

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...

THE TESTIMONY

...of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." Psalm 19:7

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

"Howbeit Jesus...saith unto him..."Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Mark 5:19

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A CUP OF WATER—A LIVING JESUS

*And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones
a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you,
he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

Matt. 10:42

Jesus spoke a message that is worthy to repeat,
That we should give a cup of water to everyone we meet.
A thirsty soul may need a drink to wet his parched lips,
To ease his thirsty tongue with some moist and cooling sips.

*If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee,
Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and
he would have given thee living water.*

John 4:10

"Water" doesn't mean just from a cup or glass, you see,
Just simply water in a cup or a glass of ice-cold tea.
This "water" is a gift from Heaven, from the throne of God above.
It is living, breathing water. It's a dying Savior's love.

*But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;
but the water that I shall give him
shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

John 4:14

Jesus came to bring salvation to a dead and dying race.
Through the shedding of His lifeblood and His boundless stores of grace—
Share this living water. It's an ever-flowing spring
Breaking forth just like a fountain as an everlasting thing.

*I will give unto him that is athirst of the
fountain of the water of life freely.*

Rev. 21:6

So, when you think of water in a glass or in a tin,
Think of sharing Jesus who died to save from sin;
For He is who forgives us and pardons guilt and strife
And raises thirsty sinners unto everlasting life.

Marcus Miller

THE TESTIMONY

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“Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh”
(Matt. 24:44).



EDITORIAL

“OF THE TIMES AND SEASONS”

In Matthew 24, Jesus told His disciples what should be expected before His return. We see nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There are famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. Rioting, violence, and unrest are prevalent in many nations. Iniquity abounds. There is a raging battle of darkness against light, and of death against life.

These conditions, in the world around us, make it very evident that we are living in the last days. Later in Matthew 24, Jesus said that no man knows the day and hour when He would return—not even the angels, but His Father only. The “day and hour” speaks of a rather exact, or specific time, or date, or time of day, and no one will know exactly when that will be. Just before His ascension back to the Father, Jesus told His disciples (in Acts 1:7), “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.” It would be many years from that time until Jesus comes back for His Bride, and the disciples were not given to know the times and the seasons. Believers, down through the ages, have looked for Christ’s return, and thought He would come in their day. This has been the source of much hope and strength to meet the daily trials.

But as the time draws near for Christ to come in the clouds and call His chosen people home, I believe His followers are given to understand, to some extent, those times and seasons. For the Lord told Daniel, “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:9–10).

According to the Greek meaning of “times or the seasons” in Acts 1:7, the word “times” refers to a general time frame, whereas the word “seasons” carries the meaning of a fixed or special occasion. The world conditions today are certainly an indication that we are living in the last “times.” The “seasons” infer a more narrowed timeframe, or a more focused time, when the last things happen before Christ’s return. Only the Father knows how close we are to that final season. I have to wonder if that particular season could be during the Feast of Trumpets. Many believe that the prophetic meaning of this feast is when Christ shall return for His Bride (I Cor. 15:51–52 and I Thess. 4:13–18). With this feast soon approaching, it reminds us of Christ’s return—but His return is just as likely to happen today! Are we ready? “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh” (Matt. 24:44).

What must we do to be ready? The very first thing Jesus told His disciples when they asked, “When shall these things be?” was, “Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matt. 24:4). To avoid deception, we need to spend more time in prayer and communion with God, and in reading and studying His Word.

Another thing the Lord instructed us to do is to watch! “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matt. 24:42). We should be watching these signs of the end-times so we understand how little time re-

mains, but this does not mean to just sit down and watch the signs take place. We have work to do! We need to be watchmen—to be ready ourselves, and encourage other believers, and warn those who are lost. Romans 13:8–14 well describes how to be prepared: Love one another, awake out of sleep, replace the works of darkness with the armour of light, walk honestly, and “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

May we all be ready and, with anticipation, look for His coming!

Darryl Filbrun

GENERAL

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

II Timothy 2:15

Much harm has been done from man wresting Scripture to his own destruction (see II Pet. 2:16). Man has been enslaved, both literally and spiritually by false doctrine. This need not be if we allow the Spirit to teach by the Word. God has given us His Word and Spirit that we might know Him. The written Word was composed by at least 35 anointed writers over a period of about 1500 years. Its message is an integrated story about creation, the fall of man, exposure of his self-willed heart, prophetic promises of a Redeemer, and the eternal destiny of man.

We will not rightly divide (discern) Scripture unless we trust it as God’s message to man. The

facts of the Bible’s authorship and the integrity of its message are well substantiated by a host of eyewitnesses, early historians and archaeological findings.

In 1947 a Bedouin shepherd boy (Ahmed el-Dhid) was following a stray goat in the Qumran desert when he thought it might have wandered into a cave. He threw a rock into the cave to scare it out and heard a distinct “plunk” like the breaking of pottery. He lowered himself into the cave to investigate. There he discovered clay jars containing ancient leather scrolls. Thinking they might have value, he took them into Bethlehem and sold them to an antiquities dealer. This providential discovery confirms to reasonable men that the ancient Scriptures have been unaltered for at least 2100 years.

These Dead Sea scrolls, as they are known, have been validated by scholars from some of the most prestigious universities in the world. Even non-Christian researchers have confirmed the validity of these ancient documents. Scrolls of the book of Isaiah have been dated to 100 years before the birth of Christ. They almost exactly mirror the book of Isaiah that we have in our Bibles. This book prophesies the coming of Christ (Messiah), His virgin birth, His means of death and much more. Fragments of most of the other books of the Old Testament have likewise been found among these scrolls and are still being deciphered.¹

How were these Scriptures, the message of God to man, originally communicated? The Hebrew writer records, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...” (Heb. 1:1–2). Initially, God spoke to chosen men and it was by them His words were passed on or transcribed by faithful scribes. The words spoken by Jesus while He was on the earth were heard by His apostles, Matthew, John and Peter who recorded or spoke what they saw and heard. John-Mark and Luke heard their versions of the Gospel directly from the Apostles. These words and their context is what we have

as the New Testament Gospels. Jesus divinely spoke to Paul as recorded by His traveling companion Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, letters Paul wrote to various churches and his spiritual son, Timothy, capture His divine instructions for living out the Gospels. The epistles of James, the half brother of Jesus, and one named Jude have been included as inspired Scripture. The book of the Revelation of Christ to the Apostle John was given late in his life while in exile. This was our Lord’s final recorded instruction to the churches letting them know that His Holy Spirit would guide and correct His churches after the Apostles and eye witnesses were no longer around to testify. Paul instructs us that all Scripture is divinely inspired by God and is “...profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” (II Tim. 3:16).

