

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR GUARANTEE!

Funeral Message for Marian Joy Remington
II Corinthians 5: 1-5 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson
April 10, 2020, 1 PM, Good Friday

I well remember when Marian came into my office after she knew she had pancreatic cancer. She was shocked that she had cancer, and she was puzzled about God's plans for her future. This nurse practitioner who had helped so many be healed, Marian now knew this cancer might be leading to the close of her earthly journey. We talked and prayed much. Then she told me, "I know I am coming back here either to testify of God's healing, or I will come back, at least my body in a box. She told me how much she loved all of us in our church, and that she had found a home. Then Marian expressed her deep awareness that she could be close to her homegoing. After returning from Tijuana, Marian called me to her new home on Horseshoe Drive, and she expressed her deep interest in what God's Word has to say about her future after leaving here as a born-again believer.

I read many passages to her about assurance of salvation when we are truly born again. I read from Romans 8: 16 that "The Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ." I read from I John 5: 10-13 saying "I write these things to you who believe in the Name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have." I could tell Marian still needed more promises until I asked her to turn to II Corinthians 5: 1-5. I asked her to read this short passage and she did. The Word declares, and Marian read these words. "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Holy Spirit as a Guarantee."

Today that remembrance of Marian stands out above all other remembrances. She said, "Don't read any more promises. This one is mine. I know the Holy Spirit lives inside me, and I know now that God's Holy Spirit is my Guarantee. Would you think about this passage with me; this passage that became Marian's go-to promise of God, her Guarantee that since she repented of sin, believed in Jesus, had received Him as her personal Lord and Savior? Think about what it means that she was a born-again believer and headed Home to Jesus. We both freely cried together, and I held her hand and told her she might beat me Home to Heaven. As I have pondered that day, and the work of God's Holy Spirit in Marian's heart, God has assured me of three ways He used this passage of scripture to remove all

Marian's fears and doubts as a born-again believer. What are these assurances in this text of God's Word?

WHEN WE ARE BORN AGAIN, WE KNOW IF OUR EARTHLY TENT IS DESTROYED, WE HAVE AN ETERNAL BUILDING FROM GOD IN HEAVEN.

(I.) Paul says in our text, "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly house is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Paul says if, but it is not only if, it is when, because each of us must die, unless Jesus returns in the Rapture to take His born-again believers, His bride Home to Himself without dying. For many people, their eternal future is a hope-so matter as they hope they will go to heaven. Jesus told Nicodemus, in John 3: 3, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Marian knew that she had repented of past sins, believed and received Jesus. She wasn't trusting in her good works, but in the promises of God for herself as one of His born-again children. She loved it when she read, "We know that if the tent, that is our earthly house is destroyed, (that there's more—it's not the end.) I told Marian that Graduation Day in Glory was ahead for both of us. I am 75 and she was just a little older at 78, so we talked a lot about heaven. I reenacted the day when God would call her Home. "Come Home, Marian. Come Home, it's Supper Time." On April 4, 2020, Jesus called out, "Marian Joy Remington, come Home." Paul tells us we know as born-again believers this old house we live in is not our eternal body. We have a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

Now I ask each of us today—Do you know that you know that you know that you are born again? So many of us in America know that we believe Jesus is the virgin born Son of God who died for our sins, was buried on that first Good Friday, and He rose from the dead on Easter morning. Head knowledge is a wonderful start, but it doesn't save us. The Scripture tells us even the demons believe with their head knowledge and they tremble. It's tragic to know in our heads, but not to have seen that knowledge become heart knowledge, so that we believe as Marian did in her heart. I told Marian that God's hope was that a number-of people might come to be born-again at her funeral. She just beamed, and she asked me, "How is that?" I assured her that I can never obediently preach a funeral message, without giving people an invitation to come to Jesus. It would be a sin against Christ's death on the cross for me to fail to call you all to the rest and salvation Marian had, when she went to sleep on April 4th, when she went to sleep in Jesus. Jesus calls to every person yet today as He once called out to me, to Marian, and to everyone, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." There is a second assurance.

WHEN WE ARE BORN AGAIN, WE KNOW WE LONG TO PUT ON OUR HEAVENLY DWELLING. (II.)

