

# Memories (Part 2)

As I continue to recall memories, I should point out that these are selective and representative. There are many more, but these stand out to illustrate the faithfulness of God in both good and bad times. (Read Part One [here](#).)

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## The Sweet Fellowship of College

“Yesterday, Today, Forever” was a medley of songs popular during my college years at the Free Will Baptist Bible College, [1. Welch College now.] that we dorm students would sing during informal gatherings. One evening, around 1970 or 1971, as the students frequently did, we’d gathered in front of the sliding curtain opening into the dining hall (where the student lounge and later “Common Grounds” were) about five minutes to six, and as was often the case, we started to sing:

*Yesterday, Today, Forever Jesus is the same.*

*All may change, but Jesus never, glory to His name!*

*Glory to His name, glory to His name.*

*All may change but Jesus never, glory to His name!*

*Precious name, oh how sweet, hope of earth and joy of Heaven.*

*Precious name, oh how sweet, hope of earth and joy of Heaven.*

*Heaven is better than this, praise God what joy and bliss*

*Walking down streets of purest gold, living in a land where  
we’ll never grow old.*

*Heaven is better than this, praise God what joy and bliss*

*I like Bible College down here, but Heaven is better than,  
Heaven is better than*

*Heaven is better than this.*

*This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through*

*My treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the blue.*

*The angels beckon me to Heaven's golden shore,*

*And I can't feel at home in this world any more.*

*More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus*

*More of His saving fullness see, more of His love who died for  
me.*

*It's me, it's me, oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer*

*It's me, it's me oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer.*

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, that calls me from  
a world of care*

*And bids me at my Father's throne make all my wants and wishes  
known.*

*In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found  
relief*

*And oft escaped the tempter's snare, by thy return, sweet hour  
of prayer.*

With a key word, one song would flow into the next:  
name...name, Heaven...Heaven,

This...this, more...more, and prayer...prayer. That particular  
night, though, as we approached the final song, there seemed  
to be a holy hush, a sense of God's Spirit. The curtain came

open well before the end. The dining hall hostess stood there smiling. She didn't hush our singing and call for someone to ask the blessing right away. Instead, she joined us as we finished out the medley with the the beautiful and poignant "Sweet Hour of Prayer," and then we prayed and went into the dining hall to eat. A beautiful moment, a precious memory, which to me highlights the camaraderie, the sweet fellowship, the closeness of our student body during our unforgettable college years.

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### **First Visit to Cuba**

It was the summer of 1986. We had just come home from our second term in Panama to begin stateside assignment. Brother Eugene Waddell, who had recently been named as General Director of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, called me, and asked me if I would go with him to Cuba to be his interpreter/translator. I felt greatly honored to be asked to go. Over the years, we had met a number of our FWB people from Cuba who migrated to Panama en route to the United States. I'd heard so much about the country and the church there. In addition, visits from the US to Cuba were very infrequent, and no one from the Mission office had gone in nearly thirty years.

It was one of the most unforgettable weeks of my life. We were in Pinar del Río, at the site where the seminary had operated for almost 20 years up until the time of the Cuban revolution. Since that time it had been closed, and the government would not allow the seminary to reopen. Eugene Waddell spoke several times during the youth camp we were attending; the FWB Church in Cuba was still permitted to use the facility for camps and conventions. Never have I seen such anointing or heard such pertinent messages as those he brought that week. His messages from the book of Daniel, and how God used this young man and his three friends as witnesses in a

foreign, hostile culture, tremendously blessed and encouraged our Cuban brothers and sisters, especially the youth.

We laughed, we cried, we worshipped, and we forged friendships that would last for a lifetime and into eternity. There were also strategic discussions and the working out of a viable strategy for the Mission to again become involved in the life of the Cuban church, but in a healthy way that would honor our brothers and not create unhealthy dependency. What has resulted in Cuba these past 30 years owes much to the wisdom God gave to Bro. Waddell and Bro. Gilberto Díaz, who was president of the Cuban Association.

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### **The 1989 US Invasion of Panama**

Things had been hot and chaotic in Panama since 1987, when frequent demonstrations started taking place against the dictatorship that had ruled the country since October 1968. Then, in early 1988, the U.S. froze Panamanian assets in an effort to force dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega to step down, and charged him with drug trafficking and other illegal activities. Banks closed, and we had difficulty getting money to even buy groceries. Things calmed down a bit, but then in May, 1989, after Noriega had the presidential election annulled when it was evident that the opposing candidate had one, violence erupted, and images of Guillermo Endara and Guillermo "Billy" Ford beaten and bloodied by Noriega's thugs flashed across the television screen. The tension grew almost daily.

Judy shares the following memory:

*Since public transportation was so difficult during this time, one afternoon, I decided to take our friend Lola to a bus stop closer to her house so she wouldn't have to wait for hours. We were chatting in the car as we arrived to the area called San*

*Miguelito. Suddenly, we were in the middle of a political demonstration. The traffic was totally stopped. I looked around. There was a river of cars in front of us, behind us and on both sides. The angry mob was shouting, "Kill the Gringos, kill the Gringos." There was no escape. The car had tinted windows, thank the Lord, because one protester approached my car and laid his AK-47 right on the hood and continued to shout! Lola was praying like there was no tomorrow and I was saying a few prayers myself. Just as suddenly as we found ourselves in this horribly frightening situation, it seemed like God parted the Red Sea. That river of cars opened up and I didn't wait to see if the traffic light was red or green. I gunned it and we were out of there safe and sound. Only God could do that!*

There were a couple of coup attempts to have Noriega step down, which failed and resulted in Noriega's men being killed. October and November slowly went, the tension growing, and no one knowing what might happen. Noriega shook a machete in the face of the United States, and declared Panama to be in a state of war. It was now late December, Christmas season, stores crowded with customers and their Christmas merchandise.

