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In Loving Memory of
CORRECTIONAL OFFICER
Dustin Pedigo



Morgan County Today

Your Community. Your News.

PUBLISHER:
TOMMY LEE FRANCIS
PUBLISHER@MOCOTODAY.COM

EDITOR:
HEATHER FRANCIS
EDITOR@MOCOTODAY.COM

ADVERTISING:
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**Ms. Avery Pearl
Pet Columnist**

Pet Perspective

My Heart Hurts

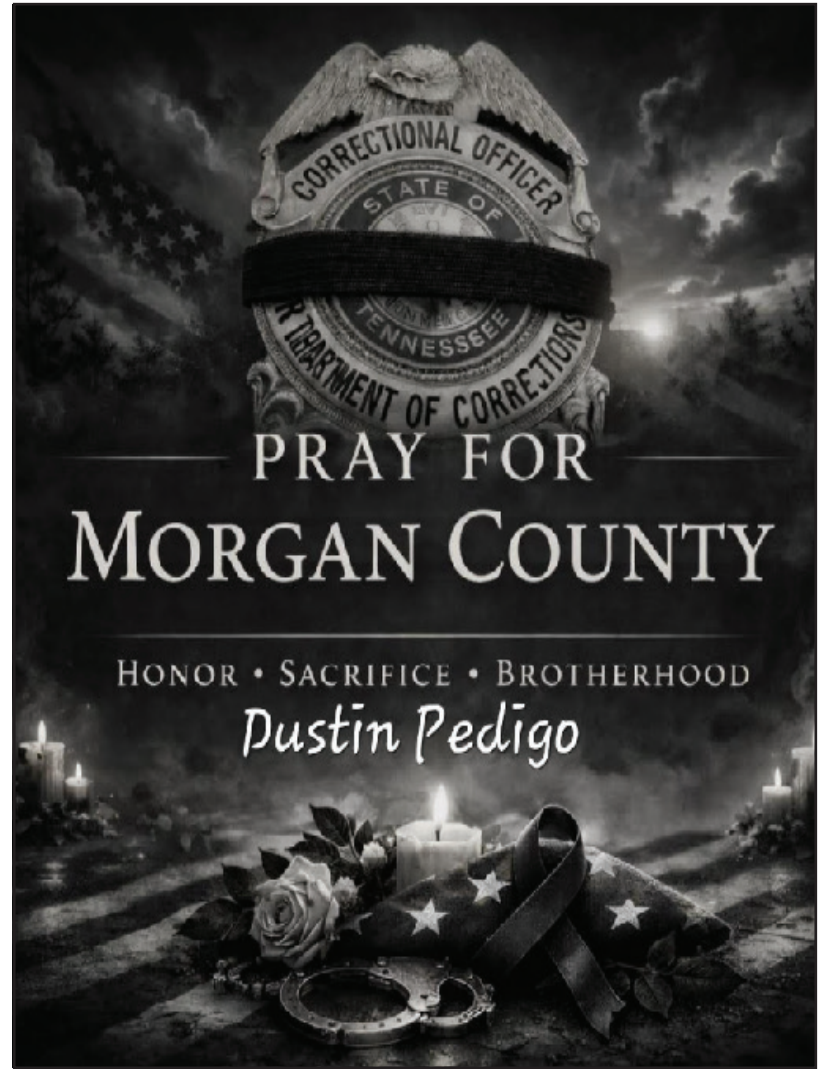
A terrible thing happened this week in Morgan County.

Dustin Pedigo an honorable, decent man was murdered by a cruel criminal at the Morgan County Correctional Complex.

It has been over 20 years since an inmate took the life of an officer one of the officers there.

Last time, it was at the Roane County Court House when, evil stole Wayne "Cotton" Morgan from his family and coworkers.

This time it happened behind those walls, that keep the worst among us from being amongst the free law abiding citizens.



Freedom isn't free and the blood of the brave men and women who put themselves on the line every single day. So that we can live our lives without much thought about the murderers, rapists, pedophiles, kidnappers, drug dealers, gang members that are kept at bay behind those walls.