When we are confident that the Scriptures are the God-breathed message for us, we can be taught by them. Most of the words in the Bible can and should be taken literally. When Jesus said that we “ought to wash one another’s feet,” we need not spiritualize this, but experience the practice and trust the Holy Spirit to reveal the deeper spiritual blessing. The Apostle Peter didn’t need knowledge, but simple obedience, that night in the upper room. After obedience, Jesus revealed the blessing. And so

¹ **Zukeran, Patrick**, “The Dead Sea Scrolls Shed Light on the Accuracy of our Bible.” www.probe.org, April 17, 2006.

it is for those who rightly divide the Word of Truth. As it is applied in obedience, the blessing is revealed.

The message is inerrant. A message that is neither diluted or adulterated does not mean that all of the words are to be understood literally. The purpose of the "... Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us..." (John 1:14) was to communicate our Lord's message. God did this by literal words as well as figures of speech. The Word sometimes uses parables (stories to illustrate a point), hyperbole (an exaggerated example for emphasis) and analogy (natural examples to make a spiritual point). The parable of the ten virgins is one example. An example of hyperbole is Joshua's description of the armies arrayed against Israel as "...much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude..." (Jos. 11:4). An example of analogy is when John was shown One like the Son of man setting on a cloud hearing a command to "...thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" (Rev. 14:16). Should we try to understand the literal meaning in the words of these figures of speech, we may miss the message and arrive at an unintended meaning.

So how do we know what is to be understood literally, as hyperbole, as a parable or as an analogy? We believe God has given three gifts that we might rightly discern His Word. He has given to all men a mind. To those who re-

ceive Him as Lord He gives His indwelling Holy Spirit. Finally, He has inspired a written record of His message.

With the renewed mind, we consider the reasonableness of the words. Someone has said, "If the literal sense makes good sense we need no other sense." A caution though: Without the other two gifts, even our renewed minds can lead us to the wrong conclusion. We are both flesh and spirit. The indwelling Holy Spirit was given to teach us and guide us in true understanding (see John 14:26 and 16:13). Likewise, without the other two gifts, we may confuse the Spirit's leading with that of our human spirit. The written Word, without the other two helps, subjects us to the limits of our intellect. A mind that is not renewed cannot understand that which must be spiritually discerned (see I Cor. 2:14). Still, God has given us the written Word as the parameter for our understanding. To summarize, we must be taught by the written Word, through the medium of the Holy Spirit as this teaching is processed through our renewed minds.

A critical test for proper discernment of the Word of God is: Is our understanding consistent with His character? If His Word seems to tell us something in contradiction with His character, we must continue to pray and seek understanding. James wrote, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God..." (Jas. 1:5). Perhaps prophetically, the Psalmist wrote,

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). John writes, "God is love" (I Jn. 4:16). Moses said of God, "He is the Rock, his word is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deut. 32:4). These verses relate just a sample of our God's character.

When we read a teaching in God's Word that seems inconsistent with His character, we know that this cannot be. There are at least two possibilities: 1) We are reading without considering the intent of the wording (context), or, 2) We have exceeded the limits of our understanding. An example of these possibilities is Scripture's description of heaven and hell.

From Paul's letter to the Corinthians it is clear that God knows our limits for understanding heaven. It can't even enter "into our hearts" unless we have divine revelation (see I Cor. 2:9). Whether the descriptions of these destinations are to be understood literally or, in part, as an analogy makes little difference if we hear the message. The message that Jesus left with us is that the beauty and joy of our eternal home with Him is beyond what carnal minds can comprehend. Likewise the eternal consciousness of the souls that hear the judgment, "...I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23) is part

of the unimaginable terror of hell! Rewards and punishment are necessary extensions of the justice-character of our God. He holds before us life and death. We have been called to be our Lord's witnesses but not His judge. People have railed at God through the ages because they lack discernment of His person and His word. Faithful Abraham knew God and was known of God. When it seemed to him that God was going to destroy the righteous in Sodom with the wicked he appealed to God's character, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). The assurance we have is that He will.

There are many religions in the world. None have holy texts that can be validated by archaeology and history as that given to us by our Lord. No others have demonstrated power over death, hell and the grave as the testimony of the risen Savior as verified by many witnesses of His resurrection. The Word of Truth is in reality a living word. It is that Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. It is contained within the boundaries of the written Word. It is the God-breathed message given to us as a gift from the Father and made alive by His Holy Spirit as we prayerfully meditate on it. It leads us to deep reverence for our Creator and Redeemer.

Stanley Boyd

THE VALUE OF TRUE FRIENDS IN THE MOUNTAINS OF LIFE

It was 5:30 A.M. and daylight was beginning to illuminate the towering masses of rock that encompassed us. While this daylight was a welcoming sight, it brought about the staunch reality of the day ahead. Before us lay one of the most daunting mountain adventures in California and the tallest mountain in the lower forty-eight states: Mt. Whitney.

The ten of us that comprised our troop possessed a variety of skills and mountaineering experience; the mountain still appeared daunting, however. It was not the size or the experience of our group that was encouraging, but rather the fact that I could count on each one to encourage and support each other as we hiked.

As we slowly climbed the mountainside, many other hikers descending the mountain encouraged us to keep going, telling us the summit was attainable. While this did spur our excitement, the mountain did not change its difficulty to aid us. Six miles into the hike, the trail began to quickly switchback up toward Consultation Lake, at an elevation of 11,686 feet. After what seemed to be far more than one mile, we finally reached our base camp. We did our best to eat what food each one could stomach; we knew we needed to eat, but our appetite lacked. We all knew what lay ahead: ninety-nine switchbacks, the danger of slipping off the

mountain in snow and icy areas, and the potential risk of lightning strikes if a storm arose.

It was about all I could do to make myself get up from my rock seat at basecamp; I was tired, but I knew this was my one chance to conquer the mountain. The high altitude was affecting each one of us, resulting in only eight of us gathering our daypacks and heading for the summit. We trudged along, occasionally pausing to take a puff of oxygen from our one-liter oxygen bottles purchased the day before. It was strenuous work, and the morning's hike was taking a toll on each of us. We approached the ridgeline about 3:00 P.M.; at basecamp we had decided that we needed to summit by 4:00 P.M. or we would turn around. Soon we approached a sign that said: Summit, 1.9 miles. We all realized that we were not nearly as far along as we thought, but to turn back now seemed as equally foolish as continuing on.