Paul said in II Corinthians 5: 2-4, “For in this tent, we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on, we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened –not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.” The last day I spoke to Marian, she had a helper there and we sat at the table and read the Word and prayed. Marian was still giving advice and she gave some of the finest motherly advice to her helper about her future. Marian all the way to Glory was so selfless, thinking of others. But before I prayed for her, I asked her, “Marian, how do you want me to pray for you?” She spoke almost verbatim the words of Paul, speaking of groaning. She was short of breath it was obvious, but she said, “Pray that God will take me Home. I am ready to go.” I groaned with her as I saw how short of breath she was. Marian isn’t short of breath today. If you and I could only see her now, mortal flesh, disease, cancer, and shortness of breath are eternally gone. Marian has gone Home to her reward as a born-again believer, as the Bride of Christ. Her last earthly longing to go Home is fully realized, and if we saw her now, we would never dream of trying to drag her back to this world filled with sin, sickness, sadness, and back to this pandemic of 2020. Her longing has been realized. Did you know each of us will die sooner than we know? Hebrews 9: 27 is so clear, “For it is appointed unto men and women, boys and girls, it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.” Each of us will stand before God. Romans 14: 10 is clear, “For we all will stand before the judgment seat of God.” If you were to stand before the Lord, would it be the fulfillment of your dreams and your deepest longings as for Marian today, or would it be tragic, because you don’t personally know the Lord, because you have never yet been born again? When I told Marian, others might come to the Lord through her personal testimony, she said, “Could that be?” I told her that is God’s hope and desire. Then thirdly, and lastly,

WHEN WE ARE BORN AGAIN, WE KNOW THAT ETERNAL LIFE IS WHAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR US, AND THAT HIS INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR GUARANTEE. (III.)

Paul said in II Corinthians 5: 5, in this last verse of our text, the words that sent Marian’s spirit soaring. He wrote, “He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Holy Spirit as a Guarantee.” The word Paul used for Guarantee is **arrhabon**. It means a security deposit, a pledge, earnest money deposited by the purchaser and forfeited if the purchase is not completed. Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday, so many Good Fridays ago, and He paid for all of our sins by carrying our sins on His back to the cross. He atoned for our sins. When we truly come to a personal born-again faith in Jesus, the price Jesus paid for us was complete and enough to save every sinner who calls on Him to be saved. The moment we come to Jesus as Marian did, God gives us inside us, His security deposit, His earnest money if you will, His

Holy Spirit, with the promise that on the basis of His promise that He cannot and will not lie, He guarantees us, He assures us of our eternal salvation. When I explained this to Marian, she said, “This is my verse.” I left her home that day with joy in my heart. I raised my hand to heaven and said, “Thank you Jesus, that Marian and I will spend eternity that never ends with you and we will have new bodies, praise the Lord. Do you want Marian’s assurance of salvation that Jesus lives within you by His earnest, His pledge, His Guarantee, His Holy Spirit? Would you bow your heads for just a moment? Give an invitation to receive Jesus, and lead in a prayer. “Dear God, I am a sinner who needs you today. I come to you, repenting of my sin. You died on the cross to open the way for me to have eternal salvation. Come into my heart today, Lord Jesus. Live inside me by Your Holy Spirit. I receive You by faith. Thanks so much for coming into my heart. I will live for you for the rest of my life. How I thank you in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE AND PRAYER AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR

Marian Joy Remington

Beloved, nothing in this whole world brings the comfort we need in such a time of sorrow as the very precious Word of God. From the well of the Word of God, let’s draw deeply as we come to this funeral service. First, from the Old Testament—from Proverbs 3: 5,6, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” In David’s Psalm 23, David spoke of the Lord as His personal shepherd. Those who know Jesus can say with joy and certainty the same words Marian loved. If you know this blessed psalm, would you join me? “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Psalm 91:1,2, declares, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most-High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust.” Isaiah the prophet spoke precious words of comfort in Isaiah 26: 3,4, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust in the Lord forever. For in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock.” And in Isaiah 30: 15, “For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In repentance and rest you shall be saved. In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength...” This is the

word of the Lord from the Old Testament. May God bless His holy Word to our hearts.

From the New Testament, the precious words of Jesus come to mind. From John 14: 1-6, Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also, And whither I go, ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, “Lord, we know no whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

From II Timothy 1: 7, Paul gives us perspective, saying, “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” In Galatians 5: 22-23, Paul tells us what God produces in the life of His own children when we belong to Jesus, and we often saw this fruit in Marian. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Paul adds in II Corinthians 5: 6-8, “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: For we walk by faith, not by sight: We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” This is the word of the Lord from the New Testament.

