

“...And he said unto me...worship God: for...

THE TESTIMONY

...of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” John 10:27-28

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FOLLOWING

How shall I follow Him I serve?
How shall I copy Him I love?
Nor from those blessed footsteps swerve,
Which lead me to His seat above.

Lord, should my path through suffering lie
Forbid it I should e'er repine,
Still let me turn to Calvary,
Nor heed my griefs, remembering Thine.

O let me think how thou didst leave
Untasted every pure delight,
To fast, to faint, to watch, to grieve,
The toilsome day, the homeless night.

To faint, to grieve, to die for me!
Thou camest not Thyself to please;
And, dear as earthly comforts be,
Shall I not love Thee more than these?

Yes! I would count them all but loss,
To gain the notice of Thine eye,
Flesh shrinks and trembles at the cross,
But Thou canst give the victory.

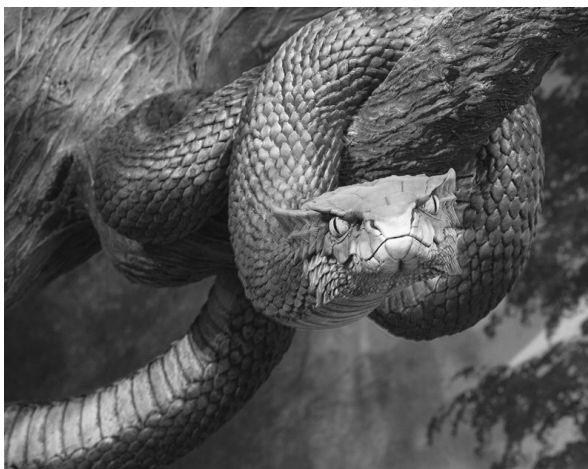
Joseph Condor

THE TESTIMONY

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“...he said unto
the woman, Yea,
hath God said, Ye
shall not eat...?”
Gen. 3:1



EDITORIAL

THE HEART OF MAN IS...

How would you describe the heart of man? The heart is the very core of our being, affections, emotions, feelings, and beliefs. From the heart, we express love, kindness, compassion, and many good traits. But from it also emanates fear, anger, hatred, pride, etc. What James wrote, when speaking of the tongue, can also apply to the heart. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jas. 3:10).

As we anticipate the return of the Lord, we have to notice the first thing He told His disciples when they asked Him about the signs of the end times. "...Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:4). Again, twice in the same discourse, Jesus warns us that many will be deceived. God tells us, in Jeremiah's writings that, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). Is this how you described the heart of man—deceitful above all things? There are three areas of deception that we need to be concerned with—that we are not deceived, that we don't deceive others, and that we don't deceive ourselves.

There are many examples in the Bible of people who were deceived. Satan deceived Eve in the Garden; Jacob deceived Isaac, and later Laban deceived Jacob; David's wife, Michal deceived her father, King Saul, by making an image of David in his bed; and the Gibeonites deceived Joshua by telling him they were from a far country.

People are deceived when they believe a lie or something that is just partial truth, or by what they allow in their lives. We must be careful what we read, or listen to, or who we associate with, to keep us from deception. Beware of false advertising which can easily deceive the buyers, causing them to purchase something unexpected. The sad thing about being deceived is that we don't know it when we are deceived. Let's be like the Berean brethren and compare what we hear or read with God's Word to see if it is true. We are told multiple times in the Bible, "Let no man deceive you..."

Have we been guilty of deceiving others? We may not do it intentionally, but if we're not careful we may do it unconsciously. Our human nature is to build ourselves up or tear others down to show us better than they. Do we say or do things (put on a "front") to impress other people? Some ways we might deceive others are by: **Exaggeration**. Do I exaggerate past accomplishments? **Flattery**. Do I give insincere praise? (Note that slander is saying things about others that you would not say to their face, but flattery is saying things to others that you would not say behind their back.) **Misleading**. Do I leave a false impression, or influence others for my own purpose? **Inaccuracy**. Do I fail to verify the facts before repeating a story? **Guile**. Do I have a hidden agenda or ulterior motive when dealing with other people? Be as Job, who said, "My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit" (Job 27:4).

Before we deceive others, we probably begin by deceiving ourselves. Others may recognize that we deceive ourselves before we realize it. One example of deceiving ourselves is making excuses. Are we late for an appointment, and make excuses about the train or traffic lights detaining us, so that we look good? If we know that we really should have left home earlier, then we're deceiving ourselves and not taking responsibility for our mistakes. Or, if we shift blame to someone else, it may cause us to see ourselves in a more favorable light. Do we try to minimize our bad behaviors and weaknesses? If so, we are only fooling

ourselves. We need to own up to our problems, confess them, and make them right. Do not be a hypocrite because a hypocrite is just deceiving himself. Jesus said, multiple times, "Woe unto you... hypocrites," and Paul writes, "Let no man deceive himself" (I Cor. 3:18a).

God knows, better than we do, what kind of a heart we have. Pray for wisdom to discern the difference between truth and error, and stay immersed in the Truth! This can keep us from deception. "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived" (Deut. 11:16a).

Darryl Filbrun

GENERAL

THE CHALLENGES TO HONOR

On a journey of many miles not long ago, we were passing through an area where several loved ones and Brethren in the faith reside, and as we were thinking of some of them while driving, one in particular came to mind, so I picked up my phone, found the contact, and dialed the number. My interest was just to hear his voice, express our love, and catch up on life. We did that for a few minutes, but soon the conversation changed with a question from this brother, "How do you honor someone you are supposed to honor, but he is not living a life worthy of honor?" I have dwelt on that question, examined my own struggles with it in certain instances, and how others must struggle at times honor-

ing me. In respect to the question asked, we have turned to the Word for our answer. There are four areas that stand out as we consider honor:

#1: The characteristics of honor! **What is it?**

The word translated is "*timao*," which means to revere; fix a value upon; to venerate, to esteem and treat others with respect because of who they are or what they have done. It could also be said it is an estimate of value in which the price is fixed according to the biblical position held, and hence does not fluctuate by what a person does or does not do. This is where the living out of responsibility sometimes gets very difficult, to honor according to biblical instruction when our heart speaks a different feeling. A similar word to

honor would be the word respect. Respect is translated biblically “*entrepo*” or “*phobos*,” which means to fear; to have reverence for; to admire; to look up to; have a high opinion of. It is understood that respect must be earned, but honor must be given freewill.