December 20, 12:00 a.m.: My family and I – our three boys were there with us, ages 14, 12, and 8 – will never forget "Operation Just Cause." The bombing, the strong military presence for weeks that followed, the terrible Friday, December 22 following the Wednesday a.m. invasion; a day of looting as people ransacked the stores, including those nearby us, and carried things up the street in front of our house. Everyone was concerned that once the stores were wiped out, looters would start breaking into homes. That night, by common consent, believers set a time to pray and call upon the Lord for His protection. I'll never forget when the prayer time ended, at that very moment, we heard the first U.S. helicopters passing over the neighborhoods, and heard that a curfew had been instituted! We were able to sleep in peace, in

spite of the uncertainty. The next day, we saw the first troops, patrolling the city. Things began to quickly calm down.

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### **Parents' Home-going**

These memories, though separated by over 25 years, have special significance: the passing of our parents, their departing this earth on their Heavenly journey. My dad died in 1981, after a year and a half struggle with pancreatic and liver cancer. He was not quite 70, and I was only 31 when he left us. We are thankful he lived longer than the doctors' had predicted, and enjoyed several months relatively pain-free. Judy's mom, Lillian Hovis, left us in 1993, at age 68. She had taken care of Judy's dad, who had lived in declining health for some time, when she was stricken with pancreatic and liver cancer in 1992. In less than a year, she was gone. That left Judy's dad, who lived for almost three years after his wife of 46 years was taken. He passed in 1996, at home. My mom suffered from Alzheimer's for more than 8 years, before the Lord took her home in 2007.

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These very selective memories, spread over a period of 30 plus years, show God's love, faithfulness, protection, and comfort. From a precious, unforgettable moment of fellowship and camaraderie, to the Holy Spirit's mighty working among believers in Cuba, to God's hand of protection during a time of uncertainty and danger, to His comfort as we said our earthly goodbyes to those we love, He was there!

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# Memories (Part 1)

Memories are indicators, reminding us where we've been, what we've experienced, and the faithfulness of God throughout our lives.

Memories are signposts, pointing us backward for remembrance and reflection so that we can then look forward to God in faith and anticipation.

Memories are not in and of themselves infallible or "stand alone." Truth, fact, and reality are all much more important. At the same time, memories are our recollection and impression of those events and realities.

Some memories seem to always be around, just under the surface, easily recalled. Others pop up out the blue, after not having been remembered or thought of for years.

It would be negligent to fail to point out that there are bad memories, awful memories, that constitute nightmares in our lives. These don't bring joy as do good, positive memories, but sometimes we can still learn from them. We can trust the Lord to heal them and to help us learn from them.

Memories can be faulty or false. My memory of Judy's nurse's cap, for example. The first time I went to see her in Missouri in 1970 after we started dating, I arrived at her house, and her dad took me with him to go pick her up. I used to tell people of seeing her come out of the doctor's office where she worked, so pretty with her nurse's cap on. She reminded me that she was not wearing a cap; I was remembering a picture of her in her nurse's garb on a shelf at home. I had conflated the two things and thus had a faulty memory.

Memories can have great value, even if we don't remember everything. While it's great to remember one's salvation experience – and many do in great detail – it is even more important to know that today we are relying on Jesus' finished work on the cross, and are believing in and following him. It's not necessary to remember the date and all the circumstances.

God constantly reminded His people of His mighty workings on their behalf in the past and urged them to go back and recall His faithfulness. (Psalm 78 is a lengthy recall of what God had done in the life of Israel, and how the people still didn't obey and follow Him.) Psalm 77:11: "I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old." (Psalm 103:2)

So, with those foundational observations, some memories "from my personal storehouse." I've selected them as representative, and for their value as teaching experiences. Over time, I hope to do a couple more of these, that cover the years of my life. I'm convinced that memories can have great value as teachers.

**1966** (I think that's the year.) "Who Am I?" Sunday morning service at my home church. I was 16. A group of young women, slightly older than me, was singing one Sunday morning, a beautiful song that was very popular during those years. As they sang "who am I that a King would bleed and die for, who am I that He would pray not my will thine for?," [1. Who Am I: Charles "Rusty Goodman" 1965] tears began to flow, and several of the girls totally lost it. In fact, they couldn't continue. The emotion spread throughout the church, as the Holy Spirit ministered to hearts. I think that some people came to the altar. Our pastor, as this went on for several minutes, realized he couldn't preach the sermon he'd prepared, but deftly and with wisdom, began to exhort and encourage the people. A tremendous memory indeed, one of many times when "God showed up" and blessed His people.



**1968** Testimonies of enrolling college freshmen. Again, at my church. Again, a Sunday morning. This time, our pastor had asked those of us going off to college in a few weeks (it was early August) to briefly share. I – the shy, inhibited one – was first. All I can say is that I poured out my heart, after spending hours going over what I wanted to say, and a Power greater than mine took over, and my testimony (exhortation) touched hearts in a way I couldn't have imagined. It may have been the first time in my life I had ever thought that God might somehow use me in the ministry as a preacher.

**1977** First service in Panama that Judy and I led. John 4 the Samaritan woman and the living water Jesus gives. We had five people present – the Cáceres family, father, mother, and three teenaged daughters. I was nervous. My Spanish was not all that good, since we had just finished one year of language school, and had arrived in Panama only two months earlier. We put the chairs in a circle. Judy played the piano and led the singing. That was the small beginning of a church plant in Bethania, Panama City – quite a memory, indeed!

**1982** Phillip's epiglottitis. I was on a trip to Panama's interior, about two hours from home. Up in Buenos Aires, there was no electricity and no running water. There was no way to keep in touch with Judy and the three boys. When I got home four days later, there was a sign on the door: "Phillip is in the hospital. Don't worry – he's much better. Come as soon as you can."

I rushed over to Paitilla Hospital to find Phillip in a hospital room under an oxygen tent. Judy explained that after I left on my trip, Phill had started running a high fever, and didn't seem to be breathing well; in fact, he was wheezing. After an entire morning of this, she grew very concerned and had a neighbor take him to the clinic for a 2:00 p.m. appointment. (I had the car.) The clinic was full that afternoon, but the receptionist realized Phillip was very sick and moved him to the front. Dr. Vásquez looked at him and said

“I don’t want to alarm you, but we need to get him in the hospital. I think he has epiglottitis.”

