



## Dr. W. Wiley Richards

June 25, 1932 - April 15, 2017

Dr. Walter Wiley Richards was born June 25, 1932 in the Pleasant Grove community of Pensacola, Florida to Walter Judson and Charlie Jones Richards. He was born spiritually when he was twelve years of age when he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. On April 15, 2017 he went to hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." After graduation from Pensacola High School, Wiley served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. While he was in the Navy, two important events changed his life. First, he felt and answered God's call to preach. Second, he married his high school sweetheart, Betty May Hargrave. They have served God together for over 64 years. Wiley attended Pensacola Junior College, then received his degree from Howard College, now Samford University. He attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned the MDiv and ThD in Historical and Systematic Theology. He later attended FSU and received the MA and PhD in Philosophy. He has served as pastor of churches in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. He served as interim pastor 51 times, and preached many revivals, Bible studies and Evangelism clinics. His greatest joy was leading people to faith in Christ, which he did scores of times. In 1968, he moved with his family to Graceville, FL where he taught at The Baptist College of Florida (formerly Baptist Bible Institute) for 34 years. Upon his retirement he was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus of Theology and Philosophy. While teaching there he published 5 books, wrote weekly Sunday School lessons for the Florida Baptist Witness for 27 years, and wrote numerous

other articles and papers. His hobbies included hunting, fishing, singing gospel songs, playing the violin and guitar, rebuilding cars, oil painting, taxidermy, and carving. Dr. Richards home-going service will be held 2:00 p.m, Tuesday, April 18, 2017, in the R. G. Lee Chapel at The Baptist College of Florida with Dr. Thomas A. Kinchen, Dr. R. C. Hammack, Dr. Ken Harrison and Dr. Roger Richards officiating. Burial will follow in the Marvin Chapel Cemetery, with U. S. Navy Honors, James & Lipford Funeral Home in Graceville directing. Family will receive friends in the R. G. Lee Chapel at The Baptist College of Florida, Monday, April 17, 2017, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family request memorials be made to the Richards' Scholarship Fund at The Baptist College of Florida, 5400 College Drive, Graceville, FL 32440. He was preceded in death by his parents, three sisters, and one granddaughter, Karen Marie Richards. He is survived by his wife, Betty, Graceville, FL; two sons, Walter Glen Richards (Carol), Middlesboro, KY and Roger Charles Richards (Sandra), Graceville, FL; two daughters, Regina Karen Rozsa (Andrew), Birmingham, AL and Charlene Joan Wiggins (Stuart), Marianna, FL; 9 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren; one sister, Eulanee Pierce, Gautier, MS; and his Vietnamese family, Richard Hoang (Jeanette), children and grandchildren. His grandsons will serve as pallbearers.

# Tribute Wall

DC

“ Came across this today. Was sad to read he had gone on to be with the Lord. I know its a great and joyous day for him. He was one of my favorite teachers at Florida Baptist Theological College class of 2000. Thank you for all you taught me and how when I was struggling you came and set with me and you helped me to move forward.

*Doug Crownover*

---

**Doug crownover** - December 09, 2025 at 02:03 PM

GM

“ Am so sorry to find quite be accident that my late mother betty morgan has lost a close and dear friend . The memories are many and fondly thought of ...my heart goes out to every one of you...we'd done a lot of fun things together through the years I will never forget any of you...may he rest in peace he was a good friend...

---

**Gwen morgan** - October 25, 2019 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ I remember him well from the 1970s. I often saw him when I was out jogging on 12th Avenue in Graceville and sometimes saw him from the street at his house. He came to visit me in my office along Montgomery Highway in Dothan, AL, when I was a single person and my Dad was President of the Florida Baptist Theological College and encouraged me greatly with his kind words. He was a wonderful person and educator.

---

**Joseph DuBose** - June 14, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ I am so sorry to hear of your lost. Dr. Richard was one of my professors while going to school since The Baptist College of Florida. He will be greatly missed. May God bless the family. Sincerely your Michael Salyers.

