



Waller Funeral Home
"An Oxford Tradition"

SEASONS

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WHEN I TAKE MY EYES OFF GOD

The lesson of the dewdrop I experienced and wrote about in the winter of 1988 often comes back to me when I struggle to maintain the focus of a Christian life. Again I share with you these words first printed 20 years ago in Seasons.

One morning during the last days of winter when everything was still barren, before overnight the trees would burst with spring and little flowers would sprout up everywhere, I took a walk.

I walked as a country dweller would, through the pasture. I passed where we once fed young calves, and I walked on to a bridge which was a favorite spot with children when they were growing up. They liked to throw rocks off into the stream to hear the splash or to see who could throw the furthest upstream.

I sat down on the bridge in the quietness of the morning, alone with God and the few natural inhabitants of a spot like this. The birds chattered, perhaps wondering why I had invaded their world; the stream made beautiful music as it flowed into a little waterfall; the insects were busy with their special chores. I felt a closeness to God in the peacefulness of these special moments and I talked with God. After a time I accepted the inevitable truth that the peacefulness of the mountaintops must give way to everyday routines—we must rush to fill the niches we have made for ourselves.

I began to walk back slowly but

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REMINDERS

A Telex Sound Mate Personal Listening System is available at the Funeral Home to assist the hearing impaired during services in the Chapel. Personal receivers with earphones provide clear reception and are comfortable to use and easy to adjust. Just ask any Funeral Home staff member to provide this listening aid.

Waller Funeral Home is completely handicapped accessible. If you need any assistance, please let us know.

For immediate notification of deaths, sign up for our e-mail obituary service. Just e-mail your name and e-mail address to us (staff@wallerfuneralhome.com), and we will be glad to include you for this free service. We will not e-mail any unsolicited material to you or allow any other access to your e-mail address.

Handling your own or a loved one's personal choices and financial arrangements in advance greatly reduces stress at the time of a death. Forms to record information for planning the funeral and burial, preparing the obituary, and completing the death certificate are available at Waller Funeral Home. We will be glad to discuss prearrangement plans with you at your convenience.

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The "children's room" is available for the children who come with their families. The various toys, games, and videos keep the children happily occupied—as demonstrated by Waller Smith, Murphy Grace Smith, and Houston Morgan—while the adults concentrate on arrangements and other funeral home concerns. The children pictured are the great-grandchildren of Don and Patsy Waller, founders of Waller Funeral Home.

WHEN I TAKE MY EYES

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stopped and sat down again on the bank formed where the road had worn down. As I sat there looking around and listening to the quietness, I turned my head and, oh, the beauty I saw! A dewdrop shining like a jewel on a weed! One glimpse and then the sun moved and I moved and it was gone. I took my eyes off the thing of beauty and I lost it. Suddenly many thoughts rushed to my mind. I thought: when I rest in the peace God gives, all is well, but when I take my eyes from Him—ever so briefly—life becomes cluttered so rapidly. Days are not so trouble-free, the night's rest is not so relaxing—so many anxieties appear.

Sitting there alone I remembered God's words: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The problem is not with His being near me—it is with my not making time for us to be together to let me give Him thanks for His goodness, praise His greatness, and ask for His guidance. The words of the hymn, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full into His wonderful face, and the things of this world will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace," say it all.

As I went back up the hill and into the house to prepare for work, I knew the day would be different—better—because in the beginning I had come face to face with God, and the day would be easier because I had been reminded to keep my eyes on Him. I will always remember the beauty of the dewdrop—it was a rare gift It challenged me to keep my eyes more faithfully on God and all He has in store for me.

I share this personal experience with you with the hope that it might cause you to stop and spend a few moments with God and have a better day for having done so.

*Sincerely,
Patsy*

REMINDERS

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Information about services and merchandise offered at Waller Funeral Home is available on our Web site (www.wallerfunerathome.com).