In a matter of minutes, the doctor had diagnosed our son with something rather rare in Panama – an infection of the epiglottis – which led to its swelling and producing thick saliva. Phillip was slowly smothering to death. The doctor immediately started two antibiotics and ordered an oxygen tent to help Phillip’s breathing. Unknown to Judy at the time, he spent that first night at the hospital, because of his concern, and to be able to monitor Phillip closely.

God was so merciful, and though I came into the picture “after the fact,” my heart is no less grateful to the Lord for sparing our son. Jehovah-Rapha, the Lord our healer.

Memories...we all have them. Let’s benefit from them.

*Precious Memories how they linger*

*How they ever flood my soul.*

*In the stillness of the midnight*

*Precious sacred scenes unfold.* [2. Precious Memories: J.B.F. Wright, 1925]

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## **Sometimes He Calms the Sea**

African-American pastor and songwriter of the past century, Charles Tindley, used a common metaphor of the time to reference the trials, tribulations, dangers, and snares of the Christian life: “When the storms of life are raging, stand by me...when the world is tossing me like a ship upon the sea, thou who rulest wind and water, stand by me.” [1. “Stand By Me”

Charles A. Tindley]

Another song writer-poet expressed similar sentiments: "Jesus Savior, pilot me, over life's tempestuous sea, unknown waves before me roll, hiding rocks and treacherous shoal, wondrous sovereign of the sea, Jesus Savior, pilot me." [2. "Jesus, Savior Pilot Me" Edward Hopper]

Songwriter Scott Krippayne, echoed these thoughts in a song he wrote in 1995:

*All who sail the sea of faith  
Find out before too long  
How quickly blue skies can grow dark  
And gentle winds grow strong  
Suddenly fear is like white water  
Pounding on the soul  
Still we sail on knowing  
That our Lord is in control  
Sometimes He calms the storm  
With a whispered peace be still  
He can settle any sea  
But it doesn't mean He will  
Sometimes He holds us close  
And lets the wind and waves go wild  
Sometimes He calms the storm  
And other times He calms His child"* [3. "Sometimes He Calms the Storm" Scott Krippayne]

Traveling by boat or ship, or being out on the ocean, rivers, or lakes was a dangerous thing for many centuries, since ancient times. Storms could arise without notice, and the wind, strong waves, thunder, and lightning menaced travelers, and could capsize a ship and cause many deaths. This has been symbolic of trouble in the Christian life. Storms symbolize illness and disease, financial disasters, broken relationships, and anything else in life that threatens us, either physically or emotionally. Can God not step in and save

the day? Can he not send a miracle our way?

In Mark 4, the disciples on the Sea of Galilee found themselves caught in a sudden storm, helpless and in grave danger, while Jesus was asleep in the boat. They woke him, frightened out of their wits, and He stood, extended His hand, rebuked the wind, and said "peace, be still." Immediately the storm ended. Instantly. There was a "great calm." Jesus then rebuked his followers for their lack of faith. Sure, He can calm storms. He's God.

A few years later, Paul was traveling as a prisoner to Rome, on board a ship in the Mediterranean Sea. Suddenly, a Euroclydon, a powerful, cyclone-type wind arose, and for the next two weeks the ship was tossed and battered until all hope of survival was gone. But suddenly Paul appeared and said to all on board with him: "The God whose I am, and whom I serve, has appeared to me." He gave Paul the peace he needed, and the assurance that all would be well (Acts 27:23). But they had to ride out the storm and suffer shipwreck. Life's like that sometimes.

Yet another song repeats for us the same truth:

*Sometimes He calms the storm sometimes He calms me  
Sometimes the storm still rages on but I feel the sweetest  
peace*

*It's such a joy to know that my Lord knows just what I need  
Sometimes He calms the storm sometimes He calms me*[4. "He Calms me" sung by the McKameys]

Here are some lessons we can learn.

God is sovereign over every storm life brings our way. He is capable of doing the miraculous; healing, provision, removing obstacles, and certainly doesn't mind His child asking for those things. He may not do what we wish He would, but He always, always, always, will be with us, and will speak peace to our heart if we call upon Him. "Therefore, we will not

fear...” (Psalm 46:2) At the end of the day, He will “get us to the other side.”

Here’s the point. We all face storms. God can miraculously still them, and sometimes will, but often we will have to go through them. However, even in the storm He is with us, can speak peace to our heart. The loss of our beautiful daughter-in-law two years ago – my health challenges the past few years – standing with friends and family during severe trials. I’m so glad He is there. The song by *Casting Crowns*, “Praise You in This Storm,” states it beautifully:

*And I’ll praise you in this storm  
And I will lift my hands  
That you are who you are  
No matter where I am  
And every tear I’ve cried  
You hold in your hand  
You never left my side  
And though my heart is torn  
I will praise you in this storm*[5. Praise You in This Storm”  
Mark Hall and Bernie Herms (Casting Crowns)]

Prayer: Father, even now be with your dear children who are caught in one of life’s raging storms, whatever it might be. Please calm the storm, according to your will, or please calm them, and assure them of your love and presence. In the powerful name of Christ, Amen.

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## **REO Pays Tribute: Marie Lytle**

On September 18, 2007 my mother, Marie Eula Buchanan Lytle was called home to Heaven at the age of 87. We had watched Alzheimer ravage her mind and body for eight years, and it was

a sweet release to see her go.

Coming up on another Mother's Day, this tribute is in memory of her, and in her honor. I owe much of the man I am today to her influence, teaching, and prayers.

I saw her kneel at the altar of the Swannanoa Free Will Baptist Church in the fall of 1961 during a powerful revival meeting that swept our church, where she wept as she repented and rededicated her life to Christ. From that day forward, she was a changed woman. We were in church every time the door was opened, and we were not permitted to miss. She prayed, she talked about the Lord to us kids, she walked with God. I saw her more than once on her knees in her room praying for her family.

I remember in January 1967 when the first Super Bowl was being played. I begged to stay home and watch it that Sunday evening, but she was adamant in her refusal. Never mind that it was the biggest game in history in the mind of a 16 year old boy. We were going to church. You didn't miss church for anything.

