

Memorial Service for Jamie Rhoden

March 7, 2023, Riverside Memorial Cemetery Jacksonville, FL

Opening remarks: Thank you all for gathering today.

Scripture: Eccl. 7:1-4

Honor Guard

Obituary: Devin Barber to Read

Prayer: Devin Barber

- Surely many of you here today have many memories of brother Jamie Rhoden. For me, I came to know him in 1969 when I was transferred to Cecil Field Naval Base while serving in the Navy. He was the preacher for the Hyde Park church of Christ off Old Middleburg Road. My father had given me a small piece of paper with brother Jamie's name and phone number, saying when you get settled give him a call because you will need to be at worship. So I called and asked for a ride to worship on the following Sunday. When he met me at the gate in this 1965 or 66, Ford Fairlane with a 289 small block V8 symbol on the side, I remember thinking this guy likes Fords so he must be ok! The following Lord's Day he had his daughter Patricia come get me..., and the rest as they say is history, for which I will be forever thankful to him.

- Jamie was in many ways a man of simple needs but a man with a complex spirit. He was blessed with a passionate and contagious personality and a love for people. He was a lover of hospitality, of his own family and the family of the church. He loved having his children and grandchildren around. I recall it seemed to be a standing expectation for us all to come by the house after Sunday evening worship for Ruth's homemade chili and time together going over the day's experiences, sermons, singing, who was there, etc.

- He had an insatiable appetite for many things. Horses, music, woodworking, and even trying his hand at painting. He did his best to learn to play any instrument he could; guitar banjo, mandolin, a little harmonica, and “the fiddle”. I learned very early on how important music was to this family which was so exciting for me since I had come from a family that loved music as well. We would get together and get out the strings. He would tell us boys to join in on a tune he would jump into, and we’d do our best, looking at each other, “wondering where he was going”. Many good times singing and playing, even better singing the hymns and working on the harmonies.

- He always had a special knowledge and love for horses and was quite an accomplished cowboy and horseman. He would comment that he thought he was probably born too late.

- He had a limited formal education but was a voracious reader. He had mentioned many times he did not like the confines of the classroom, but he loved learning. He was more than able to discuss and debate with the best. Under his sometimes-gruff exterior was quite the gentleman with much understanding and wisdom.

- He was born in Macclenny, FL on July 3rd, 1926, to Eddie Bryan Rhoden and Lillie Mae Rhoden and spent many of his early years in Baker County.

- When asked about his childhood he would light up to talk about his days spent with his Uncle Dan and Aunt Nancy Baxley and the hard work lessons and love he learned from them. As a boy he worked delivering for Mr. Heston’s store and delivering the Times Union paper.

- He served honorably in the United States Marine Corps during World War II in much of the Pacific islands, serving in much of the most difficult ground fighting of the war. He often

remarked that were it not for the fervent prayers of his mother for his safety and return he was not sure he would have made it. God had other plans for his life as he would come to know.

- After returning from the war in 1945 he would later marry Ruth E. (Ganey) Rhoden on June 5, 1948. His family had moved into a home next door to Mr. & Mrs. Frank Ganey and as a result they began what would become a lifelong romance. His sister Alice is said to have saved him for Ruth, or maybe the other way around, since we have heard that there were other handsome suitors.

- As time went on, he began attending the Willow Branch church of Christ with Ruth and learned and obeyed the gospel. He, Ruth, and his cousin Freddie Lou were baptized into Christ on a Wednesday evening in 1950 by brother Hershel Bass.

- In time Jamie was asked to bring a lesson by the elders and that set-in motion his training to become a minister of the gospel. He was sent out by the elders to provide preaching needs for many area congregations and later would come to work full-time for some as well. He conducted many preaching assignments and gospel meetings in the area as well as in other states such as Tennessee, Ohio, and Georgia.

From Ruth –

- I am going to miss Jamie so much. He was a faithful husband, father, and grandfather for 75 years and took good care of us all. He taught and baptized many into the Lord's church during his service to him. He retired at the age of 91 and continued to enjoy the company of his family and friends until the Lord called him home on March 2, 2023, at 96 years of age.