We would like to sell you a lot in Eastover Memorial Cemetery, located just off Highway 30 on Hopewell Road. We take pride in keeping the grounds neat and attractive. Take a drive out and look around. We will be glad to talk with you and show you what is available.

We are committed to providing careful professional and compassionate attention to each family we serve.

OLD AGE: Wisdom doesn't come in annual increments

Judeo-Christian scripture speaks of old age as a blessing—even as a reward for righteousness.

"Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12).

Over and again, it recites the lives of long-ago heroes of the faiths, often recounting their long lives.

One example is King David: "He died at a good old age, having enjoyed long life, wealth, and honor. His son Solomon succeeded him as king" (1 Chronicles 29:28).

Wisdom is attributed to that advanced age as well.

"Is not wisdom found among the aged?" asked Job. "Does not long life bring understanding?" (Job 12:12).

Yet wisdom is not automatically acquired in annual doses. A great test of long life is to accept its bittersweet nature and to determine that it shall be more sweet than bitter.

It's no small challenge.

"All would live long," Benjamin Franklin mused, "but none would be old."

In old age, memories grow manifold while dreams become fewer.

Death takes an increasing tally of loved ones and friends—those whose lives, to one degree or another, help define our own. Geography or even disputes may separate us from those yet living.

Senses may dull so that food, music, flowers, and conversation cease to be so pleasurable as they once were. The decline of one's strength and reflexes can make other formerly cherished activities more taxing than invigorating. A multitude of choices

becomes more overwhelming than liberating.

As more and more change takes place beyond our control, the tendency of some is to view each new difference—from tweaking of the order of their beloved worship service to the ubiquity of cell phones—as an intentional threat against one's peace of mind.

Pearl S. Buck, author of "The Good Earth," notes, "You can judge your age by the amount of pain you feel when you come in contact with a new idea."

Yet we all know people who sail sanguinely through even advanced years. They set aside what is no longer meaningful or pleasurable and embrace all the more what still feeds their souls, perhaps even developing new interests and friendships and understandings along the way as circumstances allow.

The elders who set an example worth imitating are the ones whose faith grows instead of shrinking, whose humor shines between the clouds of loss and limitation, whose memories are spice and not sustenance, whose wisdom is shared more when it's asked for than when it isn't.

Old age is a chance, if anything, to grow stronger in our faith, to improve ourselves, to enhance our value to others, to invest more intensely in those we love.

Perhaps the chief aim of age should be that urged by 19th Century British preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon. "Carve your name on hearts," he said, "and not on marble."

*-Northeast Mississippi
Daily Journal
April 26, 2008*

EASING THE BURDEN FOR LOVED ONES: How Preplanning a Funeral Ensures Security and Peace of Mind for Everyone

It's a difficult subject to bring up. No one likes to think about the time when they'll no longer be here. But truth be told, everyone will need a funeral some day. Without planning ahead, they can be stressful, expensive, and filled with disagreements. Or you can create an occasion where loved ones come together to reflect on a life well lived, without the pressure of quick decisions and worries about expense.

How can you accomplish this? Through preplanning, which allows you not only the opportunity to create the type of memorial and burial that fits your beliefs and preferences, but to also put your family first by taking away the anxiety caused by guessing what you might have wanted. Planning a life celebration is a priceless gift of security, compassion, and care for those we love.

Under a cloud of sorrow and time constraints, family members are often overwhelmed and uncertain of the decisions that need to be made: Did Dad want a traditional funeral or did he want to be cremated and have his ashes scattered at the lake? What music would Mom want played? Who will preside at the service? Making the dozens of decisions that arise when someone passes away can be nerve-racking.

Another point to consider is that family members often have differing ideas and opinions that can escalate during such an emotional and exhausting time. And in today's world of blended families, preplanning can save children, step-children, and extended family from disagreements about which cemetery, who will read a eulogy, and who pays for what.

