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Words of Life

"HEAVEN"

If we want to know about Heaven, we must listen to someone who has been there. But the best person that we can call upon to find out about Heaven, one who has more knowledge than all others, is Jesus Himself. And Jesus, who has gone to prepare a place for us (Jn. 14: 2), has told us about Heaven. Jesus still speaks to us in the pages of Holy Scripture about Heaven.

He tells us that in Heaven we will have perfect happiness and there will be no fear that it will cease, as we read in the Book of Revelations (21:4), "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things have passed away", and as we read in Isaias (35:10), "The redeemed of the Lord shall return and shall come into Zion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness: and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

The happiness of heaven is no capable of being described nor can we begin to imagine the joys that God has prepared for those that love Him. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for them that love Him (1 Cor. 2:9) Picture yourself having the joy from all your past Christmases, Easters, birthday parties, . . . in short, having all the joys of your past life all at one time. Wouldn't that be a tremendous joy? Now think of the largest number that you can imagine, take that number and multiply it by all of the joy that you have had in your entire life. What an indescribable joy that would be if you had such a joy. But such a joy would hardly be the beginning of the joy that will be yours in Heaven, O Child of God!

St. Paul tells us that, "we now see through a glass in a dark manner. But then face to face." (1 Cor. 13:12) We experience a great happiness when we meet a friend after years of separation. If human meetings can give such joy, how much more joy will we have when we behold God face to face.

In this world, we receive great delight, by looking at a picturesque sunset or by listening to beautiful music. Yet no one can go on forever looking at the same sunset; and an endless repetition of the same piece of music might very easily lead to madness. But when we see God face to face, there will be no tiring of this beauty because He is the Author and Source of all beauty. And whereas we become weary of the sunset—which is only a created reflection of God—we will never grow weary of His own infinite beauty and goodness.

Now is the time to prepare for Heaven. The precious value of time can never be exaggerated. An hour, minute or even a second wasted is gone forever. Time lost can never be regained.

If you regard the time you spend on earth as the stepping stone to eternity, you will automatically want to be a "go-giver" instead of merely a "go-getter". You won't forget for one moment that eternity depends on your faith in Jesus and on how you play your role on the stage of life. You will realize that the longest life is too short to fulfill the special mission assigned to you by Almighty God Himself—the mission of being an instrument in bringing His divine love to a world very much in need of it.

PRAYER

Instill in each of us, O Divine Savior, such a yearning for heaven that we will use every moment on earth in bringing Your love to others.

Plan early for on-farm storage of grain.

Fertilizer use has reached an all-time record—24 million tons in the year ended June 30, 1959. This is about 8 per cent more than the previous year.

One in 16 persons employed in the U.S. works either directly or indirectly with the dairy industry.

Probably the most serious threat to the life of shade trees are wood rots.

Many shade trees diseases are caused by parasitic fungi and bacteria.

It's soil testing time.

grams alone. If we could . . . homes of some of the . . . order. She was a welcome . . . learned and mighty in the land, and could cover on equal terms with . . . diversity deans and United States . . . neglected . . . bestow a smile of loving kindness and a word of encouragement on the poorest child that walked unkempt and tattered, along these country roads.

Throughout her many active years, and indeed until within a few years of the end, her presence was seen, and her influence felt, everywhere and in every place of the life of this community. Hers was not the life of the common mortal who in his time plays many parts in sequence as described by the poet: she played many parts simultaneously, and she played all of them well. As occasion required, she could and did, with equal poise propriety, discuss classical music with a touring artist, or the current potato crop with her tenant; play a simple game with a six-year-old child, or a fugue of Bach;

she bade us all a loving farewell; and now at night she has quietly crossed the Bar, to see her Face face-to-face.

The loving heart of a mother, the inquiring mind of a scholar, the aspiring soul of a poet—all of these had her abode in the body we are now met to lay in its final resting place. It is altogether fitting that we should assemble for her obsequies here within these stately walls, which she, more than any other individual, was instrumental in erecting as an enduring temple toward which all our souls might turn, in life and in death.

She has indeed wrought among us long and faithfully and well. Only a few now present knew her in the morning of her life; many more of us knew her at noontide; nearly all of us knew her in the afternoon, and all in the evening. At sunset she still labored faithfully in the Master's vineyard. When twilight came

park—even to a secluded wooded area, where the family have a day or several days of family fun. . . . that the . . . family parents have vivid memories of events of a few years ago when families were separated by wartime conditions. They want their families to be together as much as possible, particularly when there's family fun involved.

Take some good books along on vacation (read them together or not); everyone will enjoy games, and even the smallest can enjoy good food to cook, or supervise the cooking. Take your hobbies if the recreation spot lends itself to what you do.

If you can't leave home, have picnic parties in your own back- or beach, or to a state recreation yard.

TRIBUTE TO A TEACHER

(ED. NOTE: Following is a tribute to Nora Cobb White Spencer, written by Joseph F. Ballew, a former student of Mrs. Spencer. Mrs. Spencer died recently in a Murphy hospital.)