They deserve our respect and gratitude.

Rest In Peace, Correctional Officer Dustin Pedigo. Thank you for your sacrifice.

For more of my Pet Perspective like and follow me on Facebook at Ms Avery Pearl.

WEEKLY WEATHER

**CITIZENS
GAS
UTILITY DISTRICT**
MORGAN of Scott and Morgan Counties

TODAY 3/3 **65° 49°**

WED 3/4 **70° 53°**

THU 3/5 **73° 53°**

FRI 3/6 **78° 58°**

SAT 3/7 **75° 57°**

SUN 3/8 **71° 54°**

MON 3/9 **72° 53°**

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— In Loving Memory —

**James Robert Bauer, 79
United States Army Veteran**



James Robert Bauer, age 79, gained his wings February 19, 2026 at Methodist Medical Center with his family by his side. James was born October 2, 1947 in Erie Pennsylvania to the late Walter and Margaret (Pistner) Bauer of Erie, PA. James proudly served his country in the US Army. He was a hard working man with a great work ethic and a long work history at Bell South and had a huge passion for hunting and woodworking.

He was preceded in death by his loving parents, Walter and

Margaret (Pistner) Bauer; and in-laws, Aramadao and Elizabeth Argentina.

James is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Jean Bauer "His Honey"; children: Scott (Erica) Bauer of AZ, Mark Murray of GA, Sheri Harris of Munford, AL, and Stephen (Misty) Bauer of TN; sisters, Ann Glasspell of PA and Linda Bauman of PA; 7 grandchildren and his longtime friend and chosen brother, Bill Podewils of Sunbright, TN.

A memorial service will be held in James's honor on March 1, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at American Legion Post 149, 202 S Kingston St. Wartburg, TN, 37887.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of James Robert Bauer.

William "Bill" Phillips, 55



William "Bill" Phillips, age 55 of Deer Lodge passed away Friday, February 20, 2026 at Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville.

He is preceded in death by his father Robert Alton Phillips; special friend Steve Gunter.

He is survived by his parents Peggy and Butch Aytes; children Kailyn (Logan) Simmons, Kelsey Phillips and fiancé Adam Pass; step sons Dylan Hughett, Shade Underwood; fiancé Amie Underwood; grandchildren Sophia, Liam, Oaklynn, Hunter; brother Barry (Diana)

Phillips; step brothers Steven Aytes (Holly), Ken Aytes; step sister Crystale Aytes; special friend Donna Gunter and a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, and uncles.

The family will receive friends Sunday, February 22, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 3:00 p.m. with Bro. Robert Freels and Bro. Tyler Trout officiating. Graveside services will be Monday at 11:00 a.m. in the Frankfort Cemetery in Lancing.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of William "Bill" Phillips.

Phillip Ray Detrick, 64



Mr. Phillip Ray Detrick, age 64, of Sunbright passed away Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at his home in Sunbright.

He is preceded in death by his father, Larry Stolzenburg Sr.,

his mother, Betty McDaniel, his brother, Larry (Duck) Detrick, his nephew Jason Detrick, and his brother-in-law Cody Marmon.

He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Detrick; children Jay (Kaleigh Brock) Hawn, Cameron (Mickie) Robbins, and Phillip Detrick Jr.; his special granddaughter Jayde Robbins, and eagerly anticipated grandson Kolton Hawn. Also surviving are his step-father Paul Ed McDaniel, his step-mother Roberta Stolzenburg, his sister Pat (Keith) Wilcox, his loving family of in-laws; Robin and Linda Marmon, Greg and Robyn Bunch, Sean and Tori Marmon,

and a host of nieces and nephews and close friends that will greatly miss him!

Extra thanks to special family friend Marcie Brookman for all the help she gave to make Phil's final days comfortable. The family cannot begin to name all of Phil's friends that have been there for him at the end, but we would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Phil was an avid sportsman! He loved to collect guns and knives, go fishing, and hunt when he was able. He had a gruff exterior but was a very loving family

man who never took those that cared for him for granted. He was quick to joke with anyone that would stop to talk.

