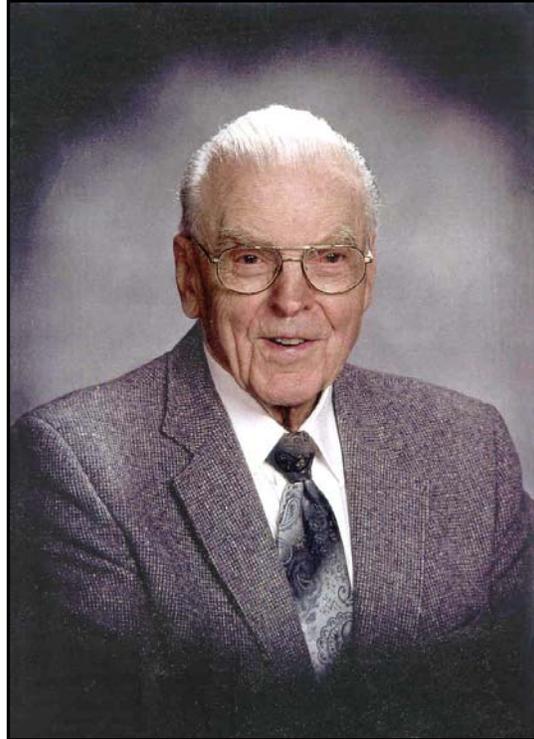


Eulogy for Harold W. Buckles, Evangelist

December 1st, 1909 – March 16th, 2008

Written by Bonnie Buckles (daughter-in-law)

Harold Winfred Buckles died on March 16th, 2008. His wife, Grace Ellen and his eldest daughter, Leota Kay Johnson, preceded him in death. He is survived by his four remaining children and their spouses: Joseph & Bonnie Buckles of Culver, Oregon; Noma & Herb Oxenrider of Gresham, Oregon; Mary & Bob Jones of Boring, Oregon; Steven & Denise Buckles of Vancouver, WA; Along with his 15 grandchildren (Larry Johnson, Laurie Valverde, Terrie Nelson, Sandi DeFreze, Bryan Buckles, Aleta Sanstrum, Bethany Learn, Joy Kirk, Kelli Kristensen, Jason Oxenrider, Cheryl Marshall, Matthew Douglass, Adrian Buckles, Ashley Domingo and Jake Buckles.)



Harold Winfred Buckles was born December 1, 1909 to Silas Winfred and Anna Mae Buckles Harold in Garden City, Minnesota. He was taken to church services as soon as deemed wise. It was a cold winter and the bobsled horses had to be shod with sharp calks to help them make it down the steep, icy hill and across the frozen Watanwan River into Garden City to the church building.

According to today's standards, Harold's family lived in poverty, but escaped feeling deprived. At a young age, Harold and his sister Dorothy had chores, which included bringing in wood for the cook stove, feeding the chickens and gathering eggs, feeding baby lambs, pigs, kittens and ducks.

When Harold was four, he and his 8-year-old sister were given permission to drive the horse and buggy the mile and a half to town to attend practices for Children's Day at the church building. On the Saturday before that special day, the two of them went into the woods to gather honeysuckles along the river hillsides that ran through town. Harold was enthralled by their beauty and fragrance. So much so that the next day when the children were to march up on the platform to sing their song, he chose to walk around smelling all the flowers before resuming his proper place at the head of the line.

From a young child, Harold was taught to have faith in God as his heavenly Father. His mother did not believe material things were the answer to a satisfied life. He was taught

to think of others and put their needs above his own desires.

As he grew older, Harold was kept busy on his parents' 160-acre farm in Minnesota. Their herd of Guernsey dairy cows was hand milked twice a day. Barns needed cleaned out. Horses had to be brushed, curried, and harnessed to pull the farm implements for tilling, planting, and harvesting. And the herd of hogs had to be fed and cared for. Then of course there was the getting to school a mile and a half from home. Many of Harold's sermons had vivid illustrations relating his own childhood farm life with Jesus' poignant, rural parables.