- His life was a long and wonderful journey. I believe everyone who knew him would agree his was a life well lived.

- I know Jamie will always be with me, in heart and memory, but not having him here beside me after 75 years together, will be a big adjustment.

- I ask that you all please continue to pray that the Lord will give me strength daily to carry on in his absence.

- Thank you to everyone for the outpouring of love that has been shown to our family during our time of loss. We appreciate everything everyone has done for us; from meals, to cards, from phone calls, to visits. We offer our heartfelt thanks. We love you all, as did Jamie, and appreciate all who are here today to remember Jamie and lay him to his final rest. In Christian love,

Ruth

- The purpose of this memorial is to honor and remember the life and passing of a beloved brother, husband, father, grandfather, and brother in Christ. To come together to sympathize with and lend encouragement to the family, friends, and each other.

From the book of Job 2:11,

“Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place – For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him.”

- The things we say today can have no bearing on the eternal destiny of our brother. He has lived his eulogy. We leave such in the hands of God who does all things well.

Funerals and memorials are for those of us who are still in this earthly sojourn. And to heed the words of the wise man.

(Eccl. 7:2)

“It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting. For that is the end of all men.

And the living will take it to heart.”

I. Life is Brief at Best.

(Psa. 39:4-5): “Lord, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; Certainly, every man at his best state is but vapor.”

(Job 14:1,2): “Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue.”

II. Life can end at any time. - So often, there is little we can do. When death takes a loved one and friend, we are grieved and struggle to understand. Death is a mysterious step. With all that we have come to learn; we still ask: “What lies beyond?”

I believe, and I know that brother Jamie believed that the Bible gives us the answer to that question.

It provides the understanding, hope, and comfort for our spirits when we must face a time such as this.

- I Thess. 4:13-18 –

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

III. Let Us Make the Most of the Time We Have and not find ourselves boasting about having tomorrow to get ready; (Prov. 27:1) “Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knoweth not what a day may bring forth.”

-Help others.

-Serve the Lord

-Prepare our souls for eternity.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus teaches us that life is more than possessions, titles, and material success.

It is not what we have in this life that matters, but who we are.

IV. There are two things we all must face!

Death (Heb. 9:27) “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

Judgement (2 Cor. 5:10) “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

-A long time ago our brother Jamie recognized his own need for his obedience to Christ. He began his walk by faith in Christ, repenting of his sins, a public confession of Jesus as the Son of God, and finally putting on the Lord in baptism for the remission of sins, according to Acts 2:38.

- A favorite passage of brother Jamie’s was Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

I pray that we use the time the Lord has given us wisely. There is comfort for us in the words of the Apostle Paul to know that this task and burden of death will one day be gone forever.

1 Cor. 15:51-54

“Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Words to

“Sweet By and By” Lead by brother Keith Crews

There’s a land that is fairer than day.

And by faith we can see it afar

For the Savior waits over the way.

To prepare us a dwelling place there.

We shall sing on that beautiful shore.

The melodious songs of the blest.

And our spirits will sorrow no more.

Not a sigh for the blessings of rest.

To our bountiful Father above.

We will offer our tribute of praise.

**For the glorious gift of His love.
And the blessings that hallow our days.**

**In the sweet by and by
We shall sing on that beautiful shore.
In the sweet by and by.
We shall sing on that beautiful shore.**

**Let us pray:
Our Father.**

We have come to lay to rest this tabernacle and remains of our friend, husband, father, and brother in Christ.

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Eccl. 12:7

Father, grant unto us who remain the courage to face the sorrow and the bereavement. To live for the day when we too will put off this our earthly tabernacle to receive in the resurrection a building made without hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Father, please comfort the wife and family of our dear brother with Your peace and assurance in the days before them.

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen

**A song he requested to be played at his funeral.
“Go Rest High on That Mountain”, Vince Gill**