The family will receive friends Friday, February 27, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 12:00-2:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 2:00 p.m. with Military Honors.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Mr. Phillip Ray Detrick.



— In Loving Memory —

Phyllis Seiber, 79



Phyllis Seiber, age 79, passed away on February 23, 2026 surrounded by her family.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Noble and Aliene Stringer; brother, Paul Stringer and sister, Sandra Faye Ledford.

She is survived by her daughter, Lisa (Jimmy) West of Mossy Grove; Son, Doyle (Vicky) Seiber of Clinton.

Devoted partner of 25 years, CL Patterson.

Grandkids, Ryan (Brooke) Jackson of Oliver Springs; Taylen Jackson of Mossy Grove;

Alison (Cameron) Seiber of Oak Ridge.

Great-Grandchildren, Lily, Savannah, Tommy "Boy", Bailey and Beckham.

As well as a host of special cousins, nieces and nephews.

Phyllis was a member of Petros Baptist Church.

She worked at Red Kap for several years then on to Methodist Medical Center.

Phyllis loved The Lord, her family, to travel, laugh, and have a good time.

She never met a stranger. If you were friends with Phyllis, you had a true friend. She will be so missed by all that knew and loved her.

The family will receive friends Thursday, February 26, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 7:00 p.m. with Bro. David Seiber officiating. Grave-side services will be Friday at 11:00 a.m. in the New Petros Cemetery in Petros.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Phyllis Seiber.



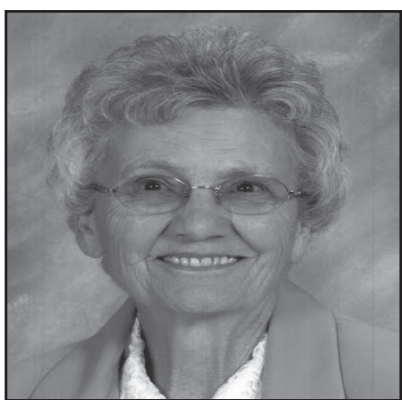
Psalm 86:4-5

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Obituaries must come from a funeral home to be in the newspaper.

Stella Bunch Kelly, 100



Stella Bunch Kelly age 100 passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 28, 2026.

Stella grew up in Coalfield and was a true Coalminer's daughter. She was born on January 15, 1926 to the late Walter and Lillie Bunch. She served her country

during WWII as a Calutron Girl at the Y-12 plant. Her husband, 2 brothers and 4 brothers-in-laws all served overseas during WWII. She was a very dedicated Christian always working in her Church and teaching many Sunday School Classes. She took pride in her ability to raise her 3 children by working off the land to provide for them. Between milking a cow and making butter and cheese, to raising a garden and canning vegetables, fruit and meat, she provided most of the food for her family.

As her children grew, she started working. She worked many years as a Head Start teacher and was very proud and hon-

ored to volunteer at the Methodist Medical Center's Coronary Rehabilitation Facility.

She was preceded in death by her parents Walter and Lillie Bunch; husband Clyde; special son-in-law Mark Shelton; sisters Aletha Bunch Spainhour and Florence Bunch Worthington; and brothers, Harvey, Isaac, Paul and James Bunch. She is survived by brother Earl Bunch; daughter Brenda Shelton; sons C.A. (Marcia) and Gary (Kathy); grandsons Stephen, Darren (Jess), Joe (Amanda), Patrick (Heather), and John (Jessi); 13 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

The family will receive friends Monday, March 2, 2026, from 12:00 until 2:00 pm Schubert Funeral Home, Wartburg.

Funeral services will follow at 2:00 pm with Ronny Jones officiating.

Internment will follow in the Union Cemetery, Wartburg, TN.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to:

St. Jude Children's Hospital.
501 St. Jude Place
Memphis, TN 38105

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Stella Bunch Kelly.



