

## AS A PREACHER

Mr. Ashbrook was always known for his stand. However, his enemies usually ignored the fact that he was a great expository Bible preacher. His messages were straight from the text, but with clear points to nail the Bible truth to hearts. He always preached with his Bible in his hand. He was a great illustrator.

His was not a ministry which brought people down the aisles. He gave invitations, but they were completely void of emotional pressure. Most of his converts were won to the Lord in their homes as he took them through the Scriptures with his Bible. He was an insatiable caller. Any evening he did not have a meeting he was busy calling.

## AS A GENTLEMAN



His ministry was always marked with the bearing of a Christian gentleman. Whether he preached, gave the announcements, or merely pronounced the benediction, his participation always lent dignity to the occasion. His dignity led many people to call him “Doctor” Ashbrook, but he had no such degree. He disdained the prospect of several D.D.’s [honorary doctor of divinity] always using the occasion to remark that “a D.D. is like the curl in the pig’s tail; a little bit prettier, but no more pig.”

## AS A FRIEND

Mr. Ashbrook delighted in the friendship of the younger men in the Ohio Bible Fellowship and was always ready to give encouragement, advice and financial help. He maintained his interest in every part of the Lord’s work to the end. One of the projects of his last year was the completion of two tennis courts at Peniel Bible Camp. At the time of his death he and Mrs. Ashbrook were involved in donating to Northside Christian School the property for a new building at Westerville.

The Ohio Bible Fellowship has lost a beloved Pastor. The Ohio Bible Mission has lost a discerning Board member. Peniel Bible Camp has lost a booster. Fundamentalism has lost a great warrior. He towered above us, but he stood shoulder to shoulder with us. Farewell, good brother! May the fond memory of your gray head give us courage to stand! We look forward to renewing our fellowship on that other shore!

# Remembering Pastor William E. Ashbrook

*Today marks the birthday of one of the founders of the Ohio Bible Fellowship, William E. Ashbrook. The following article was published in the OBF Visitor shortly after his death, to which I have added some pictures. It is important to know, appreciate, and learn from those who have gone before us!*

Farewell, Good Brother! Remembering Pastor William E. Ashbrook  
March 19th, 1896—April 5th, 1977

On Tuesday morning, April 5th, 1977, one of the charter members of our Ohio Bible Fellowship was prompted to glory. Our brother, William E. Ashbrook, dressed for breakfast, ate a light meal and retired to his easy chair to take advantage of the oxygen which had been provided to aid his breathing. A few minutes later he was gone. Only a body was left—peacefully seated in the chair.

## AS A YOUTH

William Ashbrook was born in Washington, Pennsylvania, March 19th, 1896. His father was a local hardware merchant. During his teenage years the family moved to a farm several miles out of town. That farm always stuck to him. He maintained a lifelong interest in dairy cattle, horses and gardening.



Mr. Ashbrook was reared in the pre-merger United Presbyterian Church. This was the old Scotch branch of the church which sang Psalms and said, “Sabbath” instead of Sunday. He graduated from one of the denominational schools, Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, having majored in Greek. His extra-curricular interests were debate and tennis. He graduated from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Shortly

thereafter he married a college classmate, Gertrude Shane, of McDonald, Pennsylvania.

A short time before his marriage Mr. Ashbrook’s only brother, John, died at the age of 18 of typhoid fever. He was to have been best man at his brother’s wedding. William Ashbrook always felt that his younger brother was the most spiritual one of the two and often remarked to members of his family that he was fulfilling the ministry his brother might have had.

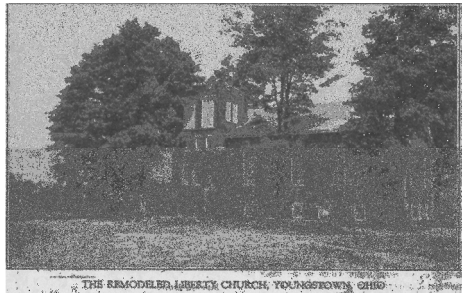
## AS A STUDENT

Although Mr. Ashbrook was born again prior to his seminary experience, the teaching at Pittsburgh Seminary did little to satisfy his heart. Theological orthodoxy was not combined



with much evangelical zeal. In somewhat of a quandary about his future ministry he and his bride honeymooned in England and Scotland while he took further work at Cambridge University and New College, Edinburgh. This education broadened his mind, but did little for his heart. However, a landlady in London suggested to the Ashbrooks that they should hear the English Methodist Pastor, Dinsdale T. Young. They accepted the advice, and Young's ministry warmed their hearts and confirmed Mr. Ashbrook's call to the ministry.

### AS A DISCERNER



Mr. Ashbrook's first pastorate was at the Liberty United Presbyterian Church, Hubbard, Ohio. The old frame church in a country cemetery was refurbished, a basement added, a parsonage built and the Gospel given. The church was in an area surrounded by the homes of Youngstown's steel millionaires. Mr. Ashbrook determined to reach the

rich with the Gospel, as well as the average people in the community. He gave a witness for Christ in their drawing rooms and made many friends among the well-known men of that area.

He came to Columbus in 1928 to take the pastorate of the Neil Avenue United Presbyterian Church, just off the Ohio State University campus. Several years later he took the pastorate of the Glen Echo United Presbyterian Church in the north end of Columbus. During this ministry the United Presbyterian Church joined the Federal Council of Churches [now called the National Council of Churches] and our brother began to protest vehemently the liberalism and near communism of this body. There was an additional aggravation in the trend of the United Presbyterian Missions. The Gospel had gone out of them, leaving them educational institutions instead of soul-winning labors. He began to introduce his people to independent missions. In the United Presbyterian Church this was considered disloyalty.

### AS A SEPARATIST

As a result of these convictions, Mr. Ashbrook addressed a letter to the Presbytery of Xenia, April 16th, 1940, tendering his resignation as Pastor of the Glen Echo United Presbyterian Church and severing his relationship to the denomination.

Approximately 115 members of the 200 member Glen Echo Church desired to follow in founding an independent church. On May 1, 1940, the Calvary Bible Church of Columbus was founded, with its first services held in the basement of the Medary Avenue School. The passage which was his great support through this period was II Corinthians 6:17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and

be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." He viewed the growth and blessing which the church enjoyed as being the direct result of God's fatherly provision for those who would separate from apostasy. Calvary Bible Church was the great ministry of our brother's life. He served as Pastor of the Congregation from its inception until after his first stroke in 1971—more than 30 years.

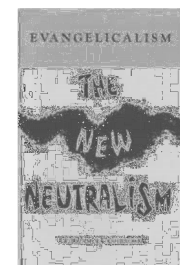


After Pastor Ashbrook's break with the United Presbyterian Church he found his fellowship in the Independent Fundamental Churches of America. He served a number of terms on the Executive Committee and valued the fellowship of other men who had paid the price of withdrawing from apostasy. However, he was one of the first to observe the trend of the times when new men, without separatist convictions, began to rise to places of authority in the group. In the years immediate prior to the beginning of the Ohio Bible Fellowship, when a number of the younger in Ohio were fighting the battle to recall the IFCA to its former convictions, he refused to attend the annual conventions, maintaining that the battle was already lost. He insisted that separation was the only course. Time demonstrated the truth of his conviction.

### AS A LEADER

Mr. Ashbrook was one of the founders of the Ohio Bible Mission and served on its Board until the time of his home going. He was also instrumental in the purchase of Peniel Bible Camp. He opposed the purchase of a number of camp properties; but, when the present property became available, he was convinced it was the will of the Lord and worked fervently for its purchase. Had it not been for his prayers, negotiations, and confident leadership, it is doubtful that the Ohio Bible Mission would own this property today.

### AS AN INFORMER



Having watched his former denomination move into apostasy, Mr. Ashbrook hated modernism, ecumenism, and new evangelicalism with a passion. He was noted for his letters to the editor of the Columbus papers exposing the liberalism and near communism of the Ohio Council of Churches. One of the great works of his life was his booklet of information on new evangelicalism, *Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism*. It was first published as a small tract in 1958. Eight different editions were printed, usually with more information added. After his first stroke in 1971, he asked the Lord to let him complete a final edition of his book before taking him home. Despite trouble with his eyes, he laboriously typed and edited this edition with the help of Mrs. Ashbrook and his son, John. This was completed in 1975—the original eight pages having grown to 129.