Much of Mother's life and special influence revolves around music. In my mind I can still see her standing at the kitchen sink and singing. You have to understand this; she was not a good singer. She never sang a special in church; didn't even sing in the choir. But her music and her heart, above all, touched the heart of God – and it touch me deeply.

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The first song I can distinctly remember Mother singing was "You Are My Sunshine," a very popular tune in the 1950s. The first Christian song I recall was the lovely "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be." I suppose that was around 1956 or 1957.

*We read of a place that's called Heaven  
It's made for the pure and the free*

*These truths in God's word we are given  
How beautiful Heaven must be.*

*How beautiful Heaven must be  
Sweet home of the happy and free  
Fair haven of rest for the weary  
How beautiful Heaven must be*

Mother loved to sing "Is Not This The Land of Beulah?" Number 27 in the old Baptist Hymnal. She would sing it with strong emotion, especially the second verse. It might have been her testimony:

*I can see far down the mountain where I wandered weary years  
Often hindered on my journey by the ghosts of doubts and fears  
Broken vows and disappointments, thickly sprinkled on my way  
But the Spirit led unerring to the land I hold today.*

I have to believe that it was, at least in part, her love for that song that birthed the same love in me; it has been a favorite my whole life, nearly 60 years now. In fact, I don't doubt for a moment that my love for music and song stems from my earliest recollections of how certain songs impacted her.

There was a time when I was about 10, and we had just moved to our new home in Swannanoa. I had been saved that summer in Vacation Bible School, and after we moved – probably around October or November, I crossed the little branch by our house, walked out to the woods, and sat down on a fallen tree. I started singing:

*He never said I'd have silver or gold  
Yet He has promised me riches untold  
He never suffered a life without care  
Yet He relieves every burden I bear.*

*Sin stained the cross with the blood of my Lord  
Yet He permitted it without a word  
Why, tell me why, He redeemed you and me?  
Love is why you and I are free.*

Life wasn't easy for Mother. She worked very hard at a local factory. My dad did not follow Christ for many years; for ten years he did not darken the door of a church, and was very bitter and angry. My parents argued frequently and there were attitudes and undercurrents in the home I never understood. Yet for the most part, we had a happy childhood.

Mother didn't drive, and so for several years until I got my driver's license, we were dependent on folks in our church for rides to church on Sundays and Wednesdays, revival meetings, and special activities. Several families, including a couple of Mom's best friends, were so good to come and pick us up, and there were four of us! Through the years, we rarely missed a service. Mother was determined that we be at God's house, hearing the Word preached and taught, and singing His praises. She loved the old hymns and she loved gospel music, and as a result, so did I.

My dad came to the Lord in 1971, and for the last decade of his life – he died in 1981 – he, too, was faithful to church. By then, I had finished Bible College, gotten married, and began preparing for the mission field. Judy and I, along with baby Michael, said goodbye to my parents in Asheville, North Carolina as we boarded a plane to fly to Costa Rica to begin Spanish language school in August 1976. Standing there as the flight was announced, and seeing Mother's tears flow as she kept hugging Michael, Judy, and me is a powerful memory. Also powerful is the memory of my parents and sister coming to Panama to visit us, and our pride and joy in introducing them to the country that had become our home.

After my dad passed away in 1981, Mother lived for 26 more years. Church attendance, ministry (especially to nursery age kids), and caring for family remained her heartbeat. As her mind began to deteriorate in the late 1990s, followed by full-blown Alzheimer's in the early 2000s, life changed for her. She always enjoyed music, though, up until the final couple of years. My brother would go see her in the nursing home



every day, and took a CD of praise and worship music for her to hear. We gave her a Gaither Homecoming CD.

The final two years of her life, Mother was totally unresponsive. She didn't know us, she couldn't speak, and her body was twisted and drawn up as she simply lay there on the nursing home bed. We had prayed many times that the Lord would take her home, yet we didn't know it was imminent on September 15, 2007, the last time we saw her. I was alone with her, speaking softly, and just watching her, when the idea occurred to me that I would sing to her.

Undoubtedly her favorite song, at least for the last 25 years of her life, was Squire Parson's classic "Sweet Beulah Land." Now I'm not a singer at all, and my best singing is done in the shower or in the car with no one else around. But I began to sing:

*I'm kind of homesick for a country  
To which I've never been before  
No sad goodbyes will there be spoken  
And time won't matter any more.*

*Beulah land, I'm longing for you  
And some sweet day on thee I'll stand  
There my home will be eternal  
Beulah land, sweet Beulah land*

Would you believe it? My mother, totally unresponsive for two years, lying in bed like a vegetable, began to respond to the song! While I couldn't understand the words she spoke – it was more like mumbling – it was evident it had touched her and that she was trying to sing along. That was a precious moment.

Two days later my brother called to say that she was gone.

Happy Mother's Day to my precious mother. Thank you for your godly influence.



# Grace and Glory

*For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield:*

*Jehovah will give grace and glory;*

*No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

Psalm 84:11

Psalm 84:11 is one of the most beautiful, majestic Psalms. Here we find these two words together, in juxtaposition that brings hope, blessing and encouragement to followers of Jesus. The Lord will give grace and glory. The context of this most precious Psalm is one of a pilgrim longing for God's house and being on a journey where he is unable to be there. But he finds God's strength sufficient for his pilgrimage (verses 5-7) and so he journeys on toward Jerusalem. The climactic part, verses 10-12, is his testimony that he would rather spend one day in God's courts than thousands elsewhere. Verse 11 is powerful: the LORD God is a sun and shield, and grants "favor and honor," a more modern way to render "grace and glory." Thus we see that there is an immediate application to the present, as he goes on to say "he does not withhold the good from those who live with integrity." (CSB)

Charles Spurgeon states:

