

Paul T. Butler

November 17, 1928 - January 20, 2017



Paul Thurman Butler was born November 17, 1928, Springfield, Mo. He was the son of the late W.D. Butler and Verna Lois (Thurman) Butler. He passed from this life to be with the Lord on January 20, 2017.

He attended Ed. V. Williams Elementary School and Reed Junior High School, in Springfield. He attended high schools in Waynesville, Mo., Port Arthur, Texas, Bearden High School, Knoxville, Tenn., and Conway, Mo., from which he graduated in 1946.

Paul enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1946 and served 10 years. He served on the staff of Commander Task Force 90 in the Korean War, for which service he received the South Korean Presidential Unit citation, United Nations Medal, Korean Campaign Medal, Combat Service Ribbon, and numerous other service ribbons. He later served with the Guided Missile Unit 41, at Port Mugu Naval Air Station, Calif. He attended two USN schools and graduated both with honors. He attained the rank of YN1 and had passed the exam for Chief Petty Officer when he decided to leave the USN and attend Ozark Bible College, in Joplin, Mo., in 1957. He graduated with honors from OBC with a Bachelor of Theology, in 1961, and a Master of Biblical Literature, in 1973. Paul was the preacher at Washington Christian Church, Lebanon, Mo., Westside Christian Church, Carthage, Mo., and North Joplin Christian Church. He started as part-time faculty at OBC, in 1960. He became a full-time professor there in 1962. He retired from Ozark Christian College in December 1997. During his 36 years at the college, he taught a full schedule of classes, was Registrar and Dean of Admissions, three years basketball coach, one year baseball coach, three years golf coach, sponsor of Defenders Club, Radio club, and 1969 Senior Class. He traveled extensively for the college, in the U.S. coast-to-coast, holding revivals, and coaching athletic teams. He taught nearly 4,000 different students including many international students. He authored 16 Bible commentaries published by College Press and some have been translated into five foreign languages. He has authored Sunday School lessons on nearly every book of the Bible.

Numerous churches throughout the U.S. have used his lesson materials. He was awarded the "Seth Wilson Outstanding Alumni Award" from OCC in 1992. He has written seven genealogy family histories (unpublished). One of his books, "What the Bible Says About Civil Government", was accepted as his written dissertation for the Doctor of Theology degree in 1990. He began teaching an adult Sunday School class at Oxnard Christian Church, Oxnard, Calif., in 1952, and has taught adult Sunday School continuously until his passing.

In 1947, at the suggestion of his sister, he began corresponding with Gale Jynne Kinnard, recently moved from St. Louis, Mo., to Conway, Mo. They met in 1948 while he was home on USN leave and married at Long Beach, Calif., November 20, 1948 and have been together 68 years.

He is survived by his wife, Gale; two children, Sherry (Larry) Lankford, Belleville, Ill., and Mark (Patricia [Uthe]) Butler, Joplin; four grandchildren, Lakin (Lynelle [Fry]) Lankford, Overland Park, Kan., Decker Lankford, Belleville, Sara (Brady) Short, Joplin, John Butler, Joplin; two great-grandchildren, Adyson and Logann Lankford; and a sister, Alice Boucher, Jackson, Miss. He often said that his years of ministry and teaching would have never been possible without the loving support of his wife, Gale, his children and grandchildren, a multitude of friends, and thousands of former students.

Mr. Butler was a member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and held office as president of the local Joplin chapter, the Missouri state chapter, and was elected chaplain general of the National Society, in 1991. He has documented 10 ancestors as veterans of the American War for Independence. One of his ancestors came to Plymouth, Mass., on the second ship after the Mayflower. He was also a member of the National Society of the Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims, the National Society of the Sons of the Colonial New England. He was a member of the Joplin American Legion, Post 13, from 1971 until his passing. In 1994, he was awarded the Medal of Honor from the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, their highest award to a non-member, for his writings and lectures in genealogy and American history.

He has given loving service to the Lord, because he was saved by the grace and providence of God.

Memorial service will be held at Park Plaza Christian Church, February, 4th, at 10 a.m.

Online condolences may be made at Ozark Memorial Cemetery and Joplin Globe websites.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Ozark Christian College or Park Plaza Christian Church Missions.

**No Events Scheduled At This
Time**