---

**Michael Salyers.** - May 01, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PJ

“ Ms. Betty and family. I'm so sorry for your loss but rejoice with you in knowing Dr Wiley is having a great time in Heaven. He an Jesse and many more are with our Lord and rejoicing and singing together. It will be a happy reunion when we are all together again with them. Love to you Miss Betty and praying for you during this time. Love Paulette

---

**Paulette Smallwood (Mrs. Jesse)** - April 22, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ Dr. Richards and his wife Betty became our very close friends when we went to BBI in 1971 and graduated in 1974, we have remained friends with them since that time until now. Dr. Richards loved his red ink pen especially when he graded my papers. When we exchanged letters over the years he still graded my letters with his red pen. The Richards came to Graceville about two years before we came. Their children and our children were about the same time. We will miss him very much, but I will continue to keep in touch with Betty. Love them very much. Betty

---

**Betty McCorvey** - April 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Little did I realize the caliber of Dr. Richards when I was a student. But he was also a friend, confidant, and was not a bad fiddle player.

---

**Douglas Bass** - April 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LD

“ So grateful to have known Dr. Wiley. He was a great man of God, he will be missed, however I look forward to seeing him again in our true home with the Father. I pray for God's peace for your family in this time of grief and loss.

---

**Larry DeRousse** - April 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Willie Richards was one of the best professors that I had not only during my years at BBI but also among those after BBI. Not only was he a genius, he was smart enough to bring the complicated field of Philosophy down to the student's level. His unique personality made his classes both interesting and challenging. He loved his Lord, and he loved his calling - and it showed. He will be missed.

---

**Dan Bayse** - April 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ Great apologist for correct doctrine.

---

**Dr. Ray Henry** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ Thoughts and prayers for the family.

---

**Skyleen May** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ Dr. Richards was one of my professors at BBI from 1977-1979. Truly a servant of God. God bless you all.

---

**Dr. and Mrs. Wayne Scarborough** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RR

“ *Dr. Ruchard's was a brilliant man.*

-----  
**Ron reed** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TM

“ *One of my most beloved professors.*

-----  
**Tho;mas D. Miller** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

M1

“ *I was a music student but I loved taking Dr Richards Philosophy and History of the Southern Baptist Convention. There was never a doubt he was walking with Jesus! Well done, Dr. Richards!*

-----  
**Mike Beck (Class of 1988)** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

AW

“ *Not only was Dr. Richards my professor, but I was one of the students who was blessed to have him serve as an interim pastor in the church where I was serving while at BCF (FBTC). He and Mrs. Betty came to mean a lot to my wife and myself in our time of serving together at Calvary Baptist Church, Cottonwood, Alabama. Even after his time at CBC, when I had him in a class, he would regularly announce to the class, "I know his momma."*

-----  
**Andrew and Kelly Wiggins** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ My sincere condolences on the loss of Dr. Richardson. A couple of years ago 2 friends and I were doing a Bible study on Revelations and he so graciously gave us copies of his book. And then he and Mrs. Richardson came to my home and met with us one day. What a joy to be able to learn just a small amount of his vast knowledge. I treasure his book and the time spent with him. May God grant you all strength, comfort and peace and may your wonderful memories sustain you in the coming days.

---

**Betty Sue Bruckner** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ God has received another Saint ! We will miss his special presence here on earth. He was a great influence in my life and my husband Shane Barden ! At least Shane has Mr Richards with him now and both are with Jesus !!!

---

**Kathy Best Shaw** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ My husband graduated in 1975 and was in Dr. Richards class. He often mentioned how much he learned from him. Praying for the family.

---

**Jo Ann Butler** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

FC

“ Mrs. Richards, Glen and family, I am so sorry for your loss. I have many good memories of spending time at your house while growing up in Graceville. I have said many times since I have gotten older what a very special blessing it was to have been born and raised in Graceville with so many godly men as role models. You and your family will be in our prayers.

---

**Frank & Agatha Cannon** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SK

“ So glad I can say I had the privilege of knowing and visiting with this man of God. God has enriched the lives of many that Granddaddy met here in this life. Praise God that he now resides in Heaven with our Lord. Love and prayers for the family.

---

**Shelba Knight** - April 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RL

“ Dr. Richards was very dear to my heart as a Professor and confidant. The years studying Philosophy had an enormous impact on both my personal and ministerial life. In my personal life, Dr. Richards challenged me to take head on the pursuits The Lord was leading me toward. Whether it was challenging academic courses like "The Trinity Space and Time" or "Nietzsche," his keen understanding and careful instruction led me to think critically and logically about life's biggest questions and dilemmas. In ministry, the apologetics and logic passed onto me through Dr. Richard's tutelage was instrumental in leading many to Christ as I challenged the Asian mind in the capacity of Strategy Coordinator and Church Planter while serving in China with the I.M.B. Ms. Betty and Dr. Richards' prayers undergirded our family while serving our Lord on the field. While we mourn the loss of his quick wit and academic acumen, we're comforted that we will see him again and praise The Lord alongside him. I hope the Angels realize that now that Doc is there he will give new meaning to their understanding of "take out a half sheet of paper!" We are praying for the family to be comforted by our Lord in this time.