#2: The command to honor!

We are to honor God! I Timothy 1:17 states, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen!”

We are to honor Jesus! First Timothy 6:15–16 reads, “Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”

We are to honor our parents! Ephesians 6:2 says, “Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise.)” Exodus 20:12 says, “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

The husband is to honor his wife! First Peter 3:7 says, “Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them [wives] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

We are to honor our church leaders! First Timothy 5:17, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

We are to honor one another! Romans 12:10, “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.”

We are to honor our rulers! First Peter 2:17, “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.” Romans 13:7–8, “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”

We are to honor our own bodies! First Thessalonians 4:3–4, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.”

So, we see that biblically, honor enters into all facets of our daily lives, and presents great challenges in certain circumstances, which leads us to our next thought.

#3: Challenges to honor!

There are times our focus gets sidetracked by our own honor or our honoring others, rather than our honoring God! In John 5:41–44 Jesus says, “I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye

have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

Children, having not been taught the biblical responsibility to honor and respect their parents and elders, struggle with selfishness as Jesus stated in Matthew 15:4–7, "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightiest be profited by me, And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

With so many struggles in marriages and family life, we think how different things could be if husbands and wives truly understood the Apostle Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 11:4–5, "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." Paul bears testimony to the meaning of honor in

these verses in Ephesians 5:28–29, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." ... and then shares the responsibility in Ephesians 5:33, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

In our fellowship with believers, our tendency is to give more attention and honor to the gifted, those with charm, personality, responsibility, etc. But we are instructed to honor all men and women! First Corinthians 12:23–25 states, "And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another."

We struggle sometimes in the workplace with authority! First Timothy 6:1 instructs, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." I remember clearly back in the mid-1990s a project we were blessed to be part of—the wiring of a large industri-

al factory which builds blinds. We finished the project over the period of a year or so, and within a year, a tornado struck the facility, destroying the major part of the manufacturing space. Having a very good relationship with the owners and maintenance staff, we started over, and throughout the project the second time, had a certain foreman on site every day. This man became very tight with the maintenance staff and factory employees. Toward the end of the rebuilding project, I began to notice a cool approach and less communication from the people we had been working for throughout the first and rebuilding phases. Upon questioning some, with a concern, I found that this foreman had been sowing discord concerning the integrity of our company, and the seeds grew into losing relationship with the customer, and eventually losing the account.

We are challenged in honoring our own bodies! Second Timothy 2:19–21, “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

#4: Commitment to honor!

As I think back to that phone call and the disconcerting question that followed, the Word does speak on how to honor someone who is not deserving of honor. Three resources come to mind:

Our first resource is prayer! We are not able to stand up against unholy abusive authority by ourselves, but the Lord stands ready to sanctify our responses and responsibility. In Matthew 5:43–48 Jesus instructs, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Our second resource is to pattern our responses after Christ! First Peter 3:1–2, “Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold our chaste conversation coupled

with fear.” Every one of us is given a conscience, and though we may not always follow it in a godly fashion, when as a perpetrator we sin against someone, (even we husbands against our wives) in word and deed, and their response is obviously a response of self-denial to feelings and emotions, and founded in a foundational commitment to Christ, the Word, and to honor, we are smitten by the truth of our sin and repent. Romans 5:6–8 reinforces a response fitting of Christ, “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Our first response when dis-honored and disrespected is to blame and shame the perpetuator, but the Apostle John in John 3:17 instructs, “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

Our third resource is to accept it, and partake in Christ’s sufferings! Hebrews 12:1–15 speaks in part concerning honoring someone that is not deserving. In part, verse 3, “For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” Verse 6–7, “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chas-

tening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” The Apostle concludes at the beginning of verse 11, “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterword it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

It seems the Apostle Paul is saying here, “The buck stops here! Yes, doesn’t seem fair! Yes, as I look around and compare my lot in life with others, why do I deserve to suffer? Is there something wrong with me that my husband treats me this way? Why is it that my wife treats me with disrespect and dishonor? Why are others around me accepted, being promoted, getting married, seem happy, better looking, have secure families, not sick unto death, etc.?” Jesus is saying, “My Child, I’ve been here before you! Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon

you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

In conclusion, let us desire the mind of Christ as we struggle with honor in our daily challenges of living and working with others! Isaiah 11:1–5 prophesied of Jesus and the teaching He would bring, and has brought to those of us on earth today desiring to do His will: “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”

Lord Jesus, grant us a righteous waiting for your soon coming!

In Christ,

Darrell Boyd

HEART MEDICINE

Howard Hess

There is a long-standing and seemingly endless discussion on the role of works versus grace in salvation. It seems to come down to two positions. Either A: Good works are necessary for salvation; or B: Good works are only the result of a redeemed heart. Somehow, *neither* position quite expresses the role of obedience in our salvation/sanctification.

No one that I know denies that the goal of the Gospel is a pure heart. One position seems to say we need a pure heart plus good works while the other response is that we only need a pure heart—good works just natural follow.

Perhaps the question that needs to be addressed is “how do we get a pure heart?” Again, we agree that it must be washed in the precious blood of Christ. Is the only way to change the heart from the inside, or do our deeds affect the heart? Is there any benefit to the believer in obedience or “good works”? Jesus said in John 7:17, “If any man will do his [God’s] will, he shall know of the doctrine...” This indicates a benefit in doing, not only before understanding, but as a path to knowing!

Is it hypocrisy to do that which we do not wholly feel or understand? That depends entirely on the motive. C. S. Lewis used the illustration of trying to go to sleep. The goal is to be truly asleep, but how do we get there? We act as though we already are. We turn

out the lights, lie still, close our eyes and to all appearances—begin sleeping. We know this is not yet “sleep” but is there any other path to the real thing?

No one would call it hypocrisy to act asleep if that really your desire. However, if one feigned sleep to avoid work or so that one could eavesdrop on a conversation, the very same action would not be deemed admirable.

Do not obedience and good works operate the same? In our desire to be like Jesus (though we well know our hearts are not perfect) we begin to act like Him, not just as a result of inner grace, but as a desire to really become like Him.