Historically Speaking Touring Oak Ridge's future nuclear energy hub (part 4): BWXT and LIS Technologies

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Carolyn Krause is exploring what's happening in Oak Ridge. She has read that new companies are investing in building facilities on Oak Ridge land partly for creating tomorrow's nuclear reactors and making the special fuels they need to power future data centers for advancing artificial intelligence.

The companies will help to meet the goals of the Department of Energy's Manhattan Project 2.0. DOE is aiming to ensure that the United States maintains its global leadership in AI and its competitiveness in national security, economic prosperity, and scientific discovery through supercomputing and quantum computing. AI data centers require electricity 24/7, and of all the energy sources, nuclear power is the most reliable, generating electricity more than 90% of the time.

Past accomplishments can lay a path for future achievements. As this Historically Speaking column has often mentioned, researchers in Oak Ridge and elsewhere learned in the past century how to make nuclear fuel and nuclear reactors, on land and sea, that have used the fuel for decades to produce electricity worldwide. Oak Ridge helped chart the way for developing advanced nuclear fuels and for designing easier-to-build, safer, more efficient, and less expensive small modular reactors that will require the new fuels to meet 21st century needs for power.

On Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2026, during Nuclear Science Week sponsored by the American Museum of Science and Energy in Oak Ridge, Carolyn took the New Nuclear "Dirt Tour" on a luxury bus paid for by Kairos Power. It helped her find out more about how and why Oak Ridge is becoming the "core of America's nuclear renaissance." The tour "guides," the lunch speaker, and passengers were well-informed about nuclear companies' plans for Oak Ridge, as well as her internet searches using AI chatbots, which provided excellent information, much of which she presents in this five-part series.

Because it uses 90% less electricity, gas centrifuge technology gradually replaced gaseous diffusion starting in the 1960s as the main workhorse for providing enriched uranium worldwide for nuclear power plants.

But a potential competitor to the gas centrifuge technology emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s: laser enrichment. The reason: it has the potential to cost less and take only about one-fourth of the land space needed by the other two enrichment technologies while producing the same amount of nuclear fuel.

DOE sponsored a competition between gas centrifuge technology and Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation (AVLIS), developed by DOE's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and reviewed by Oak Ridge researchers; the goal was to select the next-generation method for economically enriching uranium in the United States. Another emerging laser enrichment technology called Molecular Laser Enrichment Separation (MLIS), first developed at DOE's Los Alamos National Laboratory, received less DOE support, and work on it declined.

DOE initially selected AVLIS as the preferred technology for future commercial enrichment because of its potential for lower cost and high efficiency. AVLIS uses finely tuned lasers to selectively ionize the desired uranium-235 atoms in a uranium metal vapor to separate them

from the more abundant and less desired uranium-238 atoms to make nuclear fuel. Despite the initial selection and substantial investment, DOE in the late 1990s shut down the AVLIS program partly because of technical challenges, such as component reliability and lifetime, as well as changing market conditions.

This century the U.S. government aims to produce more domestic enriched uranium to meet rising demands for national defense and for nuclear power needed by an increasing population and number of AI data centers, as well as to lessen the nation's dependence on imports. Therefore, DOE supports harnessing both gas centrifuge technology and laser enrichment for making enough nuclear fuel for both defense and civilian uses.

But the viable laser enrichment technology today is not AVLIS; it is Molecular Laser Isotope Separation, or MLIS, a technique pioneered by the cofounder of a company with a small facility in Oak Ridge to be discussed later in this article.

Oak Ridge property has been sold to companies that are focused on using advanced gas centrifuge or laser enrichment to produce enriched uranium for power-producing reactors. The gas centrifuge companies include the previously mentioned Centrus Energy and Orano USA firms. BWXT is working with Oak Ridge National Laboratory on developing and scaling up the production of the next generation of centrifuges, which are much smaller than the typical centrifuges that are several stories high.

BWXT. BWXT Enrichment Operations, a new subsidiary of BWX Technologies, has completed the construction of its eight-acre building on the 97-acre site it purchased on April 15, 2025, next to the TRISO-X site at the Horizon Center Industrial Park. The BWXT representative told us on the bus that the building, started in June, will be completed in December 2025 and that new buildings will be constructed later. On Jan. 26, 2026, Virginia-based BWX Technologies announced it had opened a new centrifuge manufacturing plant in Oak Ridge; it's in the building that was only partially completed when we saw it last October. The project will likely create 100 jobs.