---

**Rev. James M. Lanley** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KP

“ Betty and Family, may God's Love and Peace surround you at this time. Knowing Dr. Richards was a blessing to all who had that privilege in this life and we look forward to seeing him again one day.

---

**Karl & Judy Peterson** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ "Precious in the sight of the Lord Is the death of His godly ones."  
Psalm 116:15

---

**Jeffrey Locke** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GW

“ Dr. Richards was an integral part of my education experience at BCF. I remember him fondly, and wish to pass my condolences to his family. He is now where we all long to be, in the glorious presence of King Jesus. Thank you, sir, for the countless lives you have impacted for the kingdom.

---

**Grover Wilson** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ I truly am glad that I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Richards. My prayers are with his family.

---

**Paul Hearn** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KJ

“ What an awesome legacy Bro Wiley has has been to so many of us. We will always remember his teachings at Trinity Baptist ,Headland Alabama. I still enjoy his books and share with my pastor friends. Many prayers for Mrs. Betty ,the Family and his extended FAITH family

---

**Kathy Jones** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

V(

“ *Condolences to Aunt Betty and family and friends. Uncle Sonny was a great man. May he rest in Heaven. Love from Ginger*

-----  
**Virginia K Broadus (Pierce)** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ *RIP our dear friend we always looked forward to hearing him preach he touched our hearts and many more our prayers to the family*

-----  
**Dan an Reda Stout** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DC

“ *Thank you my brother for all you taught me while I was blessed to attend BBI and be under your guidance. God bless your family during this time. Look forward to seeing you again.*

-----  
**Dan Chapman** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Dr. Richards (Sweetness) was probably the most intelligent man I have ever met. He was the perfect balance of smarts and usefulness. Unlike most intelligent men, Dr. Richards balanced his intelligence with common sense and humility. He was a living professor that didn't hesitate to tell you when you were wrong, and then would lovingly show you why based on scripture and common horse sense. It has been 25 years since I last sat under his teachings, but to this day I still think back to principles he taught us in class. I aspire to be Christlike, ans Dr Richards was an earthly role model of what it looked like to live a Christlike life. While his body has "gone the way of all flesh" I am certain that his spirit is with Christ in heaven, I look forward to the day when Wiley and I will meet again there.*

-----  
**Jack Smith** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ My deepest sympathy to the family of Dr. Wiley Richards. As the former managing editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, it was my pleasure to anticipate Dr. Richards' Bible studies for nearly 12 of the 27 years he contributed. I can say without equivocation that he was an inspiration to tens of thousands as he taught, encouraged, inspired -- in rightly dividing the Word of truth. Thank you for sharing him Miss Betty and I will be praying for you.

-----  
**Joni B. Hannigan** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ Dr. Richards was an awesome servant of God. He and his dear wife and fellow servant, Mrs. Betty, have impacted more lives than they could possibly know. Their example reminds us of the song, "Thank You", by Ray Boltz... "Thank you for giving to the Lord..."

-----  
**Jim and Polly Weaver** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ Dr. Richards made such an impact on my life. I have always remembered him as the best and my most favorite teacher. He saw things in me that I did not see in myself and because of him, I am now walking in those things with confidence. Dr. Richards inspired me because he was brilliant but also so very kind.

-----  
**Chris and Julie Thomas** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

OF

“ Deepest Sympathy, Prayers for you and your family.

-----  
**Odell Judy Booker - Family** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GN

“ The obituary is a wonderful tribute.

-----  
**Gary Nichols** - April 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

HH

“ We will miss Wiley and his smile....he touched many lives over the years. He was the best example of a Christian that anyone could want to follow. Our prayers are with Betty and the family and friends during this time of grief. It is a blessing to know that he has entered the gates of heaven and will celebrate Easter with our Lord.

Harley and Dot Herndon - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CW

“ I didn't know him well, but what I do know is that he has a big heart and was ready w open arms to include myself and my family into theirs. For that I am grateful, and have only one regret, I would have loved to have more time to get to him for the wonderful person he is. My heart goes out to the family w my deepest regards.