I thank God that He appointed my lot to be born and grow to manhood in the community where Nora Cobb White Spencer lived. Without the stimulation of her brilliant intellect and the inspiration of her radiant spirit, my boyhood among these hills would have been poor indeed. But no community can rigidly be called a poor place in which to grow up so long as it can count among its citizens a teacher so abundantly equipped to serve the needs of youth as was she whose loss we now lament. Soon after I learned to read, and my childish mind began to peer wonderingly out into the great world beyond the guiding star of my life. Her benign spirit beckons me onward and upward still, never more than these narrow valleys, she became the great world beyond these narrow valleys, she became the guiding star at this sad moment.

Long and distinguished as was her teaching career in the public schools of Cherokee County, I was privileged to know her in the formal relationship of teacher for only one brief school term; yet all my life she has been my teacher. It was she who first made me genuinely aware of the riches to be found in the realm of books and kindled within me the desire to "know the best that has been thought and said in the world." It was she, more than any other of my teachers, who taught me, by direct instruction and far more by superb example, to speak and write the English language. Nor was she without the crowning roll in my religious education, for it was through her that I came to know and love the great hymns of the church and through her that I first learned to appreciate merely the supreme literary quality but above all the matchless spiritual truth and beauty of the Book of Psalms. Many a gem of divine wisdom cut of its pages have I heard fall from her eloquent lips:

Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God, and keep His commandments: my heart be acquainted with Him.

What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable to Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.

I could repeat scores of them. I have long been humbly conscious of the immense personal debt I owe to Mrs. Spencer, and I have the sweet memory of having more than once acknowledged it to her with gratitude while her ears could yet hear my words. Nor have I been wanting in a keen awareness of her immeasurable influence on the lives of others, both near and far, through her long and untiring service in this church and community, and in the schools of Cherokee County and of other counties beyond the borders of this state. But only when we stand aghast in the aching void that is left after the final exit of a superior spirit do we become fully aware of its potency.

The passing of Mrs. Spencer marks the end of an era in the history of this church and this community. When an ordinary man or woman passes out of the life of a community, another steps into the breach, and the life of the community continues with little change. But the one who has so recently departed from among us was a woman of such extraordinary stature that there is none to

take her place. Such powers of intellect, such wealth of personality such quality and range of talent, such tireless energy a tenacity of purpose—rarely is any community enriched by an individual possessed of all these. Far more rarely is a rural community such as ours so favored as to retain an individual so abundantly endowed by God and nature after that individual has acquired education and culture. She followed (thank God that she did not) the usual course of persons of her superior talent and training and sought some center of wealth and culture, the younger daughter of John and Sarah Elizabeth might have won there far higher recognition in the teaching profession, or she might have had a distinguished—even famous—career in any one or more of several other fields: creative writing, journalism, drama, music, or politics. Moreover, she could have enjoyed there those things for which her artistic soul most hungered here among these hills; great music, painting, and drama.

Instead, she elected to devote her life to the education and improvement of the children and youth of her native mountains. And so deep and strong was her love of humanity and her devotion to duty that even in the most trying times she ever regretted her choice, or lost her dream, or faltered in her task. Into her work, year after year and decade after decade, she poured all her splendid and varied learning and talent—literary, histrionic, and musical; and all that she did was vitalized and illumined by a personality that she like the Evening Star.

Nor was her work confined to the secular sphere—indeed, she drew no sharp distinction between the secular and the sacred, for to her, as to another noble woman of literary bent, every realm of life was sacred. "And every common bush afire with God." To this hallowed hill she came to worship Him. But her active soul could not rest content with passive worship; she must prove her faith by her works. Accordingly, she laid on this altar all the talents that so distinguished her in the teaching profession, and did with her might what her hands found to do; we are all witnesses that it was much—how much and far-reaching, God alone can judge.

She was not, to be sure, the first in this region to serve God and humanity with full energy and devotion in both schoolroom and the church—the two are, in fact, so exceedingly well suited to coordinated service that many have endeavored to do so. But who else of all those known to us has served in both so long and so well?

It has been said of both women and teachers that their work is never done. Of ordinary women and ordinary teachers this of course is not true. But she was neither an ordinary woman nor an ordinary teacher, and so long as God gave her strength, her work was never done. Throughout that half a century of her creative life, she not only her appointed rounds of duty both at school and at church in every kind of weather with a constancy that shamed us all; she also gave most generously of her unscheduled time at all seasons to a multitude of worthy tasks. She thought not in terms of hours per working week, but rather in terms of human need, and went far beyond the call of common duty in the service of humanity. Her home was ever open to any and all the youth of this who would go there to seek knowledge and counsel—either secular or religious. Into her home she especially welcomed groups of young people for the purpose of planning and rehearsing programs to be presented on all occasions here in the church. A very large percentage of you whose faces I see now before me have participated in some of these programs under her masterful direction. The number of hours she spent on church pro-

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