Thanks to support from a federal \$1.5 billion contract with DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and two awards – one for \$2.37 million and another for \$1.2 million – from Tennessee's Nuclear Energy Fund, announced last spring by Gov. Bill Lee, BWXT has the money to continue plant construction in support of national defense.

Behind the construction of the pilot plant is a sense of urgency: the U.S. Navy predicts that its supply of highly enriched uranium (HEU) – uranium fuel with a concentration of over 90% fissionable uranium-235 – will run out in the late 2040s. Its current supply is a finite stockpile of Cold War-era uranium.

Over the past 60 years, BWXT has built for the Navy more than 420 small nuclear reactors that use HEU it has obtained from NNSA's Oak Ridge Y-12 National Security Complex. The pressurized reactors – based on a concept co-invented by the late Alvin Weinberg, longtime ORNL director – are used in U.S. submarines and aircraft carriers as their power source for both



BWXT erected this building in a very short time using large panels of concrete (Courtesy of Ray Smith)

propulsion and electricity generation. The company claims it is a leader in the world of small modular reactors because it makes each one small enough to fit into a submarine.

BWXT's new \$45 million building in Oak Ridge houses the first advanced centrifuge manufacturing development facility. One goal of the pilot plant is to demonstrate mass production of small centrifuges based on the classified Domestic Uranium Enrichment Centrifuge Experiment (DUECE) technology developed at ORNL for isotope production.

ORNL is partnering with BWXT to prove that DUECE technology can work at scale to make both low enriched uranium (LEU) and HEU for national defense. ORNL, which began development of "small centrifuge" technology in 2016, is testing a cascade of DUECE centrifuges on its campus.

The national defense goal of this project is to re-establish the U.S. ability to produce "unobligated enriched uranium" – uranium enriched using 100% American technology and parts. The U.S. military is forbidden under international treaties to use uranium or enrichment technology imported from other countries for any use other than peaceful purposes (e.g., providing electricity for the public).

According to plans, the DUECE centrifuges manufactured and tested in the BWXT facility in Oak Ridge will eventually be transported to a pilot plant that BWXT will build in Erwin, Tennessee. There, BWXT will make unobligated LEU – nuclear fuel that is made in America and therefore not restricted from being used to make military weapons.

Its first fuel fabrication project will be to aid in the production of tritium used to make highly explosive thermonuclear warheads for missiles. BWXT will manufacture LEU pellets and stainless-steel rods probably for the Tennessee Valley Authority's Watts Bar Nuclear Plant in Rhea County. It provides a neutron-rich environment for turning lithium atoms in a special rod into tritium, which is recovered by DOE's Savannah River National Laboratory.

For the TVA reactor, BWXT and NNSA will prepare a tritium-producing burnable absorber rod (TBAR) that resembles standard nuclear fuel rods. However, it will contain not only LEU from BWXT centrifuges but also lithium aluminate. Inside the rod is a zirconium getter that acts like a chemical sponge by soaking up tritium.

- Continued on next page.

Historically Speaking Touring Oak Ridge's future nuclear energy hub (part 4): BWXT and LIS Technologies

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

It is planned that the BWXT centrifuge system will much later be “repurposed” to produce the HEU required to keep the Navy’s fleet of submarines and aircraft carriers moving in the 2030s and beyond. (Sources: World Nuclear News, Virginia Business, DOE, NNSA, Government Accountability Office, American Nuclear Society)



Cristo Liebenberg, president and co-founder of LIS Technologies, speaking at AMSE (Courtesy of Ray Smith)

LIS Technologies. Laser Isotope Separation Technologies (LIST) announced on Jan. 16, 2026, that it will create 203 jobs over seven years and invest \$1.38 billion in the new facility it will build on LIST Island. This formerly named Duct Island is located on the historic K-25 uranium enrichment site in Heritage Center Industrial Park. LIST is led by Jay Yu, co-founder, executive chairman and CEO, and Cristo Liebenberg, co-founder, president & CTA, as well as a champion for an alternative laser enrichment architecture that he believes is needed to make laser enrichment viable on a commercial scale. Yu is also the founder and chairman of NANO Nuclear Energy Inc., a vertically integrated advanced portable microreactor technology company publicly listed on the NASDAQ Exchange.