Cassandra wiens - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ Dr Richards was a sweet man and a wonderful professor. I attended FBTC 1993 to 1995. I graduated with my AA degree in Religious Education. I was grateful for godly men like Dr. Richards to guide us in our faith and doctrine. God has gained another saint. God bless the Richards family and all of us who have been touched by such a blessing of a teacher and friend.

Rebecca Kay Buchanan - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ We were students of Dr Richards in the early 1990's. We praise God for his leadership. May God grant peace to his family.

Michael & Jeannie Barber - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

VS

“ Roger and Charlene we will be praying for you and your family. So sorry to hear but I know you are sure of where he is and that brings comfort to your hearts. I love you all. Vicki Sandifer

---

**Vicki Sandifer** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GW

“ Loved his classes & preaching. I'm a better Christian/pastor from his influence. Blessings of Joy & Peace in Christ our Lord

---

**Gary Wiggins** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ My prayers and condolences go out to the family. I went to Wallace College with Charlene and knew Dr Richards as I served with him at one of his many interim pastor positions. It was at Selma Baptist Church in Dothan, Alabama in 1990. It was my first position after graduating seminary. Dr Richards was a pleasure to serve with. He gave me very sound wisdom. I thank God for him.

---

**John Cook** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ Richards, Knowing Easter is upon us and as we are celebrating Jesus' resurrection, it reminds me of the great HOPE that we will see Wiley again. His eternal investments over all these decades are paying and will be paying dividends for generations beyond our lives. Praying for Jesus' peace from John 14:27 to rest in your hearts. Also, y'all were great next door neighbors 1969-1971 to the Ray Walker family. God bless. Shalom, mike walker pastor <http://thebayouchurch.org/>

---

**Mike Walker** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PW

“ I loved Dr. Richards. He was my favorite professor. Prayers for all of his family and friends.

Paula Williams - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TG

“ So sorry to see him go, but glad to know he is Walking the streets of Glory now. My condolences to all of you who are family and friends. God Bless you all.

Tony L Gushlaw - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ So sorry to hear of Dr. Richards passing! Our prayers are with you. We share many great memories with your family from our days together in Graceville. Joel Walker

Joel Walker - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ Loved Dr Richards so very much except in Phlosophy class, then I just love him a little bit.

Sammy Hiers - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ Charlene and family, may memories help to comfort you at this difficult time.

Tammy Billups - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ Willy was truly a great man of God. He will be missed.

Dawn and Rick Freeman - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ *Our loss Heavens gain. We truly enjoyed and loved Bro Wiley while he was with us. God Bless and keep you*

-----  
**Johnny & Grace Watson** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RA

“ *A great professor and godly man Benny Anthony class of 95.*

-----  
**Rev. Benny Anthony** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ *Thank you for making a tremendous contribution to my life and ministry.*

-----  
**John Love** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ *My condolences to the family. Praying for you during this difficult time.*

-----  
**Jackie Malone** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CE

“ *I'm so sorry to hear of Dr. Richards passing. He was a very thoughtful yet challenging professor. Our prayers are with you during this time.*

-----  
**Charles Edwards** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ *Thankful for the faithful years devoted to training others for gospel ministry.*

-----  
**John Wright** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RR

“ My deepest sympathies go out to the family of a great man of God who guided my understanding of God's Word, especially in regards to Eschatology. He, like many others beside him, taught wisdom in and responsibility to the Word, for which I will be eternally grateful to God. God bless you all!

-----  
**Ronnie Richardson** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

EP

“ Dr. Richards was one of a kind. His kindness and wisdom touched every one around him. We were both honored and blessed to set under his teaching and preaching. We will be praying for Ms Betty and the rest of his family.

-----  
**Ed and Rose Pilarczyk** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ I had the privilege of being taught by Dr. Richards for one class, Theology 302, in my Junior year at the Baptist College of Florida back in 2003, I believe. I heard him preach in chapel many times. He is someone that I always looked up to and admired. My condolences and prayers to his family.

-----  
**Daniel Solomon** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JR

“ Granddaddy was the best! His example to follow is nearly unmatched and will forever live on with Jesus. I owe so much and love you deeply.

-----  
**Jeremy Richards** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ So sorry for your lose you family will be in our prayers.

-----  
**Sammy Strickland** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BV

“ *I am so honored to have known such a fine Christian as Dr. Richards! May Our Lord comfort you, Betty and children through the days to come. You are in our hearts and prayers!*

---

**Brenda Vaughn** - April 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM