

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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**Forest Hill
Church of Christ**
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd
Memphis, TN 38125

Office: 901-751-2444
Info Line: 901-531-8849

www.foresthillcofc.org
jsanders@foresthillcofc.org

Elders:

Anthony D. Callahan
Warren Davenport
Gregory D. Mangrum
Harold D. Mangrum
Keith B. McAlister

Ministers:

Barry M. Grider,
Pulpit Evangelist

Matthew Jones,
Personal Evangelist

Jordan Pugh, Youth

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship.... 10:30 A.M.
Afternoon Worship.... 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

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Irene C. Taylor
1931-2017

Celicia and I have had the honor and privilege of being mentored by some of the finest gospel preachers and wives that could be found anywhere. We have truly been blessed by our association with Robert and Irene Taylor. As I contemplated attending the Memphis School of Preaching, I was already doing some preaching and I relied heavily upon the sound and scholarly material written by brother Taylor. In 1990, not long after I began my studies in the school, I was delighted to attend the Power Lectures in Southaven, Mississippi, where I finally had the opportunity to meet him and hear him preach. Because of my long association with the Knight Arnold/Forest Hill church it has been a joy to spend much quality time with brother and sister Taylor, and I know Celicia feels the same way I do.

So it is with much sadness that I pen this article concerning the passing of the beloved Irene Taylor. After an extended illness she passed from this life during the early morning hours of January 12. She was 85. Jesus said of a woman who anointed His head with precious ointment, "She hath done what she could: she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying" (Mark 14:8). Likewise, during her lifetime, Irene Taylor did what she could to live a life pleasing to her Father in heaven and in honor of His Son, Jesus Christ. Only eternity can fully estimate the amount of good that she did while upon this earth. She set a noble standard that all wives of preachers could and should follow.

Born and reared in Nampa, Idaho, sister Taylor received a quality education both in academics and in morals at Freed-Hardeman College, graduating in 1952, the same year she married her classmate, Robert R. Taylor, Jr. The Taylors worked for several years with the Ripley, Mississippi congregation, and then began an association with the church in Ripley, Tennessee that has now continued for over 40 years. She considered being a help meet to a gospel preacher as a high honor with a grave responsibility. Brother Taylor would tell you, as well as all of us who have witnessed her life, that she fulfilled her role in a most admirable way. Sister Taylor was a marvelous teacher of women. In fact, she has been one of the most prominent sisters in Christ among us, regularly teaching Bible classes for women and girls and speaking on ladies days. Like her husband, sister Taylor has been a prolific author of biblical books and other Bible related materials that have enriched personal study. Her book of poems, *Pearls of Poetry*, displays her marvelous skill as a writer. Whatever she wrote, the reader could be assured that her writings were for God's glory and the reader's edification.

Sister Irene Taylor was a woman of holiness and righteousness. She loved that which was pure and right and hated every false way (Psalm 119:128). She vigorously opposed those who wanted to change the role of women in the church to that which was contrary to biblical teaching. She fought the feminist movement's anti-God, anti-Bible, and anti-family agenda.

Above all, Irene Taylor cherished her role as a loving wife and mother. Rebecca and Tim were born to this marital union and later, along with their respective mates, blessed their parents with four precious grandchildren. A great-grandson was born shortly before sister Taylor's passing. We are mindful of the entire family during this time of sadness, but we know they, as do all of us in Christ, have great hope in the resurrection of the dead and in a heavenly reunion in the sweet by and by.

The funeral service for Irene Taylor was conducted at the Ripley, Tennessee Church of Christ on Saturday, January 14. Her earthly tabernacle was laid to rest later in the afternoon in Bradford, Tennessee. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

Barry Grider

The Joy of the Hope of Heaven

Irene C. Taylor

Heaven is a real place. It is not merely a state of mind as some religionists would have us believe. It is a prepared place for a prepared people. It is the promise of a better home than earth can offer.

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 (John 14:1-3).