LIST’s announcement marks the third-largest, nuclear-related investment since Tennessee’s Nuclear Energy Fund was launched. LIST is using money from the state fund as part of its \$1.38 billion investment to build in Oak Ridge a commercial-scale laser uranium enrichment facility. In December 2025, the state had granted the company a radioactive material license for its small demonstration facility in Oak Ridge.

The company plans to build the first U.S.-origin commercial laser uranium enrichment plant in the world using its special laser isotope separation technology. According to a news release, LIS Technologies will support “U.S. utilities, next-generation reactor developers and national defense requirements while helping to reestablish a resilient domestic nuclear fuel supply chain.”

After the morning bus tour, we first learned about LIS Technologies after we stopped for a pizza lunch at the new William J. Wilcox K-25 Interpretive Center in the Heritage Center Industrial Park. Viktor Chikan, the chief technology officer of LIS Technologies, talked about the laser enrichment company’s origins and plans.

“Laser enrichment is the next step in next-generation enrichment technology,” Chikan said. He emphasized that a laser enrichment facility should reduce both the cost and footprint of uranium enrichment compared with the gas centrifuge plants deployed today and gaseous diffusion plants used in the past.

(After lunch, some of us ascended the Interpretive Center’s stairs and looked at the huge footprint of the long-gone K-25 Gaseous Diffusion Plant. It was the largest building in the world in the 1940s!)

LIS Technologies plans to scale up its lab-tested technology to do laser enrichment of uranium hexafluoride gas to create LEU for large civil reactors and HALEU for next-generation small modular reactors and microreactors.

The company will use a powerful 5.3-micron infrared carbon dioxide laser of the correct frequency to selectively excite to a higher energy level only uranium-235 atoms in uranium hexafluoride gas molecules. Because these molecules are so excited, they will not condense, or coagulate, with the abundant uranium hexafluoride molecules containing uranium-238 atoms. This advanced process enables separation of the iso-

topes and capture of uranium hexafluoride enriched in uranium-235 for use in nuclear fuel.

This laser enrichment process invented by Jeffrey Eerkens is known as Condensation Repression Isotope Separation by Laser Activation (CRISLA), an advanced Molecular Laser Isotope Separation method that relies on the physical properties of molecules for harvesting the desired ones rather than on the molecules’ chemical destruction. Essentially, the laser activation selectively prevents the excited U-235 hexafluoride molecules from condensing with the others in the supercooled environment of a supersonic jet, allowing for their separation.

Chikan talked about Eerkens, 94, who became the cofounder of LIS Technologies in August 2023. Born in 1931 in what was later called Indonesia, from the age of 10 through 12, Eerkens was interned during World War II in a Japanese concentration camp in Java. After his release and repatriation to Holland in 1946 because of his Dutch ancestry, he completed high school.

Eerkens came to the United States in 1950 and enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, from which he received three degrees, including an M.S. degree in nuclear engineering and a Ph.D. in engineering science. Since the 1970s, Eerkens has explored Molecular Laser Isotope Separation of gaseous uranium hexafluoride. He is widely regarded as the father of laser enrichment. “When we started LIS Technologies under Eerkens’s leadership, we never thought we would be back on the original site for uranium enrichment that led to the atomic bomb that saved his life,” Chikan said. “It’s a full circle for him.”

Liebenberg spoke about LIST at the American Museum of Science and Energy, the last day of Nuclear Science Week. He showed a slide indicating the company’s plans for scaling up and testing the technology developed in 1993 through several facilities, culminating in a 40,000-square-foot commercial facility in the 2030s at an unknown location. It will produce 5.5 million separative work units (SWUs) of enriched uranium per year. That decade will likely be the first in which both gas centrifuge technology and laser enrichment technology will together produce a secure domestic supply of enriched uranium for the United States.