*Who else could give either grace or glory? But God is full of grace—His very name is Love—it is His Nature to freely dispense of His goodness to others. As it is according to the nature of the sun to shine, so it is according to the Nature of God to give good things to His creatures. In Him all fullness dwells—all grace and all glory are perpetually resident in Jehovah, the Infinite. What a mercy it is that we, poor empty sinners, have to do with a God of such fullness and of such goodness! If He were shorthanded with His love, what would become of us? If He had but little graciousness, if He had but little glory, then we great sinners must certainly perish. But since the Lord is a bottomless well of love and a topless mountain of grace, we may come to Him, and come*

*freely, without any fear that either His grace or His glory will ever suffer any diminution. Note again that the text says, "Jehovah will give grace and glory." Not only has He these wondrous blessings, but He has them that He may give them freely. If He were to keep them to Himself, He would be none the richer, and when He distributes them, He is none the poorer! The Lord does not sell grace or glory, He does not put them up to auction to those who can give something in return for them. God is a great Giver and a great Forgiver. He gives grace and glory without money, without price and without any merit in the receiver. The Lord gives—there is nothing freer than a gift and there can be nothing freer than that greatest of all the gifts of God, eternal life! That expression, "eternal life," sums up these two things—grace and glory. "The Lord will give grace and glory." It is His glory to give His grace and because of His graciousness, He gives glory! [1. Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit #2502]*

Yet, "grace and glory," surely suggest our future blessing in eternity as well. "'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home" (John Newton). I thought of some songs that feature the phrase "grace and glory," some of which emphasize the here and now, while others the "sweet by and by."

"Where He Leads Me I Will Follow" – a song of commitment and trust, where the lines of the verses are repeated as "I can hear my Savior calling," "He'll go with me through the garden," "He'll go with me through the judgment," and finally "He will give me grace and glory." The refrain says "Where He leads me I will follow (three times)...He'll go with me, with me, all the way." From His initial call to the grace and glory that await, no doubt a reference to Heaven, He will truly go with me all the way. [2. Where He Leads Me: Ernest W. Blandy, 1890]

A group called "Poet Voices" sang a song about a decade or so ago called "Grace and Glory." Again, borrowing from those

beautiful words it states "His love is full of grace and glory that is why I sing."

Unmerited favor of the Savior falling from His holiness  
It is never ending grace extending from His righteousness  
To the undeserving, God is serving bountiful supply  
His great love's abounding and surrounding us from sky to sky.[3. Phil Cross, Bridge Building Music, BMI, Chris White Music, BMI]

Christian songwriter, poet, and comedian Aaron Wilburn wrote a song some years ago in which "grace and glory," while not the theme or title, still figures prominently in the message. Recently performed by a number of singing groups, it was a favorite of Aaron's mother: "That Sounds Like Home to Me," a song about Heaven, in which the refrain thrills the believer's heart by affirming "the hills will echo with the story as we sing of His grace and glory. Wow! To think that one day we'll extol His grace and glory throughout the ages.[4. C.A. Wilburn and Edwin Crook, Werner Chappel Music, Inc.]

Finally, there comes to my mind a song I heard only a couple of months ago by a trio I enjoy a great deal. Songwriter Sue C. Smith and collaborators beautiful lyrics, and Karen Peck's country soprano delivers yet another song of hope "On the Banks of the Promised Land." My soul is set to soar when I hear the refrain "Hallelujah, what a morning, when I reach for that nail-scarred hand, and I'm led by His grace and His glory, on the banks of the Promised Land." [5. Sue C. Smith, David Moffit, Jason Dyba]

My conclusions: The Psalm would indicate that grace and glory are for both now and for the future. It's grace that saves us now, that guides and guards us in this life, that leads us on this earthly pilgrimage, but it is also grace that leads us home, to again quote John Newton.

To glory – what does that mean? The goal, the end of God's

grace working in us is to transport us to glory, as some of the songs I've quoted suggest. But we might also say that the grace at work in us brings glory to Him who is worthy of it all – grace to glory. And most definitely grace accomplishes glory – His glory and our enjoyment of it and rapture in it – here on earth temporarily and imperfectly, and permanently and perfectly in Heaven.

These past days have been bittersweet. Services at church have been good, and it is thrilling to see our Hispanic group there, growing in the Lord, and becoming more involved. However, news came of the passing of two friends, both named Tim. Tim Hayes was from Illinois, very active in his church, in missions, and with the Master's Men Disaster Relief Team. I have known him since college days. A massive heart attack. Then, Tim Coats, formerly a Home Missionary in South Dakota, and in recent years a bivocational pastor there in Rapid City. He and Kathy were summer missionaries with us in 1982 in Panama when our kids were very small. Faithful men, good friends. They have now gone from grace to glory, praise the Lord.

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## **A Panamanian Perspective on Holy Week**

Since I spent nearly 30 years in Panama as a missionary, I have a perspective on Easter that I trust has taught me some valuable lessons.

First off, Holy Week in the early years (1970s-1980s) tended to be influenced by Roman Catholicism, the predominant religion in Panama. The entire week was somewhat subdued, with

less emphasis on the commercial aspects of life. Good Friday was somber and solemn; television and radio stations could only play, funeral-like music, dirges, and the like. Churches had mass to commemorate the passion. There were no sports or entertainment. (After those early years, Good Friday became more "secular," and has remained so. It is possible that some radio stations may have special solemn programming, but not the TV stations, by and large. Some of the older people, staunchly Catholic, complained, but basically the day has become a "holiday," not a "holy day.")

Strangely enough, Easter Sunday was pretty much business as usual. Though it was called "Domingo de Gloria," (Sunday of Glory), there didn't seem to be a lot of celebration of Christ's resurrection, and folks went to the beach, had picnics, visited family, etc., pretty much like any other time when they were off work. But neither the solemnity or the frivolity seemed to touch people very deeply. The solemnity didn't cause people to come to Christ for forgiveness of sin, and receive a Savior who would change their lives. The frivolity wasn't Christian joy, based on the the certainty of the Risen Lord who had conquered death.

What a difference I discovered in the evangelical church! For one thing, many churches had a special Good Friday service which featured the seven last words of Christ he uttered from the cross. I took part in many of those over the years, sometimes preaching just one of the seven words, as in a joint service, and sometimes all seven. It could make for a very long service, but focusing from a theological as well as a practical perspective was helpful and challenging.

