



Dr. Barry Robert Leventhal

May 7, 1943 - December 13, 2022

Barry Robert Leventhal (aka. Baruch, The Bear and Papa), 79 years old, shed his earthly body, certainly with boundless joy and enthusiasm, and sprinted into glory to meet his Messiah face to face. Barry was born in Los Angeles, California on May 7, 1943. After being widely recruited in both football and basketball, he graduated from San Gabriel High School and set off to play football for his beloved UCLA Bruins. As a senior, he co-captained the Bruins to an improbable 14-12 victory against a #1 ranked, undefeated Michigan State team in the 1966 Rose Bowl and in the process notched the Bruins their very first Rose Bowl victory. In the 56 years since he graduated from UCLA, he never lost his love for his Bruins or his disdain for the USC Trojans.

Having reached the apex of his athletic career after the Rose Bowl victory, Barry began to experience how short-lived was the elation that so often goes with earthly, temporal achievements. In the months following the Rose Bowl victory, through the faithfulness of close friends, regular meetings with Hal Lindsey and time spent studying the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, Barry realized that he was being pursued by the “hound of heaven” and came to the eternity-altering realization that he had a God-shaped vacuum in his heart that could not be filled by anything but Jesus Christ. On April 24, 1966, Barry placed his faith in the free-gift of eternal life offered through the death and resurrection of Jesus – a decision that radically altered the trajectory of his life and would go on to impact the lives of thousands of

others.

In the summer of 1966, after graduating with a degree in Kinesiology, Barry met the one true love of his life, a beautiful blonde haired, blue-eyed gal from Galax, Virginia. He and Mary were married on June 10, 1967, and they stayed by each other's sides, through thick and thin, for the next 55 years, 6 months and 3 days. Marriage is hard yet these two were diligent to keep pursuing one another over all the difficulties that a half-century of life threw at them. Out of their enduring love came four children and sixteen grandchildren.

Following a stint on staff with Athletes in Action, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, Barry went on to earn his ThM. in Christian Education and a PhD. in Systematic Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary. His doctoral dissertation was a ground-breaking work entitled, Theological Perspectives on the Holocaust. It was during these years that Barry discovered, diligently cultivated, and began to share his deep love and respect for God's Word.

Over the next 50+ years Barry would go on to help plant several churches, including Christian Family Chapel (Jacksonville, FL) and Woodbridge Community Fellowship (Woodbridge, VA). He co-founded Christian Family Life with Don Meredith to help encourage and strengthen marriages and families. He led and served with Ariel Ministries where he helped disciple and equip Jewish believers. Additionally, Barry spent over 30 years teaching at the graduate and post-graduate level – at Dallas Theological Seminary (Dallas, TX), Trinity School for Ministry (Ambridge, PA) and the last 20 years at Southern Evangelical Seminary (Matthews, NC). He contributed to numerous books and scholarly journals and was a sought-after speaker on topics like Biblical Prophecy and the Holocaust.

Barry was one of those rare individuals who was gifted with a giant intellect, an extremely high emotional quotient, and an incredibly strong work ethic. He was as adept at teaching Greek, Hebrew, apologetics, philosophy, and church

history as he was teaching pastoral ministry or an introduction to preaching class. He was equally comfortable in the pulpit, the classroom, or the living room.

His greatest contributions, from a ministry perspective, were in making the Bible accessible and in making sure everyone he met knew that Jesus was alive and that He loved them. He took difficult concepts, gave them handholds, and then showed you where to grab. He was practical – showing how the Bible, properly understood, is as relevant today as it was when it was written. Barry was no ivory tower academic cloistered away in an off-limits office. He wasn't afraid of the mess. He leaned into the hard stuff. He frequently engaged waitresses, nurses, neighbors, and random folks he met. He would tell them about Jesus and share with them a Joe Gibbs tract that laid out clearly how they could come to know this Jewish Savior.

As Barry aged, his body began to break down. The glory days of football took a significant toll on him orthopedically. He underwent untold number of surgeries to in an attempt to lessen his pain. Two new knees...two new hips...spine fused from top to bottom. The Six Million Dollar Man he was not. And though none of these surgeries resulted in the pain reduction Barry so deeply wanted, their benefits showed up in other ways. The pain the LORD allowed in his life did its work to round off his rough edges. Some get bitter...some get better. Barry got better – more empathetic...more kind...more patient...more loving. In short, pain helped Barry become more like Jesus.