It is with this understanding that we attempt to train our children. We ultimately want goodness and holiness in their hearts. We know we cannot put it there, but we believe the best path is for them to be encouraged to behave as if it were. We tell them to sit still in church, not because we believe their hearts are perfect, but to help them desire the good. We tell them to be kind, to say, “Please” and “Thank you,” believing if they “do His will,” they eventually will “know of the doctrine.”

The problem has been that if we are in a setting where good works are admired, there is a temptation to do them for public approval and not for inward instruction. While this pitfall is lamentable, surely it is not a reason to cease from obedience.

If one desires to be humble, that is truly a desire of the heart. We could say that outward things have little to do with it, yet we have many daily choices to make. We often know what kind of possessions, activities, clothing, conversations, and even thought patterns tend to lift up ourselves. If one avoids making choices that feed his ego, his works can help his heart in this area.

Giving away goods and money does not merit eternal life. A covetous heart cannot enter the Kingdom. Anonymous intentional choices that either limit one’s income or net worth can, however, discipline the heart. In fact, Jesus clearly taught us, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21).

As another example, we are to love others. Likely, all of us have times when there is someone our heart does not want to love. Without controversy, this is a problem and a condition of the heart. Having admitted this, how do we change our hearts? We could simply fast and pray for a change of heart and perhaps God would grant this. However, the wise man will learn that how we feel about others has little to do with how they treat us, and almost entirely results from how we treat them. I John 3:12 asks about Cain who slew his brother Abel: “and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother’s righteous.” It was Cain’s actions that made him hate his brother. This principle helps explain how

man can perpetrate such cruelty on his fellow man as American slavery or the German holocaust. As we treat people badly, we dislike them more and more. The heart is changed by our actions! Therefore, if we want to love someone that we do not, we will probably begin by acting as though we do. Praying for them, kindness, deeds of love (before the heart is brought into full submission)—this is the path to the end that we desire.

This concept applies to many decisions in the Church. Detractors tell us it is the heart that matters: "Rules and restrictions only create Pharisee-ism; You cannot legislate righteousness," they cry. In one sense they are right. If we believe that following a certain set of standards brings salvation, we have erred. We do however, believe that wise paths laid down by spiritual believers can assist in bringing the heart to where it needs to be.

In working with myself and others in the area of moral purity, I have accumulated a number of books by those who counsel in this area. Many of the writers are of the school of theology that says works are no benefit to salvation. I have been intrigued, however, when they are dealing with moral failure in the lives of believers, they give all sorts of works to arrest the problem: "Change the route you drive to or from work, cancel certain subscriptions, have a friend call at appointed times." One book described an elaborate contraption that would render the television unusable in a motel

room. I think at the end of the day, they realize the heart must be guarded by deeds!

In conclusion, we agree that words are not an end in themselves; neither are they redemptive in the sense that they atone for sins. We believe, however, that they are more than just the result of a beautiful heart. They are the prescription of God, embraced by those who want to be like Him. They are the path by which the heart is changed and brought into the likeness of Him whom we serve.

I think this also gives us hope. If we are told good must spring from perfect hearts, we may despair waiting for that state of goodness. If, however, obedience is an assistance in our heart transformation, we may begin here and now.

I trust this understanding does not diminish the grace of God and His Son. We know salvation is a gift, is undeserved, and is from Him and not from us. Even the desire to have a pure heart comes from Him. We simply believe the Holy Spirit prompts obedience and good works knowing that the Great Physician has prescribed them as the best heart medicine there is.

"Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established" (Prov. 16:3).

Selected from *The Vanguard* by

Weston and Lynae Peters

THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN THE CHURCH AGE

A Study of Romans 12:1–8
Paul Shirk

Spiritual gifts are special abilities given by the Holy Spirit to equip believers to edify the local church body and to minister in the larger kingdom of God. Spiritual gifts are described as “spiritual” because they are bestowed upon those who are spiritually awakened by the Holy Spirit. And they are called “gifts” because they are freely given by God’s grace; they are not earned or merited. The Bible teaches about spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 12 and 14, in Romans 12:1–8, and in Ephesians 4:7–11. This article will focus on the teaching found in Romans 12.

Romans 12 opens with an earnest exhortation to first present ourselves in sanctification to the Lord (verses 1–2). Then, with the aid of God’s grace, we are to honestly evaluate how God has gifted us for His service (verse 3). This gifting equips us to fulfill His will for our lives. Finding God’s will with regards to our gifting involves offering up our lives for service, resisting worldly ambitions, and seeking His grace for discernment.

1. The Role and Development of Spiritual Gifts in the Church

All believers are given gifts whereby they can serve God and the church (I Corinthians 12:7,11). In the New Testament we see the usage of spiritual gifts being a combination of the Lord calling individually as well as the potential calling, confirming, and commissioning

by the church (Acts 13:1–3, 26:16–20; Galatians 2:7–10). When God gifts and calls us, we are to use those gifts as we have opportunity without running ahead of a possible future calling and confirmation from the church body.

Sometimes using our spiritual gifts leads the church to call us to exercise our gifts in a particular way. Nevertheless, we do not need a special call from the church to use our gifts in many areas of service. The work of the kingdom is primarily advanced by brothers and sisters from local church bodies responding to opportunities to serve. God will bring into our lives those opportunities to use our spiritual gifts if we stay focused on living a holy life, rejecting worldly perspectives, and fulfilling God’s will each day.

It is important to recognize that spiritual gifts are not the same as natural talents. Spiritual gifts are what God gives to Spirit-filled believers. God gives spiritual gifts at our New Birth which often complement the talents that He gave us at our natural birth.

Depending on our calling and the opportunities that God gives us, our gifts can be used in the local body only or in the universal kingdom of God. Regardless, the local, visible church body is the home base from which believers go forth to use their gifts to serve the larger kingdom of God (Acts 13:1–3, III John 1:5, 8).

There are many members with many various gifts, but only one kingdom of God. Within that kingdom, God has designed spiritual gifts to be interdependent—meaning they work effectively when

they are working together and when they balance each other (I Corinthians 12:15–31). Spiritual gifts are not as effective when exercised in isolation from the other spiritual gifts in the local, visible body.

