

July 1st, 2005

Dear brothers and sisters in our Lord,

Summer greetings to you! Did your Spring heat make up for your Winter freezing? Here in Indiana we thought we might not thaw out from the winter for a long time. Little did we expect the dog days of summer to jump from August to June! Praise the Lord anyhow, I still love each season as it comes, don't you?

Speaking of seasons, one of the most significant friends in my life received his highest promotion possible on earth. On April 11th my brother-in-law Jerry Cassel was personally escorted to glory by his Savior from his easy chair in the living room to the Living Room in heaven that Jesus has prepared for him. Jerry's departure was totally unexpected – just an incredible shock for all of us, most of all for my only sister and friend Mary Lou.

Jerry's life was celebrated at a glorious gathering at our home church. Dear friends, his life was a vivid object lesson. A totally ordinary fellow, Jerry met the



Lord when he was 52 years old. He died one month before the 49th anniversary of his marriage to Mary Lou and just two months before his 75th birthday. He and Lu had five children themselves, and adopted five more. The most significant earthly achievement of Jerry's was to be a manager of several grocery stores. But this home-grown guy from Peru, Indiana, who began his career as a carryout boy stayed steady. He worked quietly. He

worked at home. He loved his wife and kids. And he came to love the Lord.

The day Jerry met the Lord, the lights came on. Though he was still basically quiet with a sweet sense of humor, he had an inner love for the Lord. Over the years he and Lu had tons of other "kids" that began to frequent their home; "kids" from work, "kids" from the Brethren Way of Christ and "kids" from the Via De Christo weekends he served on over the years. But as is the case with many of us, the effects of his life and testimony were unseen. That is, until his Homegoing Celebration.

We planned for 100 people (50 being family) for dinner. We were told that the Via de Christo folks in Illinois would try to gather a quartet of guys (4) to come and sing a few hymns during the Celebration. **How about 48 guys showing up!!!** People came – and came - and came. Somewhere around 400 came..... and suddenly everyone knew that this quiet, unassuming man was a giant in the land

when it came to shining the light of Jesus. **We had a grand day – fitting one who so faithfully lived in Christ – and Christ in him.** Our hearts ache for his presence, yet we look forward to embracing him when we get to graduate! Sharon and Jeff and their children joined us that day, and she sang that sweet song

**“I shall see you soon again in the land of Life.
I shall hear your voice again singing praise to the Lamb.
No more heartache, no more tears,
You are home, free
so I’ll see you soon again in the land of Life.**

**Where there is peace, peace in His presence,
and joy evermore.
You will nevermore depart,
never face one more goodbye,
You are home,
You are home!
So I’ll see you soon again.....”**

Let me close this section by quoting something even more profound: **And if I’m on my way to get your room ready, I’ll come back and get you so you can live where I live. Jesus.** recorded in **John 14:3** and just one more—

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Ps. 116:15 Amen!

Turning attention to other events in the past quarter, several significant ministry opportunities came about.

1) I lead a Neighborhood Bible Study using the Purpose Driven Life as a study focus. We completed the course as we started, with 12 folks. This study gave us time to focus on a ton of Scripture, to get to know one another, to begin to build a real community of Christ love, pray for one another, and plan for future outreach to the neighborhood.

2) It was my privilege to lead worship in several church services.

3) The Greater Fort Wayne House of Prayer continues to meet regularly. I serve as a worship leader there.

4) Marlene and I are considering hosting some small group retreats here at home. Would you be interested in attending one? It can be from one to three days, and we can accommodate up to 6 people (if you are comfortable in close

quarters.) If you can come with your own group, fine; if you would need to join another group, we can work at making such arrangements. Several of you have indicated an interest in this. Some wish to return, others to come for the first time. Let me know.

5) My home church asked me to teach a Sunday School Class, and so with not a little pausing and prayer, I have accepted that wonderful opportunity. I asked the Pastor what he wanted me to teach and he replied, “Whatever the Holy Spirit tells you to teach! I trust you and I trust Him; do whatever He tells you!” How’s that for an assignment! I am currently looking to build a foundation with this group, as none of the folks really know me there. I’m thinking about naming the class **Revival 404: The Bride and the Bridegroom**. I hope we will press in to the heart of our Bridegroom as His coming nears. We will look at His heart for us, His Bride, and seek to use our time together to pray, to study what it means to be His, and how to grow in intimacy, holiness and freedom in Him. Once this foundation is established, I’ll more easily be able to miss a Sunday here and there for ministry away from the church. For now I’m going to try to hold to being gone just one week out of every 4 at least for a couple of months.

Looking ahead, I am anticipating a couple of ladies retreats, one here in Indiana, the other in Michigan, in addition to several church services. The Neighborhood Bible Study will resume around the end of August. I’m getting to a point where I need to be careful, prayerful and discerning (I guess I always need to be, yes?) about what I commit to. Please pray for me for wisdom and discernment.

As always, your partnering with me is my sole mainstay in these days at hand. My gratitude to you is simply unspeakable. If I can pray for you in any specific way, please don’t even hesitate to write or call me. I think you already know it, but let me put down points of communication, okay?

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Jerry’s unexpected homegoing is a huge reminder to all of us that we need to be about our Master’s business. We need to be wise virgins, anticipating the coming of our Bridegroom, dressed in our wedding gown, lamps filled with oil and trimmed! So Maranatha! Oh Come, Lord Jesus!

My love and prayer,
Robin Lee



View from our deck overlooking Irish Lake