We sang songs (in Spanish) like "There is a Fountain," and "Nothing But the Blood." We also sang songs about the passion such as "Oh Qué Amor," (Oh What Love), and "¿Sabes qué Murió Jesús?" (Do you Know that Jesus Died?) this last one sung to the tune of the 1960s pop song "Sealed With a Kiss." Beautiful, melodic songs about our Savior's death on the cross

that really touched my heart, but unknown to English-only speaking people.

Easter Sunday was always a special day in Panama. We'd sing, in Spanish of course, songs like "Low in the Grave He Lay" with volume and emotion, and hear the resurrection message delivered on that day of days.

We introduced to the church in Bethania, where we served for about 15 years, the "Sunrise Service" concept. I think some other churches already were doing it, but it was new to many of the people we'd seen come to Christ, and over time came to be one of the most popular and inspiring things we did each year. An early service, often around 5:30 or 6:00 a.m., followed by a breakfast fellowship meal, and then Sunday School, made for a glorious day in the Lord, and with His people.

I remember our first Easter in Panama, in 1978, when we met at the church on a Sunday night. It would have been March 26. Our main service was held on Sunday night at the beginning of the church plant. We sang. We prayed. I preached. At the end of the service a young man in his early 20s came forward to receive Christ. His words to me were these: "I knew there had to be more in life than what I had found, and tonight I found it in Jesus Christ." Christ arose! He lives! He is risen. He is risen indeed!

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## **REO Pays Tribute: Leeman Underwood**

*Editor's Note: We believe it is good and right to honor the men and women who have inspired, encouraged, and challenged us*



*throughout our lives. REO Pays Tribute will be our ongoing attempt to do just that. We hope that our meager words will honor those to whom honor is due.*

### **Leeman Underwood by Steve Lytle**

It was probably 1972, the year Judy and I married, when I met Leeman Underwood, but I had heard about him before then. His daughter Gail was his oldest child and she was Judy's cousin and best friend growing up. She was a senior at Free Will Baptist Bible College (Welch) when we were freshmen.

Leeman was born in Flat River (Park Hills), Missouri, but grew up in Fredericktown, Missouri, the son of Vester and Edith Underwood. He came to know Christ as a young man, and grew up in Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. Born in 1923, he joined the army and fought in World War II. His sister Lillian, two years younger, finished his 12th grade work in 1942 so that he could graduate from high school with his class.

When he returned from the war, Leeman married Laura Bayless, from Knob Lick, MO. They settled down in Fredericktown, where Leeman was employed in the lead mines and where they had four children: Gail, Greg, Sue, and Pam. He was ordained as a deacon at the Copper Mines Church. He and Judy's mom frequently sang specials at church; he had a beautiful tenor voice, and she sang a strong alto.

When the mines began to close in the late 1950s, Leeman moved his family to East St. Louis, Illinois for a year and worked there. When he heard of jobs in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, he and Laura decided to move the family there, though it was a long way from southeast Missouri. They went to Oak Ridge in 1959, and began working at one of the nuclear energy plants in Oak Ridge, and worked there until his retirement. They moved into their house on Lancaster in 1965, and he has lived there ever

since.

Leeman, Laura, and the children attended the First Free Will Baptist Church in Oak Ridge, where he was elected as a deacon. They faithfully served there for over 50 years.

Leeman loved to travel. They frequently went back "home" to Missouri to visit his old home church, and his family and friends. He always enjoyed returning for his high school reunion. Some of his family went with him in 2016. He was one of two attending from the class of 1942. Even closer to home in Oak Ridge, he goes out on Saturdays with his daughter Sue for long drives to enjoy the beauty of the mountains. Cades Cove is still a favorite destination of his, to see the mountain vistas, and the wildlife there. On more than one occasion, Leeman and Laura would travel to be with Judy and me for special missions services, and were faithful to support and pray for our ministry through the years.

Leeman was an extraordinary ordinary man. Quiet, mild mannered, kind, he loved his Lord and his church. He loved his family; I don't know if I've seen anyone else who loved his kids and grandchildren any more than Leeman did. There were pictures of them all over the house, and it seemed like every time we went to visit, some of the grandkids were always there. They loved hanging out with Grandma and Grandpa.

Judy and I visited the Underwoods numerous times over the years. We stayed in their home frequently when traveling for International Missions to visit churches in Missouri, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

The oldest daughter, Gail, married a preacher and became a pastor's wife. She died of cancer in 1995 while just in her forties. We were in Panama and couldn't come back for the funeral. Shortly afterwards, we came home for our stateside assignment and went to see Leeman and Laura. I remember spending time with them, talking about Gail, and watching some

of the early Gaither Homecoming Videos, hearing songs about Heaven and our hope in Christ. We shed quite a few tears on those occasions, but they were tears of hope and joy. Gail's death was very hard on Leeman and Laura, but God gave grace and life went on.

In recent years, time has brought many changes to Leeman and the Underwood family. We were privileged to attend their 50th wedding anniversary in 1996. Aunt Laura passed away in 2011. Leeman still lives in his own house, but his youngest daughter, Pam and her husband Butch, live with him, and provide care and companionship. He has chronic beryllium disease, caused by exposure to beryllium while working as a machinist in the Oak Ridge factory for so many years, and taking the small particles into his lungs. More recently, he began to experience kidney failure, and was actually on dialysis for eight months some years back, but miraculously was able to come off of this treatment for several years. Now it seems to have come back.

On his good days, he sits in the living room watching old westerns on TV and enjoying his company – family, friends, and people from his church.

It is a blessing, and an honor for me to pay tribute to Leeman Underwood. A true man of God, and one of the kindest, most hospitable men I have ever known.

I have said that Leeman was a good singer. Perhaps his best known song was "I Thirst," by Beverly Lowry. I only know he sang it from the heart, as a testimony, and he sang it well.