As a matter of clarification, we want to note:

2. The Distinction of the Spiritual Gifts from the Sign Gifts

In one sense, all the gifts are spiritual gifts because they are given by the Holy Spirit. And, in another sense, they are all sign gifts because they are signs of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. However, the Apostles performed miraculous signs and wonders which confirmed that their word was authoritative and that their role was distinct in the foundation of the Church and in the defining of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 5:12–13, 19:11–12; Romans 15:18–19; II Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3–4). These miraculous signs were primarily evident in the apostolic age and have diminished after the death of the Apostles. But the spiritual gifts are with the Church throughout the entire Church age.

The intent of this article is to focus on the seven spiritual gifts that are listed in Romans 12, and to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each. These categories are broad, and we believe they encompass most of the spiritual gifts identified in the New Testament.

3. The Identification of the Spiritual Gifts

a. Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is primarily the ability to see a current event

and give direction from God's Word.

In the Old Testament the "Word of the Lord" came to the prophets, and they would give direction as the mouthpiece of God. The words which they spoke often became Scripture and gave direction for present and future events. For example, in Isaiah chapters 7 and 8, King Ahaz was given a sign that a child named Maher-shalal-hash-baz would be born to Isaiah; and, before the child could cry out his parents' names, Assyria would spoil Samaria. Within this prophecy was a greater future prophecy of the coming Emmanuel. Israel's current situation prompted a prophetic word from the Lord which in turn typified a greater future fulfillment. Yet the primary exercise of the prophetic gift was precipitated by a current situation in which the Lord gave direction.

The spirit of prophecy was the means by which we received the Old Testament Scriptures (Luke 1:70, 24:27; Romans 16:26; Hebrews 1:1). In the New Testament era the Apostles authored and gave oversight to the development of the New Testament Scriptures (John 14:26, 16:12–15). Today, with the Canon of the Scriptures now being complete, the primary role of the New Testament prophet is to bring forth the Word of the Lord from the Scriptures to address a particular event or situation.

Jesus said that there was no greater prophet than John the Baptist, and yet John performed no miracles and made no predictions (other than to proclaim that the Messiah had come). This illus-

trates that it is not necessary to make future predictions or to perform miracles to be a prophet.

Prophets often see more clearly what others struggle to understand. They are often discerning. And they are a voice of conscience against sin in the church. As a result, in a lax or apostate church, they will typically be unappreciated. For example, Stephen said to the Jews, “Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?” (Acts 7:52).

Prophets tend to bring issues sharply into focus in order to bring people to a firm decision point, like when Elijah asked, “How long halt ye between two opinions?” or when John the Baptist proclaimed, “Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees.” One measure of the spiritual life of a church is how it interacts with the gift of prophecy.

But prophets can become critical and impatient with lethargy or opposition. Elijah called fire down from Heaven to destroy his adversaries (II Kings 1:10). He saw himself as the only faithful person left in Israel and did not recognize that there might be others who had not bowed to Baal (there were 7,000 faithful: I Kings 19:14,18). Moses reacted in anger at the people when he struck the rock (Numbers 20:10).

Prophets can become discouraged by how long it takes people to move forward with direction and purpose (Moses in Numbers 11:10–15; Elijah in I Kings 18:21), by the lack of results for their labors (Elijah in I Kings 19:14; Jeremiah in Jeremiah 20:7–18; Ezekiel in Ezekiel 3:7), by doubting the valid-

ity of their ministry at times (Elijah in I Kings 19:4; John the Baptist in Matthew 11:2–3), or by being frustrated because of the mercy and patience which God extends to undeserving sinners (Jonah in Jonah 4:1–3).

Present-day prophets should be cautious of speculations which go beyond the Scriptures—they are to prophesy according to the proportion of their faith. And they should not give in to doubts and discouragement because of a lack of response. Their faith must be solidly anchored to the Word. By the power of the Holy Spirit the strong prophetic spirit can be tempered to speak the truth to the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Body (I Corinthians 14:3).

The prophetic gift, when rightly used, helps to provide guidance in the present and vision for the future. We have given more space to this gift than the others because it is often misunderstood.

b. Ministry

The primary and overarching definition of ministry is “service that is commissioned to meet needs.” The minister may or may not be a speaker. Preaching, teaching, humanitarian aid, healthcare, counseling, and responding to a need can all be forms of ministry. Ministers see needs and respond to them because they believe that is their responsibility. Whether they perform their service willingly or somewhat reluctantly, they typically recognize needs and feel compelled to respond.

Those with the gift of ministry are often focused on their work and they desire to see action and progress.

They will often sense, or notice needs before others notice them.

But those who are gifted to minister can become frustrated with prolonged discussion of ideas about what could be done. They prefer to act on what is already known rather than try to determine what plans should be in place in case something goes awry. They may not be inclined toward study or meditation as much as being doers of good deeds. Sometimes they need to exercise patience while more in-depth details are being considered. The gift of ministry helps to move plans into action so that people's needs are served.

c. Teaching

The Greek word for teaching means "to provide instruction with a moral or spiritual purpose." There are examples in Scripture of teaching occurring in a personal conversation, an interactive group discussion, or a presentation. Jesus used all these methods in His teaching ministry.

Good teachers have the ability to explain and illustrate difficult concepts in ways that are easier to understand. They can give practical applications to theoretical concepts. Teachers promote sound doctrine and guard against false doctrine. They tend to be careful and analytical.

A prophet senses and foresees things; a minister performs things; and a teacher analyzes, understands, and explains things. These three gifts, when working together, are very complimentary and beneficial to one another. For example, if the prophet conceives an acceptable plan, the minister will implement the plan, while the

teacher will ask for time to first refine and detail the plan.

But sometimes a teacher can deliberate too long trying to determine all aspects, risks, and plans that should be in place to safeguard against surprises, and he can struggle to move ahead before everything is figured out. A teacher may tend to place a high value on education, presentation, and reasoning—sometimes to the neglect of seeking divine guidance and then proceeding in faith.

Teachers play an important role in providing careful evaluations of doctrinal understandings and practices, and they give important structure to project planning.

d. Exhortation

Exhorters are people who inspire, encourage, and motivate others. They stir up people to action. Prophets are sometimes negative in their approach (warning against sinful behavior), whereas exhorters tend to be positive in their approach (encouraging right behavior). Exhorters are generally optimistic and, seeing the good in others, try to encourage them to develop their spiritual gifts. They want to see people's gifts recognized, appreciated, and used. They are often good counselors because they see the strengths that others can build up to help them overcome their weaknesses.