What an incentive to live the Christian life here on earth—the promise of a better life in that great beyond! The King James Version says that Jesus is preparing a **mansion** for the faithful. Newer versions translate it as **rooms**. It would seem that the rendering **mansion** is preferred since we have rooms here but few of us have a mansion. However, if rooms is correct, we can be assured that those rooms will be like none we have ever seen on earth. God has promised a prepared place for His prepared people and our responsibility is to make sure we are prepared. We know God will keep His promise for His promise is true. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness...” (2 Peter 3:9). While most declare a desire to go to heaven, not all accept the necessity of doing God's will in God's way. If we are not willing to submit to God's will here on earth, what makes us think we would be happy in heaven even if we are permitted entrance there, which we know cannot be?

When we think of heaven perhaps our minds picture the description of beauty recorded in the book of Revelation.

And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; and the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald. The fifth, sardonic; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass (Rev. 21:18-21).

Mankind is impressed with fine jewels. It is this writer's opinion that Inspiration chose such imagery because this was something man would consider special and worthy of attainment. Undoubtedly, heaven will be far more beautiful than the human mind can comprehend.

The real joy of heaven, however, will not be found in its “material” beauty. The real joy will be in being forever in the presence of God. It will be found in sharing the presence of

the great worthies of all time, of the faithful who have gone before us.

Heaven is described as a place of rest. It will be a place free of cares and trials which are a part of this life.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 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 (Rev. 7:16; 21:4).

No more will we experience the pain of illness and aging nor the sorrow which comes when we must give up to death those we dearly love. We will be changed; we will be incorruptible (1 Cor. 15:47ff). It seems amazing that there are those who believe the second coming has already occurred. If so, we have been shortchanged! We still experience sickness and death; we still must endure the trials and tribulations of life. To declare this to be heaven makes of God a liar. Such a declaration is beyond belief.

Despite teachings to the contrary, man once saved can so sin as to be lost. Apostasy is real (1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; Acts 1:25; 2 John 9-11). To enjoy the joys of heaven requires a lifetime of faithfulness on our part. God will do His part. He is preparing that place for His own. Jesus will return at the proper time to meet us in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Heaven is full proof of God's love for man. A preacher of the past declared, “When man sinned in Eden, God headed for Calvary.” There is much truth in that statement. Johnny Ramsey gives the theme of Revelation in this fashion: “If you will overcome, you may come over.” The ultimate reward for living faithfully in this life is that home in heaven for eternity.

...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Rev. 2:10; 22:14).

When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God drove them from the garden lest they eat of the tree of life and live forever in sin. In heaven, the faithful will have the right to eat of that tree and be with Deity forever.

As expressed in the words of that beautiful hymn, “Heaven will surely be worth it all.” May each of us fasten our eyes above and so live as to receive the ultimate gift of God's love: eternal life with Him.

(from *Through the Eye of Joy*, Irene C. Taylor, 2004)

How Shall I Be Remembered?

Irene C. Taylor

*Have you ever really stopped to think
Of how you're viewed by others?
By those who know us the very best.
Our husbands, children, mothers?*

*How those whose lives we touch each day,
The friends we hold so dear,
Will think about us when we're gone,
When we're no longer here?*

*Will we be viewed as kind and gentle?
Or one whose tongue was sharp?
Who made our world a better place?
As one who left her mark?*

*Will our husband look back fondly
Of support and strength we shared?
Will he know, without a doubt,
How much we really cared?*

*Will our children have sweet memories
Of how much that they were loved?
Of sacrifice made from our heart?
Will they to tears be moved?*

*Will our grandchildren likewise know
How special they truly are?
Will they have a special memory
With nothing there to mar?*

*If in my hands there should be placed
A symbol of my life,
What would it be? A Bible, book, or something else?
What would depict that life?*

*It's a serious matter to reflect
On when it's time to go.
How will I be remembered then
Based on my life below?*

*Now's the time to do the deeds
That will guide the choice they make.
Let's live right for our own good
And our dear loved ones' sake.*

(from Pearls of Poetry, September 1997)

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