

"He Looked Beyond My Faults"

Amazing grace shall always be my song of praise,
for it was grace that brought my liberty;
I do not know just why He came to love me so,
He looked beyond my faults and saw my need.

I shall forever lift mine eyes to Calvary,
to view the cross where Jesus died for me,
how marvelous the grace that caught my falling soul;
He looked beyond my faults and saw my need.

Our family is so grateful for the love and support shown during this difficult time. God has placed such special people around us and we cherish the comfort of each of you, shown in your own special way. The days ahead are sure to be difficult, as we adjust to life without Ricky. However, God's word gives us peace and we are "... convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38 - 39

**Lunch served immediately after the service at
Greater Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church
2135 Jefferson Avenue SW ~ Birmingham, Alabama
Fellowship Hall**

**Final services entrusted to:
Mullins Metropolitan Funeral Home**

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Celebration of Life



Ricardo "Ricky" Rather
January 3, 1955 - February 24, 2012

**Graveside Service held at G. W. Carver Memorial Gardens
Birmingham, Alabama
February 29, 2012 at 11:00 am
Dr. Michael W. Wesley Sr., Officiating**

Ricardo Rather was born in Birmingham, Alabama on January 3, 1955 to Leon and Elizabeth Rather. Ricky, as he was affectionately called by his family and friends, confessed Christ at an early age, was baptized, and joined the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church under Dr. W.M. Norwood. He graduated from Western-Olin High School in 1973 and joined the United States Army from which he was honorably discharged in 1975. He went on to study at Miles College. He would later help his father lay the foundation for the family business - *Community Tire & Auto*, in Ensley. Ricky later became an Alabama Department of Corrections Officer and held that position for many years. Ricky was an especially loving person who never met a stranger. He stayed very close to his family and was never shy about professing his adoration towards them. The family jokingly knew when to expect his daily repeated phone calls, often remarking in unison at the ringing phone, "that's Ricky." He was known for his jokes, his big smile, and his loving spirit. He used his sometimes difficult life experiences to testify about God's grace and took every opportunity to voice his faith. Ricky suffered a stroke at home on February 23, 2012. He made his transition from this life on February 24, 2012 in Lagrange, Georgia surrounded by family. Ricky was preceded in death by his son, Ricardo (Rudy) Rather Jr. and his brother, Tyrone Rather.

Ricky will be lovingly remembered by his wife, Mary Elizabeth Rather of Lagrange, GA.; parents, Leon F. and Elizabeth Rather of Birmingham, AL; daughter, Carriss Rather (Jamaral) Gilchrist; grandchildren Haley and Hayden Gilchrist all of Pleasant Grove, AL; stepson, Michael (Marilyn) Epps of Lagrange, GA; sisters, Angela Rather Johnson of Birmingham, AL and Kristy Rather (Kenneth) Hall of Hueytown, AL; brother, Michael Leon Rather of Birmingham, AL; nieces, Geralda Johnson of Birmingham, AL and Ines Rather of Stuttgart, Germany; nephew, Leon Rather II of Stuttgart, Germany; sister-in-law, Gertraude Rather of Stuttgart, Germany; uncle, Tommie Charles of Bessemer, AL; aunts, Ramona Humphrey of Decatur, AL, Josephine Robinson and Bettie Smith of Birmingham, AL. His life will also be cherished by many other family members and close friends.

Order of Service

Viewing ~ Family and friends

Opening Hymn ~ *"He Looked Beyond My Faults"*

Scripture & Prayer ~ Dr. Michael W. Wesley Sr.

Family Expression ~ Mrs. Kristy Rather Hall

Words of Comfort ~ Minister Jamaral Gilchrist

Solo ~ Mr. Michael Rather

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

Committal ~ Dr. Michael W. Wesley Sr.

Benediction ~ Minister Jamaral Gilchrist

"Because I Could Not Stop for Death"

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;

The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor, and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children
strove
At recess, in the ring;
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, he passed us;
The dews grew quivering and chill,
For only gossamer my gown,
My tippet only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet each
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

~Emily Dickinson

The United States Military Flag Ceremony

The 'first fold' of our flag is a symbol of life.

The 'second fold' is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The 'third fold' is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The 'fourth fold' represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The 'fifth fold' is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, 'Our Country, in dealing with other countries may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong.'

The 'sixth fold' is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States Of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The 'seventh fold' is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The 'eighth fold' is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The 'ninth fold' is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the

men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The 'tenth fold' is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The 'eleventh fold', in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The 'twelfth fold', in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, 'In God We Trust'!

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

The next time you see a flag ceremony honoring someone that has served our country, either in the Armed Forces or in our civilian services such as the Police Force or Fire Department, keep in mind all the important reasons behind each and every movement. They have paid the ultimate sacrifice for all of us by honoring our flag and our Country.