

Beyond The Sunset- January's Hymn of the Month 2025

By
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New Year's brings new beginnings, and with new beginnings comes new expectations. For the Christian, the greatest expectation is what waits for us beyond this life-- to enter into God's presence, to see loved ones and old friends again and, of course, to see our Savior. I suppose you could ask, "I wonder what's beyond the sunset, the sunset of life." Well, in an attempt to answer that question Virgil and Blanche Brock would write a hymn that for years has given encouragement to those who are looking forward to what's beyond. The story behind the writing of the song goes like this.

Because of the evangelist, Billy Sunday, Winona Lake, Indiana, had become the center of evangelical activities by the 1930's and would continue that way into the 50's. Homer Rodeheaver stood at Billy Sunday's side as the leader of all the crusade music. After Billy's death in 1935, Rodeheaver eventually founded the Rodeheaver School of Music at the Winona Lake Bible Conference grounds. On one occasion, Rodeheaver had invited some students to his home, Rainbow Point, on the lake. In that group were Virgil and Blanche Brock.

After dinner that evening, the students had the opportunity to witness one of those beautiful sunsets that the Point was famous for. Virgil Brock recounts for us what happened next:

"In our group was a blind man named Horace Burr. Suddenly he exclaimed, 'My, that sure is a wonderful sunset. Thanks so much for picturing it for me. I sure would have missed a lot if you folks hadn't been here to describe it.' Someone then raised the question, 'I wonder what's beyond all of this?' Immediately, the answer began to form in my mind. I reasoned—Horace Burr had never seen the glory of an earthly sunset, yet was blessed as we tried to describe it to him—so we too, as Christians, have never seen what is beyond, but God in His love and promise, has told us in the Bible of the glory that is awaiting us beyond."

Later that evening, Virgil and Blanche, back at their apartment, would together write the song *Beyond the Sunset* and give us all some added insights to what waits for those who put their trust in Jesus Christ for eternal life. I've visited the graves of the Brocks in Winona Lake and seen the stones that testify to their song. But because of their testimony in song and the saving grace of Jesus Christ, I'm well assured they are not there. They are *beyond* in a place I'm looking forward to. How about you?

Beyond the sunset, O blissful morning, When with our Savior heav'n is begun, Earth's
Toiling ended, O glorious dawning; Beyond the sunset, when day is done.

Beyond the sunset, O glad reunion, With our dear loved ones who've gone before; In
That fair homeland we'll know no parting, Beyond the sunset for evermore!