As I looked around, I noticed that we were the only ones still ascending the mountain. As we passed many hikers descending, I wondered what our fellow hikers thought of us; "You're crazy for trying to summit at this time of day," or perhaps "You appear exhausted! Are you going to be able to make it back down?" However, the mountain was becoming ours both in a literal and figurative way. We encouraged each other to press on because the summit couldn't be too far ahead!

After nearly thirteen hours on the trail, we finally summited the

14,508-foot giant! Scanning the horizon, we realized that in the distance lay a large, low cloud front. This was concerning, as a potential lightning storm on top of this mountain posed a serious risk. We quickly snapped a few pictures and began our descent to lower safer elevation. After descending several hundred feet, altitude sickness began to set in among several of our group, slowing our pace. There was a sense of comradery among us, however, as we did our best to encourage those who felt ill and keep up group morale. It was here that I noticed the true friendship between us, as we encouraged each other to keep going. Through this difficult time on the mountain, I began to recognize some of the similarities between the type of friendship we were experiencing and the type of close friendship necessary within the church of Christ.

Choose your friends wisely before you need them; if they are true friends, they will be with you when you are struggling on the mountain of life. While it may be possible to make true friends at the time when you need them most, it will certainly be more difficult than if you already had them. True friends know who you are and what you are made of. Because of this, they will be able to build you up in areas you need it most. While on the mountain, we all had different hiking speeds, yet we were determined to stay together as a group. Likewise, true friends may be at different areas in their walk with the Savior, yet

continue to stay with and build up those around them.

Let's face it. Life is not always flat, smooth, and shiny. While it can be this, in reality it is often mountainous, rough, and sometimes dull. Telling the difference between fake friends and true friends is relatively simple: fake friends are only with you as long as life is flat, smooth, and shiny. The friends you choose in the smooth times in life often define your outlook on life in the mountainous times. Consequently, each



one of us must be a friend to others in the mountainous times in their lives.

Proverbs 18:24 states that "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." What is the reason then that a true friend will stay close to you in the trials of life? First, friendships are not something in which one person only gives and the other only receives. Rather, true friends are mutually able to give and receive; within this friendship, there is something mutually beneficial for both friends. Second, true friends stick together because they know that when they

face trials, the other will be there for them.

One thing that each one of us realized, hiking Mt. Whitney, was that at its high elevation, food does not appear appetizing. Regardless, we all knew that our physical life and energy came from it; consequently, we did our best to eat. Likewise, even if making time to study the Word doesn't appear spiritually appetizing, continue to feed on the Word. Deuteronomy 4:29 encourages that if we "...seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." Consequently, the Lord will reveal Himself to us if we diligently search for Him.

When the dark clouds began to appear in the distance, we knew that our safety was in the lower elevation where lightning was less likely to reach us. When the clouds of doubt, temptation, and sin appear on the horizon, run to the higher, more stable rock Christ Jesus who is our protection. Second, look to those around you, as they will be an encouragement for you. Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 says that "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." In a physical sense on the mountain, having friends around me brought confidence that being alone never would have.

Finally, look back at the mountains you have conquered in your life, remembering how through the

power of Christ you overcame them. If we are to overcome the battles in life, however, we must also be mindful to "Put on the whole armor of God..." (Eph. 6:11), as it is vital for victory. Encourage others by showing them the "great things he [God] has done for you" (I Sam. 12:24). Lastly, give God the praise for all He has done!

Dale Miller

IS CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW?

In Romans 10:4, the apostle Paul explains that "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." But what does this mean? This article is going to make an attempt to answer that question by considering the verse in the larger context of Romans, analyze the Greek grammar, interpret the theological meaning for today, and offer a practical take away from this passage.

The Romans 10:4 passage falls within a much larger discussion about the fact that righteousness is secured by faith, not the Law (Rom. 9:30–31) and "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek" (10:12a). Initially, Paul points out to the Roman Church that the righteousness of God has been revealed in Christ (1:16–17) and shows that all people (both Jew and Gentile) are sinners (3:23) and in need of the blessed hope that only the Gospel can deliver (3:21). The saving righteousness of God through the

death of Jesus triumphs over Adam's sin (5:12–21) and enables the power of grace over sin (6:1–23) and the Law (7:1–6). It is apparent that Paul is dealing with a mix of Jewish and Gentile Christians, asserting that the cause of Israel's rejection was because they pursued the righteousness of the Law with their works and self-effort (9:32). One could wonder how God could give the Law to His own chosen people, knowing they could not keep it. However, as one commentator states, Paul effectively "shows that God is absolved from the responsibility for Israel's rejection."¹ Israel had become ignorant of the righteousness of God, not understanding that it was obtained by faith. This is the background context leading to Paul's statement in Romans 10:4, that Christ is the end of the Law.

In an effort to grammatically translate what Paul means when he states that Christ is the end of the Law, "te,loj ga.r no,mou Cristo.j" (Rom. 10:4a), one needs to consider what te,loj and no,mou mean or are referring to in the original language. The word te,loj refers to the end, conclusion, or goal.² Therefore, I propose referring to te,loj as an "end-goal." The word no,mou means "law" or actually, "of the law" because it is in the genitive case. In agreement with Morris, one "should probably understand this as the Law of Moses."³ Therefore, I am going to refer to this Law as the Torah. The Greek syntax is also im-

portant to the meaning. The word te,loj and Cristo.j are both definite predicate nominatives, which means that to translate it properly, one needs to add [is] as a verb between them.⁴ As a result, this sets up an equation that can be flipped around for syntax testing. The end-goal of the Law [is] Christ and Christ [is] the end-goal of the Law. The reason this test is important is that one could falsely conclude that Christ has autocratically ended the Law in order to replace it with something else. If that was true, it would deny Christ's proclamation that He did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it (Mat. 5:17). That said, the idea or concept of termination is also a favorable view, because as another commentator puts it, "though the Law is righteous in its requirements, it fails as an instrument of justification." While men could never be justified with the requirements of the Torah, the Son of God could be. Considering everything above, the verse could be translated this way: "For the end-goal of the Torah [is] Christ unto righteousness for each one believing." (My Translation).

