

## They Still Speak

In that great chapter of faith, Hebrews 11 the writer defines faith “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11.1). He points out its importance in our salvation, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11.6). Between verses one and 6 there is another aspect of faith we may overlook. “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it **he being dead still speaks.**” (Hebrews 11:4, emphasis mine D.T.). The example, power, and influence one’s faith can have on others, on generations of people was yet to be born.

How many of us have read of Cain and Abel, the faith of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and his leaving the household of Pharaoh in order to serve God? Actually, the whole eleventh chapter of Hebrews points out faith, the obedience, and works of those who lived long ago. The source of faith is God’s word, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17). The result of faith is seen in how one lives, the basis of their decisions, and its influence.

Which gets me to the main point of this article. A few weeks ago, my Aunt Virgie Galloway passed away. Her daughter Kathy, my sister Sharon, and I were texting each other about our Great Grandparents Embry. In Ohio County, Kentucky there is a building with a sign which reads “Antioch church of Christ.” Its location is in the middle of farmland and nothing else. Our Great Grandparent’s farm was right next to that building. In fact, the land donated to build the building came from their farm. During the winter Grandpa Embry would get up early Sunday morning to go and “build a fire” in the church building. Grandma Embry would prepare the Lord’s Supper. When it was time to have a Gospel Meeting, he would take out a small loan at the bank and pay it back a little later. (Keep in mind, this was during the great depression and money was hard to come by.) I am not saying that congregation did not exist without the Embry’s but they were a vital part of its work.

It was during that time my dad and his siblings grew up. Now there were thirteen children who lived so the older one’s grew up in the Ohio/Butler/Grayson County area while the younger ones grew up in Louisville. My dad spoke often of his Grandparents. They had some livestock: cattle, chickens, had a garden, and were pretty well self sufficient as they sold enough from their farm to purchase what they needed. Those older grandchildren, my dad, his sisters Irene and Virgie, would stay

with them on numerous occasions. Grandma Embry would be out in her garden singing "Watch and Pray" among other hymns. They reared their children teaching them the Bible and many obeyed the Gospel. Personally, I am not sure if all of them did or not but the majority were Christians.

Those early years my dad spent with his grandparents influenced his life, especially in his later years, and the same can be said for many of his siblings. Irene, Virgie and numerous other grandchildren became Christians largely due to the influence of their Grandpa, and Grandma Embry.

My Great Grandpa passed away in 1945 and Grandma Embry left this world in 1965. He died before I was born and she died when I was eight years old. Truthfully, I barely remember her but both of them still speak. Their faith and influence can be seen in the preceding generations. Just as I can still remember our dad getting up early in the morning to get ready for work and practicing his songs for Sunday's worship, or mom and dad filling out their bible class workbooks.

I remember Uncle Bob and Aunt Virgie visiting from Alabama. I thought they spoke funny as they had an accent. One could tell they worked well together as they brought up three boys and 1 girl. One summer Bob worked at Paradise Power plant which is near the farm. The whole family stayed a week or two in the old house. A house without modern conveniences such as running water, in door plumbing, and air conditioning. One of my favorite memories was my brother Mike, with our three boy cousins, and Aunt Virgie playing some sort of baseball game. The last time I got to visit with Virgie and Kathy I brought that up and she laughed. She and our mom had a special bond as they were close in age. Kathy has a picture of both of them and they were both very pretty. Virgie will be missed but her influence still lives on through her children, grandchildren, and those who knew her.

So, what kind of faith are you leaving behind? What will others remember about you? Each one of us will speak long after we are gone. Let us make sure our faith in God, His word, and our example will be for good. - - Dennis Tucker