Many funeral directors agree that while no one likes to contemplate death, making final arrangements in advance is like a gift to loved ones. It's also one of the best ways to ensure that things are taken care in the manner that you wish.

In an effort to "make the right choice," loved ones often spend far more for products and services than they normally would. When the wishes of a loved one are known, family and friends may be prevented from emotional overspending in their rush to "pick something nice." Planning ahead enables comparison

shopping without time constraints, facilitates the family discussion of important final arrangement decisions, and removes some of the burden from loved ones.

One of the best ways to preplan is to sit down and put your thoughts in writing. Take time to record detailed instructions regarding funeral and cemetery preferences as well as documenting vital statistics, estate planning information, and military service.

Following are seven things everyone should know about planning a funeral.

1. Be informed about the choices available.

Arranging funeral or cremation service can seem complicated, but there's always someone who can help you. Funeral directors are trained professionals who can be a vital and supportive resource for you. They can explain all the options available and help you make informed decisions and guide you through the process.

2. Plan ahead.

At a time of loss, there are many practical decisions that need to be made. Unfortunately, this is often the time when we're least able to approach the subject rationally. It makes sense to find a funeral director you can trust before it becomes necessary.

3. Decide the final disposition.

Selecting burial, mausoleum entombment, or cremation is a very personal decision. Discussion of your choice with family and documentation is essential. Whatever you choose, government forms, fees, and the organization of a memorial service will fall to your loved ones without preplanning. For ease and peace of mind, choose a funeral home that will walk you through all the necessary arrangements.

4. Find out what government benefits are available.

To find out your exact Social Security benefits, call (800) 772-1213 or go to www.ssa.gov. Veterans may be eligible for a burial allowance from the Department of Veterans Affairs. You can contact them at (800) 827-1000 or online at <http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/bbene-burial.asp>.

5. Don't be afraid to ask about prices.

The cost of arranging a funeral can vary greatly between companies. Be careful to choose a funeral home that presents its prices—the cost of the

casket or urn, transportation fees, preparation charges, as well as other professional services—clearly and simply.

6. Funeral or cremation service arrangements need to be documented.

Many people think everything is taken care of by having a will and a living trust, but those documents only cover medical treatment and financial affairs. You should make sure that your wishes are shared in writing with several people you trust: family members, friends, and your funeral director.

7. Consider prepaying.

If you decide to prepay for funeral or cremation service arrangements, be sure to let your family know. Also, keep your prearrangement documents in a safe place. Check with your bank before placing copies in a safe deposit box to ensure the box will not be sealed at the time of death.

-Northeast Mississippi

Daily Journal (ARA)

June 29, 2007

GETTING THROUGH GRIEF

Grief is something we all experience. A close friend described grief as a ghost, saying, "sometimes it is so tangible you can actually touch it, other times it is a sense of despair softly whispering in the air."

In moments of profound losses, the process of grieving is inevitable. The grieving process was first outlined by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. The five stages of grief, according to Ross, are: shock and disbelief, anger or resentment, guilt, fear, and deep sadness.

Grief is an experience that affects everyone differently. The five stages of grief are neither set in stone nor on a stopwatch. Some people try to postpone grieving, but it's not something that can be escaped.

Grief has different tones. The grief caused by a sudden death is much different than the grief caused by an anticipated death. Anticipatory grief allows the grieving process to begin prior to a death, while an unexpected death comes by surprise with no warning to help brace for the loss.

Any therapist will agree that a mental-health professional is not typically required to find healing. Just talking about grief with a significant listener can lighten the load.