With the context and grammatical contemplations, Romans 10:4 can be interpreted with theological meaning to our lives today. The righteousness of God as revealed by faith in Jesus Christ was the end goal of the Torah (or Law). Israel's rejection and lack of faith in their effort to follow the Torah

¹Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1990), 430.

²Moisés Silva, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis Set* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 470.

³Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2006), 380.

⁴Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 264.

caused them to stumble, because they focused on their works instead of their faith. Paul explains that Jesus Christ was the end-goal of the Law and Israel missed it. In the same way, we too can become so focused on trying to make ourselves look good before men instead of relying solely on our faith in Jesus Christ. We must not try to “establish righteousness by human effort,” but rather, accept “the divine gift.” Those who do so will not only avoid the pitfall of legalism, but bear fruit by the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. As Towns rightly explains, “the one who believes in Jesus will not continue in a life of sin but will daily be transformed into the character of Christ through the personal power of God’s Holy Spirit.”

So then, what is a practical takeaway of Christ being the end-goal of the Law? Believe in Jesus and you will not sin against the Law? That righteousness of the Law is a natural outcome of belief? Almost all believers know that just believing in Jesus does not automatically mean one will not sin. After all, even the devils believe (James 2:19) and yet, they continue to sin. The fact is, only those who truly have been imparted with God’s seed, (the Holy Spirit), do not keep on sinning (I John 3:6, 9). For these individuals, righteousness is an act performed because they have been born of God (I John 3:7, 9). One must be born of the Spirit (John 3:5), or the righteousness they portray will be of human effort, not from the divine source within them. John teaches us how to tell the difference when he says that no one

born of God makes a practice of sinning (I John 3:9), and explains that by this, it is evident who belongs to God and who belongs to the devil (3:10). Understanding this sheds light on Romans 10:4 in the following way. The Law’s entire intent and end-goal was for Christ to come and fulfill the righteous requirements of the Torah, so that we as believers, by faith, could be born again with God’s Spirit and walk in righteousness from now on. This is why Paul can say we “are become dead to the law by the body of Christ...but now we are delivered from the law...that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter” (Rom. 7:4a, 7:6).

In conclusion, let us not become confused with trying to follow the old Law with our flesh. It is only those who have been born again with God’s seed (the Holy Spirit), that overcome sin and practice righteousness as a result. It is not faith plus works, but rather, *faith works*. Nor would it be proper to conclude that the Law is done away with because it was ineffective, and now as Christians, we can live however we want. This too would be wrong, as Paul stated, “The law is holy...and just, and good” (Rom. 7:12) and “was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). While the obligation to follow the letter of the Law is gone for those who believe (Rom. 6:14), the righteous fulfillment of the Law continues on through those who have had their sin nature put to death with Christ on the cross (Gal. 2:20) and

are born again unto newness of life (Rom. 7:6; II Cor. 5:17), because of what Christ has done. Christ did not come to abolish the Law, but since He was the end-goal of the Law, what was impossible for God's chosen people in the old covenant was fulfilled and completed by Him alone.

In the new covenant, people whose faith is fully in Christ, can and will walk in righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. How can we be so sure? Because of what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17a). Today, we witness the rebirth of corrupt human hearts into new life, for those whose faith is rooted fully in Christ. Truly, it is just as the author of Hebrews said when he quoted from Jeremiah 31:33: "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Heb. 10:16). The new covenant firmly establishes that the Law is written internally on the heart of the Christian by the Holy Spirit, whereas the old covenant (or Torah) was external and dependent on rituals, obedience, and the written Law. Since Christ (or God-man) was the only flesh in history that was able to fulfill the written Law, Paul could legitimately exclaim that "the end-goal of the Torah [is] Christ unto righteousness for each one believing." (My Translation.) Praise God!

Trent Boone

GOD'S GREATNESS AND POWER

The Fear of God—Part 2

We want to discover more of the treasures found in the "Fear of the Lord," as stated in Isaiah 33:6. We certainly do enjoy and benefit from many incredible inventions that man has designed. However, nothing even comes close when we compare them to God's mighty power!

The depth of our Fear of the Lord is limited to our understanding of God's greatness. The more we comprehend of how great God really is, the greater our Fear of Him will be.

God's Mighty Power is Unmatched

In the beginning, God simply spoke, with incredible power, and said in Genesis 1:3 "Let there be light: and there was light."

Job 36:26— "Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out."

Psalms 96:4— "For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods."

Psalms 145:3— "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable."

God's power is unmatched, mighty, and limitless. Only God has the power to create "something" out of "nothing," and only God can take that "something" He has made and reduce it back to "nothing." We cannot do that, but God can. He alone is God!

God's Hand is Very Large

It is estimated that the distance from our planet Earth to the outer edge of the universe is 46.5 billion light years. Remember that light travels at 186,282 miles per second, that is a very, very large distance, and yet the Bible says that God counts that distance like the size of just His hand.

Isaiah 40:12-18— “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him?”

The meaning of the word “span,” in verse 12, is the comparable distance from the thumb of God to His little finger.

God is Great and has no Equal

Deuteronomy 3:24— “O Lord GOD thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?”

Psalms 86:8-10— “Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great and doest wondrous things: thou alone art God.”

God is supremely great.

He is God alone.

We are to worship God alone.

God's Power in the Wonders of the Human Body

Consider the human body for a minute, your life began from one tiny cell that was fertilized. In the middle of that little dot was a master computer that is called DNA. Think about it, every organ, every hair, every blood vessel, every personality trait, all our personal features were programed within the chromosomes of the DNA of that tiny cell.

The average adult can have over 100 trillion cells. That is the number one with fourteen zeros behind it. Amazingly, these all work together and in harmony with each other. It would be impossible for all the cells to work together by just chance, or by evolution. The human cells are another proof of our Creator's power and His supreme greatness!

The human hand alone has 27 bones, and our entire body has at least 206 bones in it.

The average human heart beats 100,000 time each day and pumps 2,000 gallons of blood daily.

The average person has over 60,000 miles of blood vessels, arteries, capillaries. That is enough to go around the world more than twice.

Consider that the world population is currently around 7.7 billion people, and each one of us has unique fingerprints—with no duplicates. God has custom designed every set of fingerprints.

Psalms 139:14—“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...” Indeed, the human body loudly exclaims of the greatness of our God!

God's Power in the Beautiful Earth

When we look around at God's creation—the majesty of towering mountains, the expanse of oceans with their high tides and low tides, the intricacy of delicate flowers, peace of a mountain stream, beauty of a valley, the green grass and bushes, and the amazing land and water animals—we can catch a glimpse of how awesome our God is!