But sometimes exhorters are perceived as pushy or intrusive when they seek to motivate people to action. Exhorters should be sensitive to the danger of their actions being perceived that way. But neither should they avoid exhorting simply because they might be perceived negatively.

First Corinthians 14:3 indicates that prophets are to exhort—in other words “to learn to speak in a way that encourages others to the right course of action.” This illustrates how the spiritual gifts are interwoven and blended together because they were designed to work together. The exhorter is an example to the prophet of how to use the gift of prophecy to motivate right behavior. Conversely, since the exhorter is usually optimistic, the prophet can be a good example to the exhorter of how a message of warning against sin can also be an exhortation to right behavior.

Whether in the form of positive encouragement or of negative warning, God’s truth spoken in love edifies the Body.

e. Giving

There are some people that are gifted with finances. God blesses them, and they in turn bless others. These people are examples of Luke 6:38. Their giving keeps coming back abundantly to them so that they can give more.

All of us are called to labor to have in order to be able to give to others in need (Eph. 4:28). Some are blessed with greater financial resources than others. However, those who have the gift of giving may not always be wealthy. Paul commends the churches of Macedonia because they gave out of their deep poverty (II Cor. 8:1–7), and he holds them up to the Corinthian congregation as an example of giving. Jesus commends the widow who gave her last two mites because she gave all she had.

Sometimes God uses the significant finances of wealthy givers to underwrite work which otherwise might not happen. Other times God takes a small gift of five loaves and two fish from an insignificant giver and multiplies it to meet a much greater need.

The spirit and gift of giving is choosing to live with less in order to give more. The Bible has instructions for givers: give cheerfully as God directs, give anonymously when it is possible, and give with simplicity (without ulterior motives). There are many temptations for givers to ignore these guidelines and get recognition for their giving.

f. Ruling

Ruling in Romans 12:8 means “to exercise oversight and protection.” It also involves the ability to organize and delegate responsibilities. This gift is also referred to in Scripture as the gift of “governments” (I Cor. 12:28). The phrase “rule over” used in Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24 also includes the idea of going before as a leader.” The idea of going before” illustrates the concept of “leading by example.”

It is interesting to note that in I Corinthians 2:2 the gifts of apostle, prophet, and teacher are listed ahead of governments in the importance of the spiritual gifts. In a carnal view of an organizational structure, the office of ruling comes first and has the power to dominate everything else. In the ranking of gifts in the church, the nurture of the church (through the roles of the apostle, prophet, and teacher) is held in higher regard than the rule of the church.

In Romans 12:8 the gift of ruling is to be exercised with diligence (attention and vigilance). And in I Peter 5:1–4 we are warned that it is not to be exercised with lordship or dominance. The first responsibility is to feed the flock. Sheep will typically want to gather where there is food and safety. God calls leaders to primarily feed and nurture. The gift of ruling provides the example, protection, and oversight that is essential to the beneficial exercise of the roles of the apostle, prophet, teacher, and all the other spiritual gifts. Ruling is never an end in itself, but rather it serves to bring opportunity and efficiency to the exercise of all the spiritual gifts in the Body.

g. Mercy

Mercy is often thought of within the context of God showing us compassion and withholding from us a just punishment. In the context of the church, the application is a little different since we are not exercising God's role of justice and punishment. The gift of mercy is the ability to demonstrate genuine compassion and relieve a hurt or a need, even when it might seem that the recipient is not worthy of such mercy.

Mercy often works in conjunction with the gift of ministry. The marked distinction between the two gifts is that the gift of mercy is exercised with more empathy and compassion. Those who have this gift can feel what others feel. They can more accurately imagine what it is like to walk in another's shoes. They have a keen awareness of the Golden Rule.

The gift of prophecy is listed first and the gift of mercy is listed last. There is typology in that order. They represent the outer boundaries of the gifts at opposite ends of the spectrum, and, as such, they can tend to clash with one another. Prophets can view those with the gift of mercy as too emotional, and the merciful can view the prophets as too uncaring. God designed these gifts, not that they clash, but that they temper and balance each other. God uses prophets to forge ahead in faith navigating uncharted seas, and He uses the gift of mercy to follow behind and calm the rough waters.

The admonition in this passage is to show mercy with cheerfulness. Mercy should not be overshadowed by resentment or anger over a hardship. Empathizing with those who are suffering can sometimes make us downcast and discouraged, but our acts of mercy are to be marked by cheerfulness. Cheerfulness joining with mercy not only alleviates a need, but it restores hope and revives a fallen spirit.

Putting the spiritual gifts together, we note that a prophet will conceive a plan, the minister will want to implement it, the teacher will want to carefully refine it, the exhorter will want to generate support and enthusiasm for it, the giver will want to finance it, the ruler will oversee it, and the mercy will care about the people involved with the plan.

In order for spiritual gifts to work for good they need to work for good together!

From Bible Helps #462

Selected by the Editor

“FAITH”

When we consider the Jews reluctance to accept Jesus in His day as the Son of God, remember that what little faith they did have grew out of the failure of all their expectations. To find in a triumphant messiah and king some special revelation of God might have been reasonable, even for Jews who were trained in a severely monotheistic belief; but to find such a revelation in one who failed to win the nation, who antagonized its leaders, who discouraged their national ambitions, turned

away from those that asked of him political leadership, and in the end aroused such bitter enmity that he was executed as a criminal—that is faith which proves the worth of the man who declared it; faith which is so strong that we are not surprised to learn that it swept thousands into the church as they went out winning souls for Christ.

Author Unknown

Selected by

Kenneth Hopkins

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.

More than one time in the Scripture, a strong impression is left that men can hinder the work of God in the earth. This may be difficult for us to believe, or to accept. Is God not sovereign? How can men affect, destroy, or diminish the work He wants to do?

Notice this Scripture:

*Psalm 78:40–41, “How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and **limited** the Holy One of Israel.*

(emphasis added)

Notice also this statement when Jesus was here among men:

Matthew 13:58, “And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

And also this:

James 4:2, “...ye have not, because ye ask not.”

