson, Indiana 46012
(765) 649-0523
bdano@iquest.net