

**Bible Verses,
Dahlias,
and Stories**

**for our Grandchildren,
our Great Grandchildren,
and Others**

by Bob and Martha Rapalje

1.0 Preface



**Martha looks over a truckload of Leatherwood dahlias
Maggie Valley/Waynesville, North Carolina.**

Matthew 6: 28-29

“ Why give thought for clothing? Consider the lilies [and dahlias!] of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say to you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”

Preface

In our lives together and now our retirement years, the Lord has blessed us in so many ways. We were blessed with children and grandchildren, and insights from our family tree, as well as personal stories of our own. We would like to pass these on to the next generations who will come after our days on earth are complete.

Most recently, we have been posting our favorite scriptures and some personal stories on a website. Also posted are dahlia pictures from North Carolina, like those of the dahlias grown by my grandfather in New Jersey from 1915 to 1968.

Having these thoughts in mind, we decided to combine 50 favorite family stories and eulogies with our favorite 50 Bible verses and our favorite 50 dahlia pictures in the form of a book to be passed down to our yet-to-be-born great grandchildren!

We are known by our friends and relatives as Martha and Bob, by our grandchildren as Nana and Papa. We were both blessed to have been brought up in loving families. Martha's parents were Vergie and Adolph Dawson (married for 63 years); Bob's parents were Bunny and John Rapalje (married for 54 years). Together we had two sons, Rob (married Rashelle with children Jessica, Caylyne, and Cassie) and Philip (married Christina with children Jenna, John, and Paige). We are now in our upper 70s, and as we near the end of our lives here on earth, we have a lot of Bible verses, dahlia pictures, and stories we would like to share with our grandchildren and hopefully pass on to our great grandchildren who are yet to be born, that we will not know in our lifetime.

It may be of interest to know that we were both career teachers. Martha taught 3rd grade until her retirement at the birth of Rob in 1973. Bob taught math at Lake-Sumter Community College for 2½ years, then at Seminole Community College for 36 years. Martha was one GREAT teacher! (BTW, they say that Bob was pretty good too!!) We both LOVED teaching, we loved our students, and our students responded in kind! At this writing we have been married 52 years, and we are still in LOVE!! This is our best advice for a lasting marriage:

- 1. Get the right one the first time;**
- 2. BE the right one the first time;**
- 3. Make Jesus the Lord of your marriage!**

We both have rich family histories that we want to share with you, and we want to ask our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to pour out blessings on each of you (see “The Blessing” which follows on the next page). We pray that you will experience the love and joy in your lives that we have experienced in ours. As you grow and study the Bible, you will learn that God is LOVE and His ways are always BEST!

In our retirement years, we discovered dahlias in North Carolina, where we took a LOT of pictures many of which are included in this book. Martha’s cousins Irma and Eddie Williams, worldwide missionaries with extraordinary ministries, observed our beautiful dahlia pictures, our focus on Bible verses on our website, and some of the stories that we shared with them. Irma then suggested that we combine these in the form of a book with Bible verses, stories, and dahlia pictures.

We hope our descendants will find this book and the advice we offer you to be worth passing down to the next generations. We pray the following prayer of blessing for everyone who reads this and makes the decision to FOLLOW JESUS in his/her life!

Prayer of Blessing

Numbers 6: 24-26

**“The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make His face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn His face toward you
and give you peace.**

**May His favor be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family and your children
And their children, and their children.”**

Psalm 67

**¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make His face shine on us—¹
² so that Your ways may be known on earth,
Your salvation among all nations.**

**³ May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise You.**

**⁴ May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for You rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.**

**⁵ May the peoples praise You, God;
may all the peoples praise You.**

**⁶ The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.**

**⁷ May God bless us still,
so that all the ends of the earth will fear Him.**

Is There a Truck Driver Behind Us??

There once was a woman who drove out of a gas station one night. As she drove away, she noticed a BIG truck behind her. She was concerned for her safety, so she made a right turn, only to see that the truck also turned right—it was still behind her! When she turned left, the truck also turned left, and it appeared to be following her. The woman was relieved when a traffic light ahead of her turned yellow, allowing her to pass through, but leaving a red light for the truck. To her surprise, the truck ran the red light, and it was STILL right behind her.

Now, becoming terrified, the woman pulled into another gas station. She RAN inside to call the police, when she saw the truck also pull into the same gas station. The truck driver ran over to her car, opened the back door, and pulled a man out from the back seat of her car. From the high position of his seat in the truck, the truck driver had seen this dangerous man enter her back seat, and he was determined to save the woman from a tragic ending to her drive.

How many people travel through life afraid of God, thinking that, like the truck driver, God is following them, threatening to do them harm? The truth is that the REAL enemy is NOT God, but it is someone or something in the back seat. God is like the truck driver who is doing everything possible to warn them and protect them from the REAL enemies that would do them harm.

Our enemy is not the truck driver. If we have been afraid of God, thinking that He is going to “get” us, we need to stop running from him. God is ALWAYS good; He always wants what is best for us.

Do NOT be afraid of the “truck driver”!!

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