Early on, Harold established himself as having a brilliant mind. He set out to get a degree in electrical engineering at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. However, the Lord interrupted his educational process there tenderly redirecting his focus toward higher and nobler goals at which point he enrolled in Minnesota Bible College. He painted signs to earn his way through Bible College, and did a fair amount of printing as well. While attending the Bible College, the Lord saw fit to bring Grace Ellen Montgomery into his life. Because she played trombone in the orchestra, he quickly brushed up on his skills and played trombone along side her. He proposed to her at the young people's camp in Worthington, Minnesota with the words, "Will you be mine forever?"

Harold's first pastorate was in Pleasant Grove not far from Rochester. A family of skunks had previously occupied the home that was to become theirs. They lived on \$12.50 per week and went calling together throughout the community. The church attendance was between 35 and 50 people. When Harold answered the knock of opportunity to pastor a larger church in Winona, Minnesota,, he and Grace left to the background sounds of accusations that they were leaving this little country church for more money, But to them, the Lord was giving them a larger harvest field for the Lord with the Sunday morning services being broadcast over the radio.

Harold felt called to hold revival meetings in many different places and did a fair amount of traveling while his family was increasing in size. After serving as a circuit preacher in Nebraska, he moved his little family to Oregon where he met Brother Arch Word who was impressed with his straight-forward manner of preaching and recommended him to San Jose Bible College. There he soon became a part of the teaching staff. While in San Jose, he and Grace met the Oxenriders and several other lifetime friends. From San Jose, the family moved to Oakland, California, and then to Hampton, Virginia where new converts were baptized in the Atlantic Ocean. He held tent meetings in Yellville, Arkansas where the locals came carrying lanterns from far and wide, hungry for the Word of God.

Making Cincinnati, Iowa his home base in 1950, Dad once again went into full-time evangelistic work. For \$700, he purchased an old abandoned hotel along the railroad tracks with eight rooms, no electricity, and a path to the outdoor facilities. Bums often came to the door begging for food, and the children feared that on one of those visits down the path they might find company.

In 1953, Harold decided he needed to be at home with his family. He took a church in Manteca, California where they stayed for 7 whole years. The time spent there was filled with great revival meetings, good vacation Bible schools, wonderful memories and souls won to the Lord. Harold took several part time jobs to help the old shoestrings meet. Then the Gering, Nebraska Church of Christ invited Harold to come be their preacher. It was a difficult move for the family after living in Manteca the longest of anywhere; they served the Lord there for three years.

In 1962, the Lord beckoned Harold to Salem. His father, Silas, had been studying about the New Testament Church from the Bible. He became uncomfortable with the two Christian churches where he had served as an elder. As a result, he encouraged his son, Harold to come to Salem to begin a church that would faithfully look to the New Testament Church as its basis. The first few years, the Christians here met in the Women's Auxiliary building in downtown Salem. Many Thanksgiving Day Rallies took place there. The women made sure there was a wonderful traditional dinner each year.

Through wise use of the tithes and offerings, there were eventually enough monies to buy land and build the church building. Clarence Oxenrider along with other dedicated servants invested much time and energy to build the building, which has been added onto several times.

Harold conscientiously gave his life to writing, printing, teaching and preaching the Word of God. Having lost his beloved helpmeet in 1995, his health had begun a gradual but steady decline. One of the most difficult things he ever did was to relinquish his role as full-time preacher to Jim Parks in 1998. Even then, he cherished the opportunity to preach whenever asked. His desire to bring people to the Lord had been his strongest motivation from the late 1920's when the Lord intercepted his college education at the University of Minnesota until he could no longer preach. His preaching ministry spanned over 75 years!

Many of us will miss Harold, but his heart's desire that many come to salvation is shared by a number of you sitting in this place. Reaching out to the lost around you will be continued here in Salem as you apply the scriptures and ask the Lord to work through you to touch the lives of those around you.

True to his solid farm-boy roots, he put his hand to the plow and never looked back. He truly lived the scripture in Luke 9:62:

*“No one who puts his hand to the plow
and looks back
is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”*