

# The University Heights Messenger

April 18, 2010

## **“Peace I Leave With You; My Peace I Give To You.”**

My family and I were in West Virginia this past week for a gospel meeting. While the meeting went well and the brethren were attentive and very kind, it was abundantly clear that their hearts were heavy. Indeed, the hearts of West Virginians the state over are heavy at this time as they mourn the tragic deaths of twenty-nine coal miners in a mining accident the likes of which has not been seen in this country for decades.

A brother offering the closing announcements one of the evenings could not keep the tears from his eyes or his voice from cracking as he reminded us of the need to pray for the families of the deceased. He did not know any of the miners or their families personally and yet, as a lifelong resident of West Virginia, coal mining has been ingrained in him from his earliest years. The other members, all of whom are from the state, felt the same way and there was not a dry eye after the closing prayer. It was quite touching and my heart went out to my brethren who were mourning the tragedy in a way that others who are not familiar with the culture simply cannot.

As I listened to the closing prayer and the good brother struggling to get the words out when he mentioned the miners and their families, one verse kept running through my mind over and over. The verse was John 14:27. In that verse Jesus tells His closest disciples, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”**

I find these words incredibly comforting and the time of their speaking

equally incredible. In mere hours Jesus’ physical torment would begin. He Himself was troubled as He spoke these words. In John 12:27 He said, **“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.”** In Luke 12:50 our Lord said, **“I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!”** Yet as His own tortured soul wrestled with the dread of physical agony which He knew was but moments away, His heart longed to comfort those who would be distressed at His absence. What a Savior we have!

The peace our Lord speaks of is sadly not one that all people can experience *in their current condition*. However, it is a peace that all people *could* experience. This is a peace that grows only in the heart of the one who knows with certainty that he is loved by God and that he lives daily in God’s favor. This is a peace that does something no other peace can do for it transcends every circumstance on this earth.

The saddest circumstance I have ever personally witnessed was two faithful parents sitting side by side, tears streaming down their faces, while each held a hand of their small child dying in the hospital bed before them. The thought of it brings tears to my eyes as I write this. Yet I learned something about peace from those two dear, faithful Christian parents. They taught me the power of the blessed peace of which our Lord speaks. Those two parents, whose hearts were breaking as they said their final goodbyes, nonetheless remained calm and serene in the face of a circumstance that has destroyed countless parents before them.

Only absolute knowledge of divine approval in one's life is capable of bringing about such serenity in the face of the worst tempests life can send one's way. That realization creates for the Christian so imbued a well spring of inner strength and courage. It also creates an incredibly strong foundation for perseverance and tenacity in confronting head on each challenge and spiritual battle the Christian is called upon to face in this life.

My heart breaks for the family of those miners, particularly if they are not Christians. They will receive countless letters, telephone calls, and well wishes from their next door neighbors all the way to the President of the United States. Perhaps they will be able to take some consolation in that, but none of it can even begin to approach the peace that Jesus promised His disciples and of which He speaks in this verse. With such peace offered is there any wonder He concluded the verse as He did? **“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”** Do you know this peace? If not, let us help you find it.

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### **IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

**Esmeralda Agustin** is struggling spiritually. Let us continue to make efforts in reaching out to her and pray that the Lord continues to show her mercy in providing time for repentance.

**Glenn Kimberlin** is shut-in.

**Rachel Crawford's** aunt, Gail Stein, continues her treatments for breast cancer.

**Taylor Osterling** has been discharged from the hospital. Let's keep the little guy and his family in our prayers. There's nothing quite like watching your child struggle with his health and Taylor is struggling mightily.

**Shannon Gilbert** continues to receive her treatments for breast cancer.

**Rachel Knollman** is doing well with her treatments at home.

**Robert Brundige**, Richard's brother, is in Parkside Manor in Cynthiana dealing with some issues. **Sarah** Brundige, Richard's mother, is in Cambridge Place Nursing Home and in need of our prayer.

Let's also remember **David Day and his wife, Michelle Oxendine, Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

The informational meeting we be today at 5. The men will meet before that at 4 to discuss the Summer Series now that brother Barnett has had to excuse himself for health reasons. Let's pray for his recovery.

### **BIBLE READING SCHEDULE FOR 4/18-4/24:**

**Sunday:** Num 21-22, Ps73, John 15

**Monday:** Num 23-24, Ps 74, John 16

**Tuesday:** Num 25-26, Ps 73, John 17

**Wednesday:** Num 27-28, Ps 74, John 18

**Thursday:** Num 29-30, Ps 75, John 19

**Friday:** Num 31, Ps 78:1-39, John 20-21

**Saturday:** Num 32, Ps 78:40-72, Acts 1

### **SERMON TOPICS:**

Sunday AM. The Eldership--7

Sunday PM.

### **CLASS INFORMATION:**

Lesson 13, II, A, (2 Corinthians 8:3-5)