*One day I came to Him, I was so thirsty  
I asked for water, my throat was so dry  
He gave me water that I have never dreamed of  
But for this water, my Lord had to die*

*He said, "I thirst, " yet He made the rivers  
He said, "I thirst, " yet He made the sea*

*"I thirst, " said the King of the Ages  
In His great thirst, He brought water to me  
Now there's a river that flows as clear as crystal  
It comes from God's throne above  
And like a river, it wells up inside me  
Bringing mercy, and life-giving love*

*He said, "I thirst, " yet He made the rivers  
He said, "I thirst, " yet He made the sea  
"I thirst," said the King of the Ages  
In His great thirst, He brought water to me.[1. I Thirst, by  
Bev Lowry, copyright 1993.]*



Leeman Underwood holding his great-granddaughter.

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# Yesterday

Last night, as we are on the vispera (Spanish for “Eve” or “time before”) of another year, ending 2016 and beginning 2017, I didn’t sleep well and lay awake for long periods of time. My thoughts went to the word “yesterday.”

Let me begin by saying that some of my favorite songs, either musically, lyrically, or thematically revolve around “yesterday.” Looking back, reflecting, and reminiscing is something we do somewhat automatically, I suppose, especially at year’s end, but it’s probably a good thing to do from a biblical standpoint: “number our days to gain a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:12), allow the past (history) to be our teacher (Psalm 78), and remember that “our times are in his hands” (Psalm 31:15).

One of the prettiest songs from the 60s was “Yesterday” by *The Beatles*.

*Yesterday all my troubles seemed so far away.  
Now it looks as though they’re here to stay.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.*

*Suddenly I’m not half the man I used to be.  
There’s a shadow hanging over me.  
Oh, yesterday came suddenly.*

*Why she had to go, I don’t know, she wouldn’t say.  
I said something wrong, now I long for yesterday.*

*Yesterday love was such an easy game to play.  
Now I need a place to hide away.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.*

*Why she had to go, I don't know, she wouldn't say.  
I said something wrong, now I long for yesterday.*

*Yesterday love was such an easy game to play.  
Now I need a place to hide away.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.*

Lovely, soft, melancholy – it is a song that almost anyone would like. Thinking back to an earlier, happier time is so typical of we humans.

“Yesterday, When I Was Young” – by Charles Aznavour and Herbert Kretzmer, was released in 1964. The most famous and best-remembered version was by country music singer and Hee Haw host Roy Clark. The song contains a haunting and powerful lyric about someone who has lived life selfishly and now looks back to all he has lost and wasted.

*Yesterday when I was young*

*The taste of life was sweet as rain upon my tongue*

*I teased at life as if it were a foolish game*

*The way the evening breeze may tease a candle flame*

*The thousand dreams I dreamed, the splendid things I planned*

*I always built, alas, on weak and shifting sand*

*I lived by night and shunned the naked light of day*

*And only now I see how the years ran away*

*Yesterday when I was young*

*So many drinking[1. Roy Clark's version substituted "happy"  
for drinking.]songs were waiting to be sung*

*So many wayward pleasures lay in store for me*

*And so much pain my dazzled eyes refused to see*

*I ran so fast that time and youth at last ran out*

*I never stopped to think what life was all about*

*And every conversation I can now recall*

*Concerned itself with me, and nothing else at all*

*Yesterday the moon was blue  
And every crazy day brought something new to do  
I used my magic age as if it were a wand  
And never saw the waste and emptiness beyond  
The game of love I played with arrogance and pride  
And every flame I lit too quickly, quickly died  
The friends I made all seemed somehow to drift away  
And only I am left on stage to end the play  
There are so many songs in me that won't be sung  
I feel the bitter taste of tears upon my tongue  
The time has come for me to pay for yesterday when I was  
young.*

Then there was a song from the 1970s, written by the legendary bass singer for the Cathedrals, George Younce, "Yesterday." I probably first heard it in the late 70s or early 80s, and always felt that it ministered to me:

*(Chorus)*

*Yesterday things were different  
Today they're different again  
Jesus will never change  
Jesus is always the same*

- 1. The sparrow will find a new dwelling  
The eagle will change its nest  
But I'm holding on the changeless One  
And I'm leaning on His breast*
- 2. The river will change, change its course  
The mountains may crumble and fall  
Time will leave its mark, they say  
Upon us one and all  
Repeat Chorus*

The song resonates powerfully in response to the fact that we live in a world of change ("yesterday things were different, today they're different again") by triumphantly affirming that

"Jesus will never, never change, Jesus is always the same."  
It's wonderful to have that hope (Hebrews 13:8, Malachi 3:6,  
James 1:17).

Finally, we go back over 100 years to A.B. Simpson, the  
founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He wrote a  
song that isn't sung much today, except perhaps for the  
chorus, but what a truth it expresses!

*O how sweet the glorious message simple faith may claim  
Yesterday, today, forever Jesus is the same.  
Still He loves to save the sinful, heal the sick and lame  
Cheer the mourner, still the tempest, glory to His Name.*

*Refrain*

*Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same.  
All may change, but Jesus never! Glory to His Name!  
Glory to His Name! Glory to His Name!  
All may change, but Jesus never! Glory to His Name!  
He, who was the Friend of sinners, seeks the lost one now  
Sinner come, and at His footstool penitently bow  
He Who said "I'll not condemn thee, go and sin no more,"  
Speaks to thee that word of pardon as in days of yore.*

*Refrain*

*Oft on earth He healed the sufferer by His mighty hand  
Still our sicknesses and sorrows go at His command  
He who gave His healing virtue to a woman's touch  
To the faith that claims His fullness still will give as much.*

*Refrain*

*As of old He walked to Emmaus, with them to abide  
So through all life's way He walketh ever near our side  
Soon again we shall behold Him, Hasten Lord the day  
But twill still be this same Jesus as He went away.*

*Refrain*

Argentinian evangelist Alberto Motessi preached a message in  
which he spoke of Christians who focus on a Jesus who lived



and worked in the past (historical). Others focus on a Savior who will live and work in the future (eschatologically). He goes on to say we should fervently believe in a Savior who is alive and working today. That is so true, but our trust in Him today flows from who He is and what He has already done through the cross, the resurrection, His immutable nature, and His faithfulness in our lives.