Have you ever been to large waterfall, or been to a big canyon? A large waterfall in America is called the Niagara Falls. If you stand close to the edge of the water falls, you will be surrounded by the thunder and spray of six million cubic feet of water bursting over the falls every minute, or if you stand at the edge of a big can-

yon, like the Grand Canyon, looking across the vast expanse and what seems like a bottomless gorge—this is somewhat like to the Fear of God—you can have an overwhelming sense of God's power and greatness.

God's Power in the Animal Kingdom

The amazing giraffe, the tallest animal in the world, stands 18 feet tall. The neck of the giraffe is around six feet long. Their heart is very large, over two feet long, and it weighs twenty-five pounds. When the giraffe bends over to get a drink, God has made several special one-way valves to protect its brain from the blood flow rushing down the long distance of its neck and causing much damage.

Our God displays His greatness in many, many of His various animals He has created!

God's Power in the Universe and Sky

Look up at the stars and you will get another glimpse of the greatness of our God. God arranged the stars with His fingers. For most of us it is difficult to comprehend the vastness of the universe.

The moon is around 239,000 miles from the earth. If we traveled to the moon in a commercial jet at 500 MPH, it would take us twenty days. Light travels at 186,282 miles per second, so it would take only 1.2 seconds for light to get to the moon.

The sun is 93 million miles from the Earth. If you could travel to the sun in a jet, it would take you

over 17 years. Light travels this distance in only 8 minutes and 20 seconds.

Past the sun, the nearest star to the Earth, called Proxima Centauri, is 4.367 light years away. That is just the nearest star. If you could travel in a spacecraft at 47,000 mph, it would take over 62,000 years to get there. That is a very long time, and just think—that is just the beginning of God's universe!

Beyond this first star is multitudes of more stars. We live in what is called the Milky Way Galaxy. The next galaxy to ours is 2.31 million light years away. Scientists estimate there are billions of galaxies, each of them loaded with billions of stars.

Not only can He count the billions upon billions of stars, even trillions. Yet God has a name for each of them!

Remember it is estimated that the distance from our planet Earth to the outer edge of the universe is 46.5 billion light years. Since light travels at 186,282 miles per second, that is a very, very large distance and yet the Bible says that God counts that distance like the size of just His hand.

- Conclusion: **Our God is Great!**
- His power and might are infinite, without limit!

God's Spoken Voice has Tremendous Power

Psalms 33:6-9—“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap: he layeth up the deep in

storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”

Psalms 8:3-4a—“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?”

The psalmist David often expressed his awe of God by meditating on God's handiwork.

It would be good for us to do this same thing, to meditate on the greatness of God.

Exodus 20:18-20—“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.”

God gave His Law to the nation of Israel; He revealed His mighty power through nature so that the people would learn to fear Him.

God desires we would always fear Him!

Romans 1:20—“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse...”

Paul says that God reveals His power to mankind through His creation.

We have no excuse to not recognize God's power.

God sees and hears everything

Another aspect of the greatness of God is the fact that God has perfect eyes, ears, and memory. He sees, hears, and remembers everything, both during the day and night. It is good to remind our children they cannot hide anything from God.

Many of us need glasses, but God does not need glasses to see better.

He hears everything spoken even a whisper, even softly spoken, and He does not need hearing aids. God never forgets, His memory never fades.

When I was once traveling to a foreign country, and nearing the next country border our guide told us to be very careful of our speech, because they were listening to what we were saying. This is a Bionic Ear.

I Peter 3:12—“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

As we get a glimpse of God's mighty power in His Creation of the Earth, the Human Body, Amazing animals, and in the night sky, the power of His spoken word, our hearts grow in wonder and praise to God.

God's Mighty Power in Redemption

Our love and wonder should grow for our God when we consider the mighty work God has done

for us, when He provided a way of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Remember, we all have sinned.

Romans 3:23—“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Sin separates us from God and leads to death.

Isaiah 59:2—“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

Romans 6:23—“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

There was mighty gulf between sinful man and the Holiness of God. God provided a way back to Him by Jesus Christ.

Consider the exceeding greatness of His power in the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus in the following verses:

Ephesians 1:18–22—“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

Characteristics of God's Greatness

Omnipotence—God is all Powerful, God has all-encompassing power, God is infinite and without any limits. There is nothing too hard for God.

Omniscience—God is completely all knowing. He knows all the past, present and future. He knows all the deeds, words, motives, thoughts, of each person who has ever lived, or will yet live.

Omnipresence—God is all present, everywhere, all the time. Nothing can escape God since He is not limited to being at one place at a time.

This will inspire us each time we sing this Hymn:

“How Great Thou Art”

*O Lord my God, When I in awe-
some wonder,*

*Consider all the worlds Thy
Hands have made;*

*I see the stars, I hear the rolling
thunder,*

*Thy power throughout the uni-
verse displayed.*

*When through the woods, and for-
est glades I wander,*

*And hear the birds sing sweetly in
the trees.*

*When I look down, from lofty
mountain grandeur*

*And see the brook, and feel the
gentle breeze.*

*And when I think, that God, His
Son not sparing;*

*Sent Him to die, I scarce can take
it in;*

*That on the Cross, my burdens
gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.*

*When Christ shall come with shout
of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall
fill my heart.*

*Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim: “My God, how
great Thou art!”*

Chorus:

*Then sings my soul, My Savior
God, to Thee,*

*How great Thou art, How great
Thou art.*

*Then sings my soul, My Savior
God, to Thee,*

*How great Thou art, How great
Thou art!*

Our God is Great, far greater than our comprehension, and as we continually live with awe and reverence of Him, we will grow in the Fear of the Lord.

Randy Jenkins

RENEW A RIGHT MOTHER WITHIN MOTHER

These are the words that graced my ears as I cleared away the breakfast dishes. As is his way, the son that was singing has been known to alter the words of songs out of the abundance of his boyish creativity. So instead of singing “renew a right spirit within me,” this morning he chose “renew a right mother within Mother.”

“Mama” is the usual name at our house, so the combination of words and tune especially caught my attention. He continued to dress himself in a nonchalant way, singing and humming obliviously while the newly invented song line replayed in my mind. Oh how fitting were the words. How needed they were! They gave me inspiration and fresh courage.