Let’s bow in prayer as we ask God’s comfort and blessing in this funeral service! Dear precious Heavenly Father, we come to you in the Name of Jesus who said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” We come to You, dear Father, asking for Your Balm of Gilead to soothe the grief in every heart. Father, especially be with Larry in Arizona, and with Debra, Cathleen, Tamra, and their husbands and children. Help us all to remember that You, Lord, in Your sovereign will and grace, knew best when You took Marian Home to Your arms last Saturday, April 4th. Thank You that Marian did not have to suffer for a longer time. Now, please woo to Your loving arms every person present here today. Don’t let one of us go away without knowing You, personally Lord Jesus. Let each of us be able to say with Marian, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” We ask these blessings, Father, in the wonderful Name above every name, the Name of Jesus, Amen.

Marian Joy Remington

(December 29, 1941–April 4, 2020)



ROCK SPRINGS — On Saturday, April 4, 2020, Marian Joy Remington, 78, “Walked into the arms of Jesus”. She was born December 29, 1941, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the daughter of Tyse and Sadie Burns. She was a resident of Rock Springs, Wyoming for the last two years and a former resident of Sun City, Arizona. She married Larry Dale Remington in October 2 of 1988 in Youngtown, Arizona. Marian attended schools in Michigan, graduating from Grand Rapids Christian High in 1959 before attending Grand Valley University for nursing because she had a life-long desire and dedication to helping others be healthier.

She was an Adult Nurse Practitioner for 40 years until her retirement on March 31, 2018. She devoted 60 years to the nursing field. Marian was a member of the Evangelical Free Church led by Pastor Richard Carlson. Her interests included cruising, going for walks, reading, bingo, bowling, singing in the choir, playing games with her family and participating in activities at the Young at Heart Center and Deer Trail. Survivors include her loving husband Larry Remington of Carefree, Arizona; daughters Debra Willard and husband Michael of Rock Springs, Wyoming, Cathleen Shakal of Rogue River, Oregon, Tamra Carr and husband Brent of Rock Springs, Wyoming; brother Dave Burnes of Lyndon, Washington; grandchildren Kayla, Travis, and Sadie; as well as many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents Tyse and Sadie Burns, and her brothers Glenn and Terry Burns.

EULOGY FOR MARIAN JOY REMINGTON

After sharing for an hour and a half with Marian and her three daughters, Debra Willard, Cathleen Shakal, and Tamra Carr, they told me about their own mother Marian, in her presence. Marian came in her dining room where she listened and then shared some herself on Tuesday, March 10th, 2020, from 2 to 3:30 PM.

I began our sharing time with prayer and told them all that this was my first time ever preparing a eulogy in the presence of the person whom God might soon take Home to His arms. What better time is there to give roses, than while our loved ones are alive, and able to hear and receive our roses? Our sharing began as Debra told us Tamra was the rose-giver in their family. When Tamra was little, she remembered her mother Marian taking her with Debra, her older sister on bike rides. Debra rode her own bike, but Tamra was belted into a seat behind Marian's bike. Marian loved to take them to construction sites in their town of Wyoming, Michigan, which is a southwest suburb of Grand Rapids. As their neighborhood was rapidly growing, Marian took them from where they lived in an apartment complex to new home construction sites when no one was working on the site. The three of them would walk inside the homes and Marian would tell Debra and Tamra where the kitchen was, the living room, the dining room, the bedrooms, the bathrooms, the closets, the laundry room, and the garage. Marian was dreaming of her own home someday in the future. Yet, though Marian was a very hard worker, she was very limited financially. She took care of her parents and her siblings, and since she was a nurse practitioner, she was everybody's nurse. She gave her all freely to her family. But let's go back a moment and fill in a blank about Cathleen.

Cathleen was three years younger than Debra, and three years older than Tamra. When Cathleen was born in 1966, Marian and Debra had moved to Hollywood in Los Angeles, California. Marian loved her little daughter so much, but she was hardly able to support Debra. It was a difficult decision, but Marian did it thinking of Cathleen. She decided to put Cathleen up for adoption with a Christian agency in Los Angeles. Marian decided that she would rather be deprived of the daughter she bore and loved, than to let her suffer without adequate provision. That's why one day Marian was holding Cathleen, and the next day, Cathleen was at an adoption agency, awaiting a Christian family to adopt her, as that was Marian's hope and prayer. Nothing more was known about Cathleen until 2016, but that's getting ahead of our story. I want you to learn about Marian a bit more. She grew up going to church as her mother took her. She went to many different Protestant churches, but it was not until she was in her 40's that Marian felt the tug of God's Holy Spirit on her heart. That's when Marian was born again. That's when God began to have His own way in Marian's life. Debra and Tamra both said that as their Mom was a single parent, looking back, Marian did a phenomenal job. She blazed her own trail. She was a banner Mom. Marian said God guided me all the

way and even used some of my bad decisions to pay off for his glory. She said that looking back, God was protecting her and providing for her by His providence. Marian took Debra and Tamra to home-shows—as Marian was still dreaming. She bought dance shoes and a baton for Tamra, but Tamra backed out and just used them for play. She dressed Debra in dance costumes she couldn't afford. To keep working during the day, Marian employed a grandma babysitter Debra and Tamra loved, Vera Aspergren. Vera walked the girls to school, and they loved her. Once a year, Marian took her daughters on a long trip to Cedar Point Amusement Park, in Sandusky, Ohio. They would leave at 5 AM and be in Sandusky by 10 AM when the park opened. They would ride the rides and stay in a motel for the night and drive back the next day. Many times, Marian rented a motor home and took her girls annually up north of Muskegon to Timber Shores, a camp-ground they all loved. She took the girls to the circus, to Holiday on Ice, and even to a Donkey Basketball game. Marian saved up special money for special things.

The girls never wanted for a meal or clothing. Debra remembered her gym teacher sending a note home that she needed a special pair of tennis shoes, that were never worn outside, separate from street shoes. Marian cried, as she didn't have the money to get Debra a second pair of shoes. Marian got some help from her parents to get these tennis shoes, but Marian deprived herself for her daughters. Debra said that Marian for so many years wore a coat with a hat and a fur ring. She said it was the absolute ugliest coat in the world, a brown coat, her Mom's worst color—a coat she got at Good Will. Tamra had a Halloween memory of earlier in the day, eating peanut butter out of the jar. That was not in the boundaries of Marian's rules, so she grounded Tamra, which meant Debra was grounded too, to stay home and boohoo with her, and not be able to go "trick or treating." Tamra said her mom should have chosen a different discipline. That night Marian had a date. When the man came to the door, Marian said, "My two daughters are grounded, so I cannot go with you. I must stay home."

Debra remembered her mother asking her to back up the Ford Gran Torino under the carport so she could wash the car. Debra was only 14. It was Marian's pride and joy, white with red pin stripes. Debra said she had no license or permit, but she liked trying to drive. Sadly, Debra ran the Torino smack dab into one of the carport posts. It made a noticeable dent. She was fearful, and Marian knew it happened. Debra waited for some fireworks, but nothing happened. "O my goodness, Mom didn't say a thing. She wasn't angry." Marian, like many moms, kept chocolate hidden from her daughters, in her bedroom. She was a chocolate lover. Marian noticed one evening some of her chocolate was missing. Tamra was getting a bath in the bathtub. Marian just walked in and told Tamra she was getting a spanking. Marian spanked her right in the bathtub and left her crying. Debra later told Tamra she took their Mom's chocolate. When Tamra told her Mom, Marian said, "Next time you need a spanking, Tamra, I'll skip it." Debra said she escaped lots of

discipline by just being gone a lot. Debra was out working and babysitting from the age of 13. Six nights a week, she was out roller-skating for the rink speed team. She said she skated herself out of trouble. Besides being a contestant at Roller World, Debra was their neighborhood's official first preference babysitter. That kept her out a lot more nights. One night, Marian had Debra home to watch Tamra, when a neighbor asked Marian if Debra could bring Tamra and watch between 6-12 children. Marian agreed and that's what Debra did.

Marian shared how God led the family to Phoenix, Arizona. There she met a lady doctor, Dr. Sheryl Harter, who believed in Marian. That's how in 1979, Marian became a full time Nurse Practitioner whose practice was using a natural path of healing. Now you may be wondering what ever happened to little adopted out Cathleen. Four years ago, Tamra started studying genealogy and searching for her long-lost middle sister. Marian told her girls that somewhere they had another sister. Tamra was on it. She got help from an expert man and within 24 hours, he found Cathleen's adopted sister Christine through Facebook—out in Oregon. Cathleen grew up having no idea about her Mom, and trying to cope with the missing place she had inside, by thinking her Mom was probably a drug addict, having no idea her Mom loved her and gave her up for adoption, for her own good. Cathleen grew up in a German family who adopted an older girl, Christine. Those adopted parents applied for a boy from the same agency that Marian went to in Los Angeles. They waited for a boy, and when no boy was available, the agency called to say they had a girl, Cathleen. Now this little daughter of Marian had a home in Medford, Oregon. It is so strange, but true, that Cathleen grew up to become a nurse in the Providence Medford Medical Center in Medford, Oregon. Cathleen had been looking for her biological parents, and so was Tamra doing the same.

Little did Cathleen know she looked like her biological mom, was a nurse like she was, and had two sisters longing to meet her. When Tamra called the contact she found, it was Cathleen's older adopted sister Christine, who wasn't sure about this call. Cathleen then finally got a call from Tamra and was shocked to speak to her biological sister. They talked for two hours. God was working a miracle and using Tamra, and her husband Brent to make it happen. The next day Marian called Cathleen and Mom and daughter were reunited on the phone. A visit was planned four years ago, and Cathleen came to visit her Mom and her sisters over her 50th birthday. When I listened to the three daughters of Marian on Tuesday, March 10th, I saw God had melded the them tightly together. Marian, Debra and Tamra were overjoyed to have all four of them together now with Cathleen. This time Cathleen told me she was here to be with her Mom and sisters for twelve days. Isn't God good? To see all the weaving together of God's grace, using both good and bad, Marian said she knew that all these miracles were God's grace. Why? The Bible says, in II Corinthians 5: 17, "If anyone be in Christ, they are new creatures, the old things are passed away, all things are become new."

But let's back up again and piece together how God brought Marian a good husband named Larry Remington. They have been married 31 years. This happened toward the end of Tamra's growing up years at home. Debra spoke of her Dad taking her to college. Marian and Larry lived together in Arizona for many years where Marian was a nurse practitioner for 30 years. In 2018, Marian had a stroke that affected her whole right side of her body. Marian had to give up being a nurse practitioner at age 76 after her stroke. She and Larry in 2018 and 2019 came to Rock Springs and moved in at Deer Trail, with both of them in wheelchairs, as Larry had health issues as well. Marian would not give up until she was able to walk again, and thus to walk out of Deer Trail on her own. Marian and Larry had been growing old together in Deer Trail. Most people with their right side so badly affected, would have given up. Marian simply wouldn't give up.

Now Marian who had so long sacrificed her time and love and energy to her daughters, lived to see them at her side giving and sacrificing back to her. Marian moved into her new home on Horseshoe Drive in Rock Springs, her 5th home she has ever owned. Because of Larry's health, he needed the care available to him back in Phoenix, so that is where he has 24-hour care to live with assistance in a home there. When Larry heard Marian had pancreatic cancer and had spent three weeks with Debra in Tijuana, Mexico, getting cancer treatments, he told Marian, "We're getting older." The treatment Marian received in Mexico was helpful to many others, but for Marian, it did not bring healing for her.

When Debra's daughter, Sadie, heard Grandma Remington was in Hospice Care, she told her Mom, "What will I do without Grandma? She has raised the bar to the highest level. Who's going to let me drive her golf cart? Who's going to take me to the Rec Center? Who's going to take me to the pool? I don't know what I'll do." Who can I go to when I want to share new things? Grandma is the most fantastic Grandma. Marian's daughters feel the same way, as do Debra's daughter Gabby, and Tamra's children, Kayla and Travis and his girlfriend, Lisa. They told me they struggle to release their Mom. Debra said it well, with tears, "If Mom has to go now, my husband Mike and I would rather God would take her Home than have her have to suffer." Our church came to dearly love Marian. She got under our skin. What a woman Marian is, as she lifted her hands in worship and praise. One night, Marian prayed aloud in the front of the service. She cared about people, body and soul. Even after getting back from Mexico, she called me twice to answer two medical questions I asked her about people I know and love. She remembered because I asked her before she went to Mexico for treatment. Heaven is a more beautiful place because Marian had the Holy Spirit living in her as her Guarantee when Jesus called her Home. May God bless this lovely woman of God whose testimony I hope leads you to find Jesus today, if you do not know Him. What a joy to tell her someday, "I found Jesus at your funeral."