Questions:

1. The apostle said we are **laborers together with God**. (I Cor. 3:9). Is He waiting on me to labor in some area?
2. What strength, or unity, or joy is missing in my life, or in my congregation because of **my lack of prayer?**
3. **What could God do** among us if He was not **limited** by us?
4. What would God do in **my life** if He was not limited by **me?**

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The Testimony Committee

MEDITATIONS

Jesus is preparing a place for you—and preparing you for that place.
 How do you respond when God responds slowly to your prayer?
 Letting the cat out of the bag is easy. Putting it back is not.
 Do you want God to treat you as you treat your children?
 Submission is one way to understand God's will.
 The sweetest words are often whispered.
 Lord, I am sorry.

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Nov. 6, 2022; West Manchester, IN
 Joni Cripe
 Nov. 27, 2022; Dallas, OR
 Oliver Wright
 Dec. 27, 2022; Living Epistle, NM
 Mathias Flory
 Jan. 1, 2023; Dallas, OR
 Zechariah English
 Corban King
 Jan. 8, 2023; Dallas, OR
 Ian Wright

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

Dec. 17, 2022; Cascade Valley, WA
 Fuller Gordon
 Dec. 18, 2022; Modesto, CA
 Amber Oberholtzer

COMMUNION NOTICES

Feb. 4, 2023 Living Epistle, NM
 Feb. 4, 2023 Pine Grove, FL
 Feb. 25, 2023 West Modesto, CA
 Mar. 4, 2023 West Manchester, IN
 Mar. 4, 2023 Morning Star, OH
 Mar. 18, 2023 Dallas, OR
 Apr. 1, 2023 Fair Haven, KS
 Apr. 1, 2023 Mt. Zion, PA
 Apr. 1, 2023 Salem, OH
 Apr. 8, 2023 Modesto, CA
 Apr. 8, 2023 Shiloh, OH
 Apr. 15, 2023 Cascade Valley, WA
 Apr. 15, 2023 Fall Creek, IN
 Apr. 22, 2023 Caldwell, ID

Apr. 22, 2023 Cutler Ridge, IN
 Apr. 22, 2023 Sugar Grove, OH
 Apr. 29, 2023 Bear Creek, OH
 Jun. 24, 2023 Mountain View, ID
 Sept. 23, 2023 Pleasant View, OH
 Oct. 21, 2023 Stillwater, OH

HARVEST MEETINGS

Aug. 6, 2023 Maple Grove, OH
 Aug. 13, 2023 Covington/Sugar Grove, OH
 Aug. 20, 2023 Salem, OH
 Nov. 23, 2023 Pleasant View, OH

CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

Please consider all the readers
 Who are struggling through the day,
 But rejoice to find an offering
 That inspires them on their way.

Just the smallest observation
 Shared for others to enjoy
 Can lift up the hands of others
 Or delight a girl or boy.

You don't have to be a writer,
 Just be conscious of the gift
 That God gave you—He will help you
 Give discouraged ones a lift!

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

Heb. 12:12-13

POEMS

FOCUS ON GOD

The moments of last year are past,
Each written down on God's eternal scroll,
We wonder if as we contemplate,
Were we ever on God's honor roll?

We remember waking up some mornings
So busy and with so much to do,
How could we ever get it all done
And keep God's purpose in our view?

The days and hours went fleeting by,
We hardly could keep up, it seems,
And yet each day we would look above
To keep God's view in our dreams.

Do you suppose as time went past,
The Lord would ever question why
We seemed so busy with this life's toils
We could hardly enjoy God's heavenly sky?

Now this New Year as seasons change
Let us remember to give Him our time.
Ah—Let us praise His holy name
So, on that resurrection morn,
He'll remember mine.

Written by Melvin L. Fisher
(Found and submitted by his family)

WILL YOU ANSWER?

Mercy unending,
Love beyond me,
Jesus is coming,
He set me free.

Life everlasting
Promises He,
Joy in my Savior,
Hope beyond degree.

Jesus the Lord
Your hope will be,
If you surrender
To His love for thee.

Now in His footsteps
Follow closely,
He'll never forsake you
Pray always, said He.

His psalm and song
Float gently to open ears,
The music of heaven
Sounding soft yet strong.

There's a beacon of love
Shining yonder for me,
The babe in the manger
Lights our way from above.

The waves as they crash
Shape a vessel with care,
A soft yet solid
Wall of refreshing air.

With open arms He waits
With a welcome smile,
As my heart aches
Will I go the extra mile?

E. Austin

FOR ME

Under an Eastern sky
 A trumpet note!
 A Glorious Presence in the azure sky!
 A gasp,
 A thrill of joy!
 And we are with Him in the
 twinkling of an eye!
 A glance,
 An upward look,
 Caught up to be with Christ forevermore!
 The dead alive!
 The living glorified!
 Fulfilled are all His promises that
 came before!
 His face!
 His joy supreme!
 Our souls find rapture only at His feet!
 Blameless!
 Without a spot!
 We enter into heaven's joy complete!
 Strike harps,
 Oh, sound His praise...
 We know Him as we never knew
 before!
 God's love!
 God's matchless grace!
 'Twill take eternity to tell while
 we adore!

Anne Catherine White.

Selected by

Louise Garber

THE WRATH OF GOD

Seek ye the Lord while He is found,
 Or feel the wrath of God abound,
 There'll be a great tribulation,
 Such as was not since the world began.

 The rocks and hills and mountains fall,
 The islands found no more at all,
 What perilous times when the
 heavens shall roll,
 When they roll together like a scroll.

 An angel will leave the heavenly band,
 And plant one foot upon the sand,
 The other foot upon the sea,
 Declare that time no more shall be.

 So come today while He is found,
 Oh, come and hear that welcome sound,
 There'll be no place left for retreat,
 When the earth shall melt with
 fervent heat.

Sam Boone

ABOVE MYSELF

Lift me above myself, I pray,
 That I may walk with Thee today;
 Out of my smallness into Thy great,
 Away from jealousy, greed, and hate,
 Above the fog and din of things,
 Up where the song of victory sings.
 And not alone would I walk there,
 For others I would lift in prayer;
 That through the day the selfish masks
 May all be stripped from daily tasks,
 That fellow-workers too, may see

And want to walk this day with Thee.

Carlton Buck

OBITUARIES

ELLER — Anna Belle, 96, of Rossville, Indiana, passed away peacefully on November 17, 2022, at Milner Community Health Care.

Anna Belle was born August 7, 1926, in Flora, Indiana, the daughter of Eldo J. and Leta M. (Royer) Shively. On May 5, 1956, she married Clarence Eller, who passed away January 27, 1996.