Next: TVA and Kairos Power’s plans for building small modular reactors in Oak Ridge are explained and the reactor designs are compared. ***

Thank you, Carolyn, for continuing your review of the nuclear companies featured on the Nuclear Science Week’s “Dirt Tour.” This is the fourth of a five-part series being published in Historically Speaking.

Romans 8



Melvin Howard

(Romans 8:1-11) deliverance through Christ: Paul's claim of no condemnation to those in Christ is not an affirmation of the impossibility of apostasy, as many Protestants assert. The promise is subsequently qualified by apostasy, as many Protestants assert. The promise is subsequently qualified by "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (v. 4). The "law of the Spirit of life" (v. 2) is the law to which the Christian is amenable. It is: (a) a law of no condemnation due to

the justification produced by the atoning death of Jesus; (b) the conduit of life into and within the in-Christ sphere; (c) freedom from the "law of sin and death"; (d) designated the "law of the Spirit" because it has been conveyed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (it is the equivalent of the "law of Christ") (Gal. 6:2, 1 Cor. 9:21; Jas. 1:25); (e) in remarkable contrast to the "law of sin and death" (the Mosaic law primarily but any other law, practically speaking), which could only define and expose sin, but could not permanently remedy it.

The apostle now addresses what the law could not do, in that it was "weak." It could define and condemn sin, but was without power to deliver from sin on an absolute basis. The antidote to the weakness of the law was the mission of God's Son, who came in the "likeness of sinful flesh." He was able to be tempted, though he never yielded (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22). Additionally, he came "for sin" (Isa. 53:12). By his perfect life and sacrificial death, Christ was able to pronounce a condemnation upon sin. He fulfilled the demands of the law that no sinful human ever could do.

The pattern of one's life is a reflection of whether he walks after the flesh or after that of the Spirit. The former leads to separation from God; the latter to union with the Creator and blissful peace. Carnality refuses to be subject to God, and those of this disposition simply cannot please the Holy Lord (v. 5-8). The genuine disciple does not pursue the "flesh," but the instruction of the Spirit; and that temperament is indicative of whether the Spirit indwells one. And if one does not possess the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ (v. 9). If Christ is a genuine influence in the Christian, his spirit lives even though his physical body is dead (potentially) because such is the common lot of all men (Heb. 9:27). If the divine Spirit dwells in you (in view of your faithfulness), that Spirit ultimately will give life to your mortal body at the time of the general resurrection (v. 11).

(Romans 8:12-17) sonship: this section likely will be interpreted consistent with the view one holds regarding the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Some believe that the indwelling is direct (through not miraculous); others allege it is indirect, by means of the written word. There need not be discord over this issue so long as ideas are not taught that are in direct conflict with Scripture. The Christian has an obligation to live "by the Spirit" (consistent with his instruction via the Scriptures) and not after the inclinations of the flesh. If he lives after the flesh, he will die. This clearly implies the possibility of apostasy. To follow the Spirit's leading is characteristic of being children of God. The Spirit leads by his inspired word (Eph. 6:17) and by the mysterious work of providence (Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9). We are not to view ourselves in a state of bondage, but as children adopted by God--a sweet and tender relationship (v. 14-15).

The Spirit (who dwells in us v. 11) is evidence that we are children of God (Gal. 4:6). In addition, our spirit (based upon our knowledge of what it takes to be a child of God) similarly bears witness to this fact. The two are dual witnesses to our divine status. The child relationship ensures that we will be heirs of God in eternity---indeed, joint-heirs with Christ. It is an amazing thought that Jesus continues to maintain a unique relationship with us, even in his ascended state. It may be required, however, that we suffer with him (because of our Christian commitment) preliminary to our glorification with him (v.17).