One of my most valuable memories at the death of my grandfather is my family's six-hour trip to Laurel. We all

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In Memoriam

We dedicate this issue of *Seasons* to those who died and whose families we served from February 1, 2008, through May 13, 2008.

| | |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mrs. Frances A. Watts | February 1, 2008 |
| Mrs. Eleanor Rust Mattern | February 2, 2008 |
| Mr. Charles Kenneth Arbuckle | February 9, 2008 |
| Mrs. Eileen Bonds Sapp | February 10, 2008 |
| Mr. John Keith Carter | February 15, 2008 |
| Mrs. Anita Campbell Phillips | February 17, 2008 |
| Mrs. Madeleine Reagan Steel | February 18, 2008 |
| Mrs. Montie Whitehead Champion | February 22, 2008 |
| Mr. Roger Allen Garrett | February 24, 2008 |
| Mrs. Mary Kathryn Sansone | March 5, 2008 |
| Mr. Ernest Walter LeBarge | March 13, 2008 |
| Mrs. Donna Schuster Cook | March 15, 2008 |
| Mr. Horace Hunter Bunch | March 15, 2008 |
| Mylee Chace Martin | March 20, 2008 |
| Mrs. Mary Eloise Gray | March 21, 2008 |
| Mr. Curtis Ivan Klepzig | March 22, 2008 |
| Mrs. Betty Michaels Lynch | March 23, 2008 |
| Mrs. Doris Smith Thibodeaux | March 24, 2008 |
| Mr. George David Rushing | March 24, 2008 |
| Mrs. Sarah Galloway Brummett | March 26, 2008 |
| Mr. Paul Herman Sharrer, Jr. | March 31, 2008 |
| Dr. Ismail Yousef Ahmed | April 1, 2008 |
| Mr. Ray Smith Poole, Sr. | April 2, 2008 |
| Mr. Terrance B. Loptien | April 2, 2008 |
| Mr. David Scott Hughes | April 6, 2008 |
| Mrs. Barbara Carlock Ledford | April 7, 2008 |
| Mrs. Nancy Phebus Parks | April 7, 2008 |
| Mr. Willie Wesley Perkins | April 13, 2008 |
| Mrs. Doris Murgatroyd Miller | April 14, 2008 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Mrs. Margaret Evans Faulkner | April 14, 2008 |
| Mr. Willard Price Naramore | April 16, 2008 |
| Mrs. Mary Lou Godbold | April 18, 2008 |
| Miss Nancy Susan Clark | April 20, 2008 |
| Mr. Christopher Shane Keel | April 25, 2008 |
| Mrs. Mary Denton Johnson | April 26, 2008 |
| Mr. Julian Elmo Fudge | April 26, 2008 |
| Mr. James Clyde Butler, II | April 28, 2008 |
| Mrs. Christine Coleman Edwards | May 5, 2008 |
| Mr. Richard Adams Smith | May 6, 2008 |
| Mrs. Cecile Dornbusch King | May 6, 2008 |
| Mr. Billy Bruce Robinson | May 7, 2008 |
| Mrs. Jimmie Evans Childress | May 9, 2008 |
| Mrs. Ruth B. Russell | May 10, 2008 |
| Mr. Rhesa Winfred Davis | May 12, 2008 |
| Mrs. Shirlee Bumgardner | May 13, 2008 |

GETTING THROUGH GRIEF

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piled into the same car and shared memories of him. By the time we arrived, my grandfather had been thoroughly eulogized. We had smiles along with our tears.

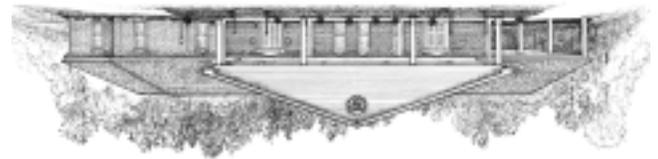
The same benefits can come from “journaling,” which many use to reduce grief in their lives. Great comfort and peace can be found in writing feelings down. Seek out a local physician or mental-health professional if you do need help in working through your grief.

-Heather S. Hartwell, Ph.D.

reprinted from *Invitation Oxford*

Dr. Hartwell, a licensed professional counselor, works with a wide range of therapeutic issues with children, adolescents, and adults. For consultation, call 662-801-5028.

NFDPA Pursuit of Excellence
 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007



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