As I wrestle through motherhood some days, it is quite clear that the sanctification of the parent makes, may I say, ALL the difference? To be sanctified: set apart to God, freed from sin. Given power to overcome the tendency to frustration, unkindness, discontentment, anger, and whatever sin besets us. Given grace to unconditionally love and gently nurture these precious olive plants that sit around our table.

I want to share some notes from a recent sermon inspired by the following verse: “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

Ten things that provoke children to wrath:

1. Having no access to their father (or mother)

Be available for them. After all, we are their earliest impression of who God is. Children will find a way to get their parents’ attention, even if it means burning a field like Absalom did (II Sam. 14:28–33).

2. When children do not have a way to please their parents

We need to show them that we cherish them by our words and actions. They need to: A) know what we want them to do, B) know they can do it, C) know we will be pleased when they do it.

3. When we don’t have time to listen

4. When we are angry

When we express anger it teaches them to be angry.

5. Lack of control, supervision, and discipline

They thrive when we teach boundaries with consistency. Training sessions are helpful and can be fun for them.

6. Not keeping your word

7. Public rebuke or shame

Speak well of them!

8. Partiality or favoritism

9. Never seeing their father (or mother) repent or make things right

Seeing an authority figure admit that they are not always right is an important example for children to carry into the future.

10. A father (or mother) that can’t prioritize

Keep big things big, little things little.

As I pondered on this list I was convicted in many ways. One practical thing I want to do is to be more present in my home. In body, of course, but also in mind. This includes things like turning my head and focusing my eyes on the boys when they burst in and announce a new idea. Structuring our days so we are in less of a hurry. Laying my phone on the top of the fridge to rest for long periods

throughout the day. Studying them and enjoying them more. And praying, faithfully.

LORD, help us to nurture and more fully engage the tender olive plants that are growing around us.

They are miraculous gifts (Ps. 139:13–16).

They are eternal treasures (Matt. 6:19–21).

They are little enthusiasts who crave discipleship (Deut. 6:1–7).

God bless you as you equip the children around you to be devoted servants in God's Kingdom.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). "Yes, Lord, renew a right mother within Mother."

Megan Turner

MEDITATIONS

Would you give your life for your wife? Then why not take out the trash?

There are over 600 commands in the O. T. but over 1,100 in the New.

Reconciliation requires two people. Forgiveness requires only one.

Men can look without seeing and listen without hearing.

Jesus' yoke is easier than the one you bear now.

"That was a good, honest, painful sermon."

Love those things that God loves.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

This section offers some questions to think about, or for Sunday afternoon discussions, or to prompt future articles from our readers, etc. Readers are encouraged to offer questions.

"Foolish and unlearned questions avoid," the Scripture says (II Tim. 2:23). These surely are questions that do not help us in our walk with the Lord, but questions that may just "gender strife."

Titus 3:9 says, "...avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain."

Many questions do not assist us in the battle of life, but rather may cause division.

There are more important questions that we need to attend to.

Spend a few minutes in serious contemplation, asking yourself the following questions:

1. Is the fruit of the Spirit being manifest in my life?
2. What is the reason for the continual tension between me and my brother/sister/ or fellow-worker? Is there a way I could help this?
3. Why do I keep stumbling in the same area of sin in my life?
4. Are there signs of pride in me?
5. Are there signs of unbelief in me?
6. Is my life characterized by "repentance, and faith toward God?"

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

July 8, 2021; Morning Star, OH
Brendan Metzger
July 18, 2021; West Modesto, CA
Marisa Rumble

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

July 4, 2021; Western Kansas, KS
Daniel and Myra Jamison

COMMISSIONS

July 10, 2021; Fair Haven, KS
Merlin Reese (with wife Teresa)
Ordained to the Eldership
Darwin Fisher (with wife Beth)
Called to the Ministry
Patrick Hirt (with wife Lindsay)
Called to the Ministry
Darren Brubaker (with wife Alissa)
Called to the office of Deacon
Brendon Wray (with wife Rachel)
Called to the office of Deacon
Aug. 7, 2021; Columbia River, WA
Aaron Young (with wife Heidi)
Ordained to the Eldership
Curtis Wray (with wife Marla)
Advanced to 2nd degree of Ministry

COMMUNION NOTICES

Sept. 11, 2021 ... Mountain View, ID and
Mission Valley, MT together in Idaho
Sept. 11, 2021 Western Kansas, KS
Sept. 18, 2021 Clearwater, IN and
Scottville, MI together in IN
Sept. 25, 2021 Pleasant View, OH
Oct. 2, 2021 Providence, IN
Oct. 2, 2021 Caldwell, ID
Oct. 9, 2021... Cascade Valley and Zillah
Brethren, together at Cascade Valley, WA

Oct. 9, 2021 Lower Twin, OH
Oct. 16, 2021 Maple Grove, OH
Oct. 23, 2021 Stillwater, OH
Oct. 30, 2021 Kidron Valley, KS
Nov. 6, 2021 Columbia River, WA
Nov. 6, 2021 Bethel, OH
Nov. 13, 2021 Covington, OH
Nov. 13, 2021 Shenandoah, VA
Feb. 5, 2022 Pine Grove, FL
Feb. 26, 2022 West Modesto, CA

HARVEST MEETINGS

Sept. 12, 2021 Stillwater, OH
Sept. 26, 2021 Bear Creek, OH
Nov. 25, 2021 Pleasant View, OH

DISTRICT NOTICES

Mt. Zion District Update

We would like to thank everyone for their contributions to our newly purchased meeting house. We still have a debt to pay on the purchase of the building. We have recently appointed a committee to look into renovations, so that we can, in the future, be able to hold our love feast there. We will proceed with these plans as the funds become available. May God continue to bless you all. To make financial contributions please make checks payable to *Mt. Zion Building Fund* and mail it to:

Keith Garber

Building Fund Treasurers,
Keith Garber and Dale Leshner

POEMS

MY BIBLE AND I*Charles Sanford*

We've traveled together,
 My Bible and I,
 Through all kinds of weather,
 With smile or with sigh!
 In sorrow or sunshine,
 In tempest or calm!
 Thy friendship unchanging,
 My lamp and my psalm.

We've traveled together,
 My Bible and I,
 When life had grown weary,
 And death e'en was nigh!
 But all through the darkness
 Of mist or of wrong,
 I found there a solace,
 A prayer, and a song.

So now who shall part us,
 My Bible and I?
 Shall "isms" or schisms,
 Or "new lights" who try?
 Shall shadow for substance,
 Or stone for good bread,
 Supplant thy sound wisdom,
 Give folly instead?

Ah, no, my dear Bible,
 Exponent of light!
 Thou sword of the Spirit,
 Put error to flight!
 And still through life's journey,
 Until my last sigh,
 We'll travel together,
 My Bible and I.

Selected by
 Arlene Leshner

THE LARGER PICTURE

If we are discouraged—
 In our daily view,
 Let us be encouraged!
 God knows what to do!

If we have lost our way
 And which path to take,
 Let us pray to our Father,
 He knows what's at stake!

If we're ill, and are weary,
 Feeling like we're alone,
 God will help us see clearly,
 He knows every groan!

When we're feeling so weary,
 There is One who's in touch,
 He will help us all freely,
 He loves us so much!

Let us lift our minds higher,
 Whatever the cost.
 Let God share a part,
 His Way is not lost!

He sees the Larger Picture!

Vicki Witmer

THE SHEPHERD BOY'S SONG

He that is down needs fear no fall
 He that is down, no pride;
 He that is humble ever shall
 Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
 Little be it, or much:
 And, Lord, contentment still I crave
 Because Thou savest such.

Fulness to such a burden is
 That go on pilgrimage;
 Here little, and hereafter bliss,
 Is best from age to age.

John Bunyan

DEATH AND LIFE

Death is life cut short like grass, or grass
in heaps like soldiers on a battlefield,
still hot and limp at first before the blood congealed
and bone and body withered dry—a grim repast
for ravaged dust which bore the battle hard, alas!
and all but died by raging feet, the sword on shield
still ringing back across the empty, trampled field
where men of valor stood, and lunged, and fell *en masse*.

And life is death consumed like flowing wine
down to the dregs, the empty cup
stained and spent of refreshment from the vine—
and life is bound within the bread on which we sup,
released within this hungry earth of thine—
and life is in the green blades springing up.

Daniel Hess

OBITUARIES

MOHLER — Anne Lucinda, daughter of Harold Orian and Marjorie Ellen (Flora) Miller, was born on June 6, 1950, in Whittier, California. She very peacefully passed into her Maker's arms on May 24, 2021, at the age of 70 years, 11 months, and 18 days.

Anne was the second of five children, moving with her family to Mervyn and Pauline Grover's tankhouse when she was two years old and living there while her parents' home was remodeled to accommodate the Miller family. When the family moved to their home on Hatch Rd., Anne spent many hours playing in the orchards around her home with her little sister.

On August 20, 1967, she accepted Jesus as her Savior, along with

twenty-seven other young folks, and was baptized in the Stanislaus River at the end of Sisk Rd. Anne graduated from Ceres High School in 1968. She enjoyed singing and spent hours studying genealogy and searching for the burial location of her great-grandmother, Lucinda Flora. Anne received much encouragement over the years listening to Gospel music.

Anne met the love of her life and married Dale Mohler, son of Kenneth and Irene Mohler, on August 2, 1969, in her parents' backyard. Anne and Dale spent their married years in Ripon, California, until Dale's passing in 2004; together they shared life's challenges as they came.

In 1974, their precious daughter, Melinda Irene, was born and

fulfilled many of Anne's loving motherhood desires. They were inseparable until Melinda married Kevin McHenry in 2003 and moved to Washington. When her granddaughter, Breanna Dale, was born, Anne spent many hours doting on her.

Anne served for many years at the Ripon Grace Brethren daycare and later opened Cornerstone Country Pre-School. In 2016, she moved to Napavine, Washington, and spent her final years making memories to last a lifetime with her girls.

Anne passed quietly and peacefully in her home with her loving daughter, grand-daughter, and sister at her side.

She was also preceded in death by her parents. Anne is survived by her daughter and son-in-law; her granddaughter; her siblings, Roland (and Carla), Jeanette (and Roger) Kinzie, Dennis (and Ann), and Kenneth (and Connie); and many nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends.

With the passing of our dear mother, we know we will miss her but the struggles and pain of this life have passed and she is at peace.

A graveside service was held June 5, at Wood Colony Cemetery, Modesto. Burial followed beside her husband. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III Jn. 4).

The Family

OVERHOLTZER — Vertrilla (Tillie) was born August 29, 1922, in the little town of Caviness, which is in north-eastern Texas, near Oklahoma. Her father's name

was Willie Ford and her mother's name was Amos (Wheeler) Ford. Tillie was the second oldest of seven children, of which Mahlon Ford is still living.

Tillie's father Willie and his father-in-law worked together as "sharecroppers," not owning the land, and farmed cotton together. They had a one horse plow, no electric, no running water, and their well was their refrigerator. They did most of the cooking outside. They had no automobile and no buggy, just a wagon. Tillie used to be a little embarrassed to go with her dad to town in a wagon, because everyone else had a buggy.

The Willie Ford family had no help to farm except from the children, who helped with everything from hoeing weeds to picking cotton. Tillie's mother, Amos, would put a younger child on a cotton bag and drag it along as Amos filled the bag with cotton. Tillie was always glad when school started because that was easier than helping around the farm. They grew nearly everything they ate. For Christmas, Tillie would get an orange as a special treat, which she would hide under the bed until she needed to eat it. Life was hard for the Ford family, but Tillie says they were happy and never went hungry.

The great depression started in 1929 and the severe draught in the midwest and southern plains started in 1930. This drought lasted for ten years and is referred to as the dust bowl. Consequently somewhere between 1935 and 1937, the Ford family moved to Lubbock, Texas, where Willie was

employed as a farm laborer. Tillie said a lot of people moved westward during those years. When they moved, Willie had to say goodbye to his mother and the children had to say goodbye to their grandmother. It was hard. The family never saw each other again.

In 1939, Tillie graduated from Lubbock High School with one year of bookkeeping education. By that time, the Ford family was near destitute. After graduation, Willie's brother Marion came and moved the Ford family of nine to Ceres, California. That made ten people in a common sedan of the day towing a trailer with everything the Ford family owned. This was the grapes of wrath personified.

When the Ford family got to Ceres, they rented a little house from the Overholtzers. Soon after, a courtship between Floyd and Tillie developed. Elvan and Gwendolyn soon followed. Floyd and Vertrilla were married on November 6, 1940, and from this union five children were born.

Tillie was baptized into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church on Thanksgiving day, November 22, 1945, by Orlando Blickenstaff. She remained very faithful until her passing on to a rich reward from a very faithful God and Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

Tillie received the "Anointing" according to Gospel order on January 5, 2016, and received several more years of a good life up until the last year or so. The Lord called Tillie home on June 16, 2021, having lived a full life of 98 years, 9 months, and 18 days.