Barry was a “let's have fun” guy. He relished going to the movies with his family. He was a great storyteller. He appreciated a good bone-in ribeye (he would gnaw the bone). After a satisfying meal, he was quick to look for “something sweet to cut the grease” – chocolate was his dessert of choice. He was spontaneous – sometimes to a fault. He was a life-long learner – he was

constantly reading his books...oh, his books, overflowing on every bookshelf that could be squeezed into their house.

Barry loved his students. He was a life-long teacher – teaching his classes at the seminary almost to the very end. For him, a love of teaching was hard-wired in his DNA, and he was world-class. For decades, he mentored, developed, and took a deep and heartfelt interest in his students. He bemoaned that the art of teaching had been reduced to assignments and tests with no bearing on the practical aspects of real life. He wanted his classes to lead to transformation and worked tirelessly to ensure that his students left with not just the required information but with the tools to use that information to the glory of God and the betterment of man.

Barry loved Israel. One of the great joys in his life was leading tours through the Holy Land. On his last trip to Israel in 2013, at age 70, he got his first tattoo (this author can attest that he literally fell asleep while the tattoo artist was putting it on him) – an Israeli flag on his upper right arm. He was desperate for his kinsmen to come to know Jesus as their Messiah.

Barry loved his family. He made sure to tell them that he loved them every chance he got. He was a present leader in the home – showing up for soccer and football games, wrestling matches, choir concerts and all the other activities that come with a family of six. Barry wanted his kids to develop the skill of thoughtful living. When one of his children wanted to plead their case to do or buy something big, he would say, “tell me your top three reasons. If your top three don’t convince me, the other twenty reasons won’t either.” He was proficient at saying he was sorry and asking for forgiveness (a trait noticeably absent in most of the world today, with disastrous results). “I sure am proud of you” was a regular refrain from his lips.

Lastly and most importantly, Barry loved the LORD – Father, Son, and Spirit. He never lost the wonder that Jesus is the Messiah. He lived in the awe that

he had been reconciled to God through the death, burial, and resurrection of a Jewish carpenter – God in the flesh. He loved God’s Word, the Bible. Most of his life he was an advocate of the NASB Ryrie Study Bible. Armed with a red pen, a yellow highlighter and ruler – he read, re-read, studied, marked up, cross-referenced, and memorized that book.

Barry was preceded in death by his mother, Lillian, his father, Curly and his son-in-law, Thomas Hess. He is survived by his wife, Mary; his four children, Rebecca and her husband Phil, Katie, David and his wife Missy and Timothy; his 16 grandchildren, Christopher, Rebecca, Adia, Jordan, Daniel, Josh, Caroline, Joslyn, Abigail, Cameron, Joshua, Luke, Lilly, Kate, Timothy and Madison; his beloved sister, Joyce (“Sissy”) and her husband Steve. In addition to his family, Barry is survived by hundreds and hundreds of students that he loved, mentored, taught, and exhorted.

Though he is gone from this present world, he’s just getting started! One can only wonder what he is doing with his new body – free from the pain that plagued him. We know he’s having fun...and we bet he still has his Israel tattoo! A private family graveside service will be held at Hamilton Mill Memorial Gardens with a Celebration of Life Service at a later date at All Saints Anglican Church in Weddington, NC.

The family will be holding a celebration of life service for Dr. Leventhal on January 28th at All Saints Anglican Church at 11 am. The address for the church is 5328 Hemby Rd, Weddington, NC 28104

Previous Events

Private Graveside Service

DEC 19 (ET)

Hamilton Mill Memorial Gardens
3481 Hamilton Mill Rd
Buford, GA 30518
jeflanigan@flaniganfuneralhome.com

Celebration of Life Service

JAN 28. 11:00 AM (ET)

All Saints Anglican Church
5328 Hemby Rd.
Weddington, NC 28104

Tribute Wall

SS

“ 1 file added to the album *Barry Leventhal*



Sue Sailhamer - January 28, 2023 at 09:34 PM

JL

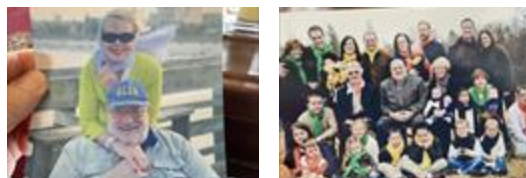
“ 1 file added to the album *Barry Leventhal*



Johanna Leupen - January 26, 2023 at 02:41 PM

SW

“ 2 files added to the album *Barry Leventhal*



Suzanne Washburn - December 24, 2022 at 01:10 PM

SW

“ David and I had the great privilege of sitting at Barry's feet as he established Christian Family Chapel and JIBS in Jacksonville, FL. As new believers, both his and Mary's modeling of being salt and light, his pastoring, teaching, and sense of humor, illuminated our path. We have been and will be forever grateful for God's great gift to us and the world of his ever-faithful servant, Barry Leventhal and his sweet bride, Mary.

Suzanne Washburn

Suzanne Washburn - December 24, 2022 at 01:06 PM

JS

“ Because of Barry, Bruce and I traveled to Israel. Bruce had been diagnosed with ALS and it was important for him to be where Jesus had lived

Barry had taught us so much.... we had to be there. Barry was a significant disciple to us and lead us through the fear.... to understand the truth... and for that I am eternally grateful. You 2 are celebrating together ❤️

jerri stevens - December 20, 2022 at 10:30 PM

GD

“ I will always remember my great friend, teacher, and brother in Christ Baruch. I will treasure the times I drove him to Messianic churches in NC and SC. Even while he was in pain from surgery, in all the pain he will find joy, joy to go and preach at a Messianic church. We will have lunch and go to a movie and talk about how the movie will use Bible motifs to make a more interesting plot. We will also talk about our family issues so that we could pray about them.

Barry loved to go and eat Mexican food, particularly Pozole, as it reminded him of his favorite place in California. We would talk about how he loved the Mother Land of Israel.

The greatest thing I remember is the joy he had when I received him with a Holy Kiss. Barry, you will always be remembered.

I know that in his last days before he went home with the Lord, he had to be praying for me, because I could not stop thinking about him, although we had lost contact since he moved to be with his wonderful daughter in Georgia.

To David, I hope to see you again in Weddington at the memorial service.

To Mary, I pray that you are healing well.

Geraldo Daniel

Geraldo Daniel - December 19, 2022 at 07:24 PM

B+

“ I had the privilege of being Dr. Leventhal’s graduate assistant for three years. During that time Dr. Leventhal had an impact on my life that I will be forever grateful for. He was the man who introduced me to Anglican tradition. Though here we mourn his passing we also celebrate that he is now partaking of the Marriage Supper.

Brendon Helms + - December 17, 2022 at 01:56 PM

Terry
Kirkland
Cook

“ Since learning of Barry's Homecoming I envisioned in my mind the incredibly joyous reunion that took place in Heaven between my parents John and Ann Scherer who loved Barry so much as their brother in Christ. My Parents went home several years ago. They loved Barry and sat under his teaching for many years. I can't wait to arrive home with them all and walk beside Jesus in His Kingdom!! Maranatha Lord Jesus. Almost home. Terry Kirkland Cook

Terry Kirkland Cook - December 17, 2022 at 11:27 AM

DL

“ 10 files added to the album Barry Leventhal



David Leventhal - December 15, 2022 at 03:27 PM

DC

We had the privilege of being in Barry and Don Meredith's church in Woodbridge Va. I (Diane) still have notes from his sermons. He was an awesome Bible teacher. Praying for Mary and all his family. Rob and Diane Crocker

Diane Crocker - December 18, 2022 at 08:57 PM

JL

Barry was the pastor of the first church I attended after accepting Christ as my savior. I sat under his teaching at Woodbridge Community Fellowship, then Log College which he taught at McLean Bible Church. I was blessed to take a trip to Israel with him in 1992 and to attend Camp Shoshanah where he taught in the summer. My walk with the Lord is blessed by his exceptional teaching and the fellowship of his family. They are in my heart as we celebrate his life and ministry. Barry used to say that when he was gone they could stuff him and hang him above the mantle, but he would be in his resurrection body with the Lord.

Johanna Leupen - January 26, 2023 at 02:36 PM