Attending Pymont Grade School and Rossville High School, Anna Belle lived most of her life in the Pymont and Flora communities. She moved to Milner Community Health Care in 2013 where she took up the role of neighborhood watch and valued the people who cared for her. She had worked in Flora in the office of the Flora Furniture Factory, Capehart Radio, and Wayne Loan. She enjoyed doing house cleaning for others. Making quilts at the Brethren Home in Flora, cooking, sewing, and walking around the Flora Park brought her joy, but her most loved career was being a homemaker and serving her family. The beautiful things she created on her sewing machine, China dishes she painted, as well as memories of her hospitality and delicious meals will be treasured.

She was baptized at North Fork in June of 1945, and she was a member of the Bachelor Run Old German Baptist Brethren Church at the time of her passing. She

was comforted by being anointed twice.

Surviving Anna Belle are her daughter, Rebecca (Van) Taylor; stepchildren, Janette (Gene) Yost and Dr. Alvan (Arlene) Eller; grandchildren, Susanna Taylor and Will Taylor; step-grandchildren, Jim (Bonnie) Yost, Jerald (Margaret) Yost, Greg (friend, Leslie Ainley) Yost, Debbie Smith, and Cathy Eller; 13 step-great-grandchildren; 20 step-great-great-grandchildren; nephews, Joel (Sandi) Ivie and Michael (LaDonna) Ivie; nieces, Linda (Leon) Welk and Joyce Shively. Several special first cousins and friends will also miss her.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; step-grandson, Dr. Doug Eller; a sister and brother-in-law, Mary Catherine and Joe Ivie; a brother and sister-in-law Bob and Helen Shively; and a nephew, Larry Shively.

Visitation was at Genda Funeral Home, Rossville, Indiana, on Monday, November 21, 2022, from 4–7 P.M. Additional visitation at the Bachelor Run Old German Baptist Brethren Church on SR 18 in Flora from 9–10 A.M. followed by the service at 10 A.M. on Tuesday, November 22, 2022. Richard Skiles and Paul Blocher shared thoughts from John 5:28–47 and I Corinthians 15:15–19 and 51–58. Hymns 84, 509, 455, and 463 were

used. John Hess shared thoughts from Psalm 8 at the burial and hymn 494 was used. Burial was at Maple Lawn Cemetery. Memorial should be directed to the Bachelor Run Old German Baptist Brethren Church.

The family would like to express their gratitude for all the kindness that was shown to Anna Belle. She treasured your prayers, visits, and cards. We especially want to thank the kind sister that has written her a letter every week for a few years sharing notes from a sermon each week and updates on what was happening in her community. As I Corinthians 15:58 says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

The Family

FLORY — Elsie Mae (Peters), daughter of Charles W. and Mary Blanche (Montgomery) Peters, was born December 19, 1923, at their home in Covington, Miami County, Ohio. Mother went home to be with Jesus on Thanksgiving morning, Thursday, November 24, 2022, at the age of 98.

She, along with five of her friends, was baptized at 16 years old and committed her life to Christ. She was a faithful member in the Covington district of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference.

On January 1, 1944, Mother was united in marriage with John Elmer Flory of Cerro Gordo, Illinois. Dad and Mother spent most of their married life in the Troy and Covington area except for two years she spent with Dad in CPS in Pennsylvania.

Mother had a servant heart and was always concerned and cared for the welfare of the family and others. She was a wonderful homemaker and thoroughly enjoyed sewing and served many meals to their family and friends. Mom and Dad were blessed with over 71 years together until his passing on May 13, 2015.

Dad and Mother were called to the office of Deacon in July 1957, where she served faithfully. On August 5, 2012, Dad and Mother called for the anointing service which brought much comfort.

Mother spent her last years at Randall Residence in Troy, Ohio, where she was lovingly assisted and cared for. She made many friends with the residents and staff there, which she so much enjoyed.

Dad and Mother were blessed with and survived by four children, Harold and Nancy (Boyd), Nancy and Galen Miller, Carolyn and Wayne Landes, and Mark and Janet (Blocher); 14 grandchildren, 53 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-granddaughter; a brother, Donald Peters (wife Beverly); brother-in-law Carl Wagoner; sister-in-law and brother-in-

law Virginia and Allan Miller; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

She is preceded in death by her husband, John Elmer; her parents; sisters, Hazel Wagoner, Lucille and husband Charles Miller, Mary Jane and husband Howard Flory; and brothers, Raymond Peters and wives Evelyn and Pearl, and David Peters.

Funeral services were held Thursday, November 29 at the Covington meetinghouse. Burial followed at Highland cemetery, Covington, Ohio.

We look forward with great hope of the Resurrection and meeting again, where we shall part no more.

The Family

MILLER — Harley Gene Miller, son of Howard and Mirtel (Wessel) Miller was born February 6, 1934 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He peacefully departed this life December 2, 2022 at the age of 88 years, 9 months, 26 days.

In June of 1947, Harley and his parents moved from Wisconsin, pulling a four-wheel cart with a clamp-on bumper hitch, to Lapel, Indiana. Harley watched his parents' baptism there, by Solomon Stoner. In December 1949, the family moved to the Mulberry, Indiana area, and the Middle Fork district. Harley graduated from Rossville High School in 1952. He

was baptized by Jakie Skiles in May 1952 into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, half mile East of the Middle Fork meeting house, along with five others, one of whom would become his wife. He faithfully served the Lord till his death.

January 24, 1953, Harley and four other young men made their way to Ypsilanti State Hospital in Michigan where they had been asked to serve as Conscientious Objectors. He formed special ties with the other CO boys, during the two years he spent there.

He returned home, and on April 17, 1955, he married Gladys Yoder at her parents' home near Rossville, Indiana, with Jakie Skiles officiating. They enjoyed 63 years together. To this union were born three sons, and one daughter; Dennis and wife Bonnie, Bruce and wife Debbra, Roger and wife Renita, and Sandra and husband Mark Long.

Harley maintained a dairy farm for 25 years to support his family. His children were blessed by his example of diligence and to work along side him and Mother on the farm. Daddy wanted to help others and served his community in various ways. He was a charter member of the Rossville Volunteer Ambulance Service. He drove a school bus for 29 years, and influenced the lives of many school children. Harley showed compassion and respect to all, and had a soft heart, particularly for the disadvantaged. He would often seek out ways to befriend them.