Tillie was preceded in death by

her husband, Floyd (age 92); two sons, Drexal (age 47) and Deryl (age 15); both sons-in-law, Jesse Boone and Kenneth Garber; one grandson-in-law, Craig Prescott; and two great-grandchildren, Jason Boone and Joel Garber.

Tillie is survived by her three children, Marqueta Overholtzer, Marleta Boone, Lyndall Overholtzer and his wife, Cynthia. Also surviving is Drexal's wife, Glenna; seventeen grandchildren; sixty-two great-grandchildren; nineteen great-great-grandchildren, and many relatives and friends whose lives she touched.

Tillie's passion in life was being a stay-at-home mother, keeping books for her husband, and teaching her children the principles of God's Word. Many evenings were spent with mother reading Bible stories and many a home cooked meal was eaten listening to Mother read something spiritual to us. When Tillie's husband or children were chopping hay, she would occasionally bring a home-cooked hamburger sandwich and thermos of iced milk out to the field for lunch. In this way and many others, Tillie's love for her husband and children endured until she was no longer able to demonstrate her love, other than to say, "I love you."

Matthew 24:45-46: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

True to her faith in God, Tillie seldom complained about the challenges of life; from coming out of the Dust Bowl near destitute; raising a family soon after the Great

Depression; losing her husband, two sons, other family members and being helplessly confined to a hospital bed. However, one of her greater challenges was coming to terms with losing their son Deryl at age fifteen in a tragic motorcycle accident. Tillie always wondered where Deryl's guardian Angel was, but took comfort in the divine providence of God toward young and obedient children.

Tillie was truly the best Christian wife, mother and faithful friend a family could ever have.

The Family

LESHER — Evelyn Mae, daughter of Noah and Nora Lydia (Rutrough) Royer, was born June 26, 1922, and departed this life June 29, 2021, making her age 99 years and 3 days. Growing up in Stark County, Ohio, in the Nimishilla District, she was baptized along with her father Noah on August 5, 1939, into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. She was faithful to those vows until the Master called her home.

Evelyn was married to Willis Miller Leshner on February 14, 1945. Making their home in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, they welcomed five children into their family. Their married life was busy and happy as they worked hard to establish the family business of producing and selling eggs and raising crops while demonstrating a strong love for their family and fellow believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Willis and Evelyn enjoyed traveling in this country and a Brethren Historical

Tour to Europe. Above all, Evelyn loved caring for her family by praying, cooking and sewing for them and welcoming new family members. This love was evident even in the last days of her life as she welcomed her family to enjoy her ninety-ninth birthday. Evelyn was also the author of poems, family histories and journals of trips they had taken. She also wrote out many Church services from sermon notes including baptismal and wedding sermons for her family.

After fifty-eight years of marriage, the home was broken by the passing of Willis on June 24, 2003. Evelyn continued to enjoy life and loved her family deeply. As time passed and changes came, she realized her need and was anointed on April 26, 2017, after a hospitalization. She continued to enjoy life even as her health began to fail and her strength to decline, especially in her last months. She left us with the good example of reading God's Word several times a day. She read her Bible for the last time Sunday morning, June 27, before going to the hospital and left it open to Philippians 3: "...I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death..." While cared for tenderly by her family, the sands of time were running out for her and she was admitted to the hospital June 27, 2021. After returning home the next day with all that loving hands could do, she passed peacefully, surrounded by many of her family,

the afternoon of June 29, 2021.

She was preceded in death by her husband Willis; her parents; parents-in-law; two infant brothers; a stillborn twin sister; sister, Velma Slabaugh; brothers and sisters-in-law, Glen Garber, Abram and Elizabeth (Lesh-Garber) Hess and Lester and Eunice (Lesh) Renicker; daughter-in-law, Marilyn Lesh; grandson-in-law, David Lavy; great-grandson, Cephas Bowman; and a nephew, Fred Slabaugh.

She is survived by children, Melvin, Kenneth (wife Beverly), Velma Bowman (husband Ronald); Arlene, who lived with and cared for her devotedly, Duane (wife Brenda); and also twenty-nine grandchildren, fifty-nine great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. Also surviving are a brother-in-law, Clarence Slabaugh of Ohio and his children and their families. On July 4, a short family service was held in the basement of the Browns Mill

meeting house. Hymn 24 was sung and thoughts given on prayer, faith and being ready for the Lord to call. The general service followed on the main floor with thoughts focused on the resurrection. Scriptures used were Psalm 1, Psalm 116, Philippians 3:8-16, Job 14:7, and I Corinthians 15:17. Hymns sung were 494, 358, 393 and 150. Burial was in the old Browns Mill cemetery at Kauffman Station beside the grave of her husband. Hymn 403 was sung and thoughts of Heaven given. Hymns 463 and 219 were sung as the grave was filled. Thus ends a life of many years of walking together. For a little while we walk a separate path hoping to be reunited in Heaven. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1). Yes, Grandma has moved to her new house.

The Family

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Contributors

Authors of essays, devotionals, poems, etc. are asked to review the Statement of Purpose on the back page of this periodical. Articles should

be based on Scripture. References are appreciated. Shorter focused articles are more desirable than articles that move from one topic to another. Selected material will be considered. Original writings are preferred. It is recommended that writers submit themselves to the Spirit, which reveals the will of God to the Church in every age, according to the varied needs and circumstances.

Written articles should be legible. Typed material is preferred and should be double-spaced. Electronic transmission or CD will be accepted. The author's name and address must be included on all material. An attempt will be made to contact the author of articles that are not accepted.

Old German Baptist Brethren
Church—New Conference

THE TESTIMONY

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The Testimony is a Christian publication intended for those who desire nourishment in their spiritual walk, and for writers who wish to express witness to the Truth of the Gospel as experienced in their own lives. It holds the Holy Scriptures to be its only Creed. Its purpose is to bear witness to the Truth of God's Word as it is applied in the daily life of committed Christians. It supports the anabaptist and pietist foundations of the Brethren of Schwarzenau, Germany (1708) including the biblical principle of the community of believers bound by a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus confirmed by adult immersion baptism (Mark 16:16). It strives to promote a life of true living piety among all who confess Jesus as their Lord. It seeks to restore and

maintain a fellowship of true primitive Christianity through the communication of all good things.

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