

## **“Keep Your Head Down!”**

**By Paul R. Blake**

I miss my friend. He has gone home. Harry King passed from this life and went to his reward last week. I met Harry on June 4, 1995 at the Sunday morning service of the Westview church of Christ. He was very welcoming. I sensed from our first conversation that we would be more than brethren worshiping together in a local congregation; we would become good friends. And become friends we did! Harry was a man entirely without guile; with him, what you saw was exactly what he was within and without. He was kind, generous, direct, and an unselfconscious encourager. In the 17 years I knew him, I never once had any fear that he feigned anything.

Harry taught me how to play golf. Most folks who know me are not sure whether they should thank him or blame him for that. Golf stands apart from all other sports because in golf, one does not have referees; each player calls penalties on himself. This makes golf a test of one's honesty and character. Harry taught me to play the game according to the rules for myself without forcing them on others who just wanted to play “friendly golf” (playing golf just for fun and not for the score). He was very patient with me while I was learning to play; he didn't criticize when I hacked the ball around the course, and he made every effort to say something good when I got lucky and made a nice shot. That was the way he lived his life in Christ. He followed the rule of faith carefully while being humble and patient with others who were learning the way.

However, Harry had the same answer for nearly every errant shot I made: “Keep your head down!” Over time I became irritated by what I thought was a rather repetitive and pointless correction, cringing every time I hit a poor shot knowing Harry was going to say, “Keep your head down!” But I eventually discovered that there was a great deal of wisdom in that old saying.

“Keep your head down!” means stay focused on what you are doing. Golfers often lift their heads during the swing to see where the ball is going before the club strikes it. This often results in a mishit because the player is not concentrating on the ball, but rather on where he hopes it will go. In other words, stay focused until the task is finished. And Harry did just that. His faith and godly works never wavered; he walked before the Lord until it was time for him to go home. Paul wrote: “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2Tim. 4:6-8).

Harry kept his head down and focused until the end. The last time I visited him in St. Elizabeth's Hospital South, he was sitting in a chair smiling and talking of getting well, going home, and getting back to worship services. He knew at some point that multiple myeloma cancer was going to send him to his eternal home, but his present task was to finish his course in this world. He would not lift his head until he finished his swing in this life. Then he would lift his head and look to see the results of his shot, a resting place in Paradise until all of the saints are gathered in heaven. Harry kept his head down; now he's looking up.

Harry J King helped shape my life with the countless things he taught me in the four years we shared at Austintown and in the 13 years since. I thank God often for the wisdom, patience, and love He manifested toward me through Harry, my brother and friend.

Harry, I am trying to keep my head down, but I look forward to lifting up my eyes in heaven and seeing you there.

I miss my friend.

### **Truth or Fable?**

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2Tim. 4:3-4).

President Abraham Lincoln loved to employ this brain-teaser to make a point to constituents. He would ask, "How many legs would a sheep have if you called his tail a leg?" Naturally, they would meekly respond, "Five." He would respond, "Wrong! You are mistaken. The sheep would still have just four legs. Calling something a leg doesn't make it so." He used this particular quiz on a delegation that was pressing him for an immediate proclamation of emancipation. His point was well-taken. (From *Who Broke the Baby?* By Jean Staker Garton, p. 35) Similarly, many people today label their doctrines as "truth," when, in fact, they are only fables.

### **Hitler or Jefferson?**

“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me” (2Tim. 3:10-11).

Dr. Glenn Olds, former President of Kent State University, recalled the sight of Mt. Rushmore as he hitch-hiked cross-country in 1941 during his junior year. From 10 miles back, he recognized Washington and Lincoln. But in the middle was a figure that looked like Adolf Hitler. Once he got up close, instead of hair combed over a forehead, the young man saw cable wires, and instead of a toothbrush moustache, he saw a scaffold. The image stuck, and he made this note in his journal: "What was Adolf Hitler at 10 miles away was simply Thomas Jefferson under construction." The experience is true to life. Almost every major problem at a distance looks bad; however, up close, it can be seen as something under construction or repair.

### **A Moments Wisdom on Weakness**

- The greatest weakness of all is the great fear of appearing weak.
- You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one.
- It is so with dogs and men: the weaker they are the louder they bark.
- You cannot run away from weakness; you must some time fight it out or perish; and if that be so, why not now, and where you stand?
- A coward gets scared and quits. A hero gets scared, but still goes on.
- Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards; they simply unveil them to the eyes of men. Silently and perceptibly, as we wake or sleep, we grow strong or weak; and last some crisis shows what we have become.
- In poverty and other misfortunes of life, true friends are a sure refuge. The young they keep out of mischief; to the old they are a comfort and aid in their weakness, and those in the prime of life they incite to noble deeds.
- Failure to accord credit to anyone for what he may have done is a great weakness in any man.
- The weakest among us has a gift, however seemingly trivial, which is peculiar to him, and which worthily used, will be a gift to his race forever.