(Romans 8:18-25) the effect of sin: one of the effects of sin is the phenomenon of suffering. Contrary to the claims of atheism, suffering does not negate the existence of a benevolent God. Suffering was never intended to be the divine ideal. It is, however, a part of the price paid for human rebellion---in both direct and indirect forms. Whatever the range of hardships, all of these combined pale into insignificance compared to the glory that awaits the faithful people of God.

In verses 19 through 22, the apostle speaks of the deliverance of the "creation" from the "bondage of corruption." The following elements are important. (a) The term "creation" refers to the material creation (Gen. 1:1). (b) The creation was not made corrupt initially, nor did it

corrupt itself. It was "subjected" to such by God. (c) Metaphorically, the creation longs for deliverance, illustrating the longing of the sons of God from their own pain and sorrow. (d) This type of argument is not without precedent in the Scriptures. In Psalm 114, the inspired writer describes the deliverance of Jehovah's people from Egyptian bondage. In conjunction with that glorious event, various elements of the creation are depicted as cooperating with, and rejoicing at, Israel's freedom. The sea saw it and fled, the mountains skipped as rams, the hills frolicked like little lambs, and the earth trembled. The Old Testament is replete with this type of symbolism (Psa. 96:12; 98:8; Isa. 35:1; 55:12). (e) The text does not depict a renovation of the material earth following a millennial reign of Christ, as commonly believed. (f) The deliverance will be in the form of a "new heavens and new earth," the equivalent of heaven itself. (g) The chronological goal is when the "sons of God" are "revealed" in their future glorious form (v. 18).

Paul continues by contending that we also groan, waiting for "the redemption of our body" (v. 23). The resurrection of the body in glory is a part of the redemptive package. Our salvation from sin also included a hope for the future; such is not seen currently, but will be appreciated at the end of our patient wait (v. 24-25).

(Romans 8:26-30) the assistance of the Spirit: in our longing to be delivered from the "sufferings of this present time" (v. 18), in addition to the "cheering" of the whole creation on our behalf, there is the promise of the assistance of the Holy Spirit. (a) The Spirit somehow helps us bear our load. (b) We have difficulty in identifying our needs, even in prayer. Thus, the Spirit makes intercession for us to compensate for our unutterable groaning. (c) God responds to our genuine needs in harmony with the interceding Spirit.

Those who truly love God and demonstrate such by obedience (Jn. 14:15) can have confidence that "all things will work to his good." This wonderful phrase, however, must be viewed in light of this context: not everything that happens in life is the active will of God. In spite of our sufferings, God is working out things for his people that will result in their ultimate good (heaven and his ultimate glorification). His plan will be wonderfully realized regardless of the dim outlook in many of life's current circumstances.

In the Lord's grand scheme of things, it was his ideal plan that men be conformed to the image of his Son. Thus, he would call them through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14), justify them by means of Jesus' death (Rom. 5:1), and glorify them eternally. These actions existed in purpose, but are pictured ideally as accomplished already (29-30). There is no support for Calvinism in this context.

(Romans 8:31-39) the assurance of victory: this discussion concludes with a final note of encouragement. God's cause will be victorious and those identified with him will share in that success. Who can defeat us? Reflect on this logic. If the Lord has already demonstrated his concern for us by the gift of his Son, we certainly may be assured that he will provide us with all necessary things to complete our heavenward journey (v. 32). Thus, whatever charges men may hurl, they are insignificant; only the Lord's judgment matters (v. 33). Our confidence in divine help is grounded in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, who is pleading our case to his Father (v. 34).

The apostle asks: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Calvinists misuse this section in their vain attempt to prove that no child of God can ever apostatize and be lost. No external force can separate us from Christ's love for us. But one can fall away from the faith, thus rejecting that love, and be lost (Gal. 5:4). Paul lists seven things that cannot disrupt Christ's love; none of these has to do with a person's choice to abandon the Savior. Christians may be viciously persecuted by opponents of the truth, but even in such matters God's people remain "more than conquerors" through Christ who loved us. Ten potential obstacles are cataloged. All of them combined cannot separate us from God's redemptive love, which is accessed "in Christ Jesus our Lord".

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