In May 1987 he and Mother moved to a new home, built on the back 40 of their farm, by the Ag Construction class. He continued to help on the farm, especially with the sod business. He enjoyed his woodshop and could repair just about anything brought for repair. Sometimes, even a hurting heart. This season ended when Mother passed away from cancer on December 11, 2018. Daddy courageously carried on until he received his cancer diagnosis in Spring 2022. He was blessed to receive the anointing service at various times in his life, most recently in the hospital on November 23, 2022.

In addition to his children, Harley is survived by 14 grandchildren, 50 great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandson; and two brothers-in-law, Charles (Faye) Yoder of Casey, Illinois, and Keith (Linda) Yoder of Rossville, Indiana. Daddy was preceded in death by his parents; granddaughter, Stephanie Miller; a great-grandson, Ted Brubaker; and his brother, Gene Miller.

Several years ago, Daddy made a sign and hung it above the door in his wood shop. It says "Perhaps Today," a reminder for him, and for all of us, that any day could be the day Jesus comes. For our Daddy, that day has come.

Long ago, a rich young man asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Their dialogue

that day was also recorded on another sign hanging in Daddy's wood shop. That message and the parable of the Good Samaritan provided an encouraging outline for the funeral service, on December 6 at the North Fork meeting house. We also sang #455 "Jerusalem My Happy Home," and thoughts were shared from Revelation 21, a chapter that was read at Daddy's bedside just before he went Home. Some of the other hymns chosen were #219, 428, 482, 506, 139, 451. Burial was in the North Fork cemetery, awaiting the resurrection call.

The Family

FILBRUN — Dennis A., 88, of West Alexandria, Ohio, was born January 18, 1934, in Dayton, Ohio to H. Raymond and Mary (Aukerman) Filbrun. He peacefully passed away in the presence of his family on Friday, December 9, 2022, at the Kettering Medical Center.

Realizing the need of a Savior, he was baptized on July 8, 1956, into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. He married Doris Jean Fisher on September 9, 1956, at the home of her parents. After completing his CO work in Findlay, Ohio, they moved to Preble County. They were blessed with 66 years together.

Daddy was called to the office of deacon in 1973, and with his com-

panion, he faithfully served, with a great love for his church family.

As a lifelong farmer, Daddy enjoyed working with his hands. He was a dairy farmer for many years and was good with the livestock. The last few years he appreciated being able to help grade eggs on his son's egg farm. He always stayed busy.

Daddy was an avid gardener and in his later years he enjoyed putting up the fruits of his labors and also cooking. He was a faithful and dedicated caregiver to his companion. He had a deep love for his companion, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

He is survived by his loving wife Doris (Fisher) Filbrun; his children, Deanne and Thomas Hollinger, Dale and Evelyn Filbrun, Doug and Pamela Filbrun, and Doreen and Larry Landes; grandchildren, Tyler Hollinger, Mandi Hollinger, Lindsey and Trevyn Wolf, Daren and Holly Filbrun, Debra and Wesley Sprenkel, Kari Filbrun, Kenton and Michelle Filbrun, Stacy and Nathan Bauman, Seth and Alex Filbrun, Kendra and Jason Stamy, Kyle and Julianne Filbrun, Kip and Xara Filbrun, Kelli and Jeremy Cable, Kraig Filbrun, Kaid Filbrun, Jeremy and Susan Landes, Jena and Matt Miller, Benjamin Landes, Brant and Annetta Landes, Laban Landes, Leanna Landes, Malena Landes, Melany Landes, Alisha Landes; and 32 great-grandchildren.

He is also survived by his broth-

ers, Marvin, Melvin, Glen and wife Karen; Doris' sisters, Elaine and Larry Hufford, Linda and Dale Bowman.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife's parents, James and Helen (Rapp) Fisher; step-mother, Violet (Woodbridge, Angle) Fisher; his sisters, Berniece Yost and husband Lowell, Vanice Flora and husband Ron; sisters-in-law, Mary Filbrun and Jeanette Filbrun.

We will miss him and commend him into the care of our heavenly Father.

The Family

DUTTER — Gordon C., 89, of Rossville, Indiana, passed away Thursday, December 29, 2022, at home, surrounded by his family. He was born in Carroll County, Indiana, on May 6, 1933, to George and Edna (Blocher) Dutter.

On December 17, 1955, Gordon married Norma Yoder, daughter of Ralph and Mary Yoder of Rossville, Indiana. They enjoyed many years of married life together, and this union was blessed with 7 daughters.

Gordon was a 1951 graduate of Modesto High School in Modesto, California. He then worked as a farmer, working the land, and raising some poultry and livestock. He also worked in carpentry.

Feeling the call of the Spirit, Gordon was baptized on January

14, 1951. He was a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church (Middle Fork district) in Indiana, in which he remained faithful. He was very active as a helper and Trustee for many years and could always be counted on wherever he assisted his family and his brethren.

He enjoyed fishing, traveling, and spending time with his family.

Along with his wife of 67 years, Gordon is survived by his children, Rochelle (Lowell) Miller, Gail (Maurice) Miller, Brenda (Martin) Boyd, Janet (Edward) Sink, Marlene (Duane) Long, Marleta (Aaron) Brubaker, Renita (David) Hess; siblings, Ivan (Bonnie), Charlotte (Hollis) Flora, Doris (Atlee) Oyler, Marshall (Rosalene), Martha (Mike) Meador; 21 grandchildren; and 91 great-grandchildren.

Terms

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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

He was preceded in death by his parents; his oldest brother and wife, David and Jane Dutter; a sister-in-law, Myrna Dutter; a sister, Georgia Wade; brothers-in-law, Leon Shaeffer and Stanley Cook; a grandson, Lane Hess; and 2 great-grandchildren, Grace Kuntz and Kaitlyn Miller.

Visitation was held on Monday, January 2, at the Middle Fork meeting house, and the funeral at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, January 3, also at the Middle Fork meeting house.

He was strong in spirit, and as his body became weak, he still showed forth faith, patience, and much appreciation to all his family and care givers.

We lay his body to rest, rejoicing in the promises of God, and awaiting the glorious resurrection morning.

The Family

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

353 Billman Rd.
New Paris, OH 45347-9102

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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