Yesterday. Today. Tomorrow. Let's live for the One who is eternal, unchangeable, and always faithful.

*The days pass so swiftly, the months come and go*

*The years melt away like new fallen snow.*

*Spring turns to summer, summer to fall*

*Autumn brings winter, then death comes to call.*

*Only one life, so soon it will pass, only what's done for  
Christ will last.*

*Only one chance to do his will*

*So give to Jesus all your days, it's the only life that pays*

*When you recall you have but one life.[2. Only one Life by  
Lanny Wolfe]*

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## Thanksgiving

Psalm 106 is one of the great thanksgiving Psalms. I will not endeavor to look at the entire psalm, but just comment on how the theme of thanksgiving, gratitude, and praise is so prominent, and how it frames the content of the entire psalm.

Verse one thunders out its note of gratitude: "Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For his mercy endures forever." An exhortation to praise Him, to give Him thanks, because He is good, and His mercy endures forever; it's impossible to miss the message.

In fact, I love the way the New Living Translation states the theme of thanksgiving in the first five verses:

*Praise the Lord! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.*

*Who can list the glorious miracles of the LORD? Who can ever praise him half enough?*

*Happy are those who deal justly with others and always do what is right.*

*Remember me, too, LORD, when you show favor to your people; come to me with your salvation.*

*Let me share in the prosperity of your chosen ones. Let me rejoice in the joy of your people;*

*let me praise you with those who are your heritage.*

Verse 48 concludes the Psalm by again extolling our God. "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting! And let the people say, 'Amen.' Praise the LORD!" We can't miss the message: God's people are to thank Him, to praise Him. And it's to be heartfelt and based on an understanding, a realization of what He has done.

In between is primarily a historical review of the nation of Israel, its failures, its rebellion and sinfulness, and, as much as anything, its ingratitude (See verses 7,13, 21.) It is a powerful reminder to us to never forget what our Lord has done for us. While they forgot Him, verse 45 reminds us that He, for their sakes, remembered His covenant, and again intervened, this time to bring them back from their captivity. Romans 1 reminds us that mankind began its plunge into spiritual darkness and idolatry when the human race failed to

be thankful (Verse 21). A failure to be thankful has devastating consequences.

We frequently tend to not be as thankful as we should be. May the Lord help us to be truly thankful for all He is and all He has done, certainly at this season, but all the time as well. Someone stated very memorably that we all need an “attitude of gratitude.”

Pastor and author Rob Morgan shares the following story about a Lutheran pastor during the 30-Years War.

*It told the story of Martin Rinkart, a German pastor in the early 1600s. It was his misfortune to minister in the worst of times. He lived in a walled town into which hordes of refugees poured during the Thirty Years' War. Great armies crossed the land, pillaging shops and farms, leaving ruin and desolation behind. Farming activities were so interrupted by the war that famine ensued throughout Saxony. Then the plague broke out. The other two ministers in town died, leaving Martin to care for the multitudes alone. All day he went from bed to bed, nursing the sick and comforting the dying. He conducted thousands of funerals, sometimes reading the funeral service over forty or fifty bodies at once. Among the eight thousand who perished in one particular year was his own wife. A year after the war ended, Martin himself died. But he left behind a remarkable hymn—one of my favorites, but one I hadn't sung or thought about for awhile.*

*It's one of our greatest hymns of – thanksgiving!*

*The writing of this hymn must have provided therapy and vigor for Martin's own spirit. I especially like the prayer in the middle of verse 2: “And guide us when perplexed...”*

**The first verse is a declaration of praise:**

*Now thank we all our God,  
With hearts and hands and voices;*

*Who wondrous things hath done,  
In whom His world rejoices;  
Who, from our mother's arms,  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours today.*

**The second verse becomes a prayer:**

*O may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever-joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us,  
And keep us in His grace,  
And guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills  
In this world and the next.*

**The last verse is devoted to Trinitarian praise:**

*All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns  
With Them in highest heaven:  
The one eternal God,  
Whom heaven and earth adore;  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.* [1. Rob Morgan, "Then Sings My Soul"]

Let's remember to give thanks in everything (I Thessalonians 5:18), because that's God's will for us. Gratitude and thankfulness are attitudes that reveal a redeemed heart, and are essential to a happy and successful life.

The 19th century British preacher, Charles Spurgeon, said: "There should be a parallel between our supplications and our thanksgivings. We ought not to leap in prayer, and limp in praise."

Psalm 100 reminds us to “be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

*Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One  
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ His Son.*

*Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One  
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ His Son.*

*And now let the weak say I am strong*

*Let the poor say I am rich*

*Because of what the Lord has done.*

Thank you, Lord!

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## **Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord**

In 1960-62 Miss Sophie Graham was a Bible teacher at Swannanoa Elementary School, Swannanoa, North Carolina, when I was in 5th and 6th grades. She was a missionary in China prior to the Communist takeover, and when I knew her she lived in retirement in Montreat, North Carolina. Miss Graham was one of the best teachers I have ever seen, bar none. She could teach the Bible! Amazingly, she could hold the attention of children ten to twelve years old. She certainly held mine. And we learned so much! One week, she taught a passage I’ve never, ever forgotten: Jeremiah 9:23-24 “Let, not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercises judgment, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight,” saith the Lord.

Over the years I've taken that passage and taught and preached it on several occasions. Some tremendous truths emerge, ultimately culminating in what Jeremiah and the Apostle Paul[1. 1 Corinthians 1:31] stated "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." Our glory, our boasting, our trust is ALL to be in Him.

First of all, some thoughts that stand out to me after 56 years thinking back to Miss Sophie Graham and the Jeremiah passage.

**The importance of Scripture memorization.** To be honest, I don't remember if Miss Graham tried to have us memorize the passage, though I rather think she did. The point is, Scripture was written to be learned, even memorized. Fanatical, dedicated Muslims memorize the entire Koran. Why can't we followers of Jesus learn many more verses than we do?

**The example of a godly teacher.** I was blessed to have good and godly Sunday teachers all the way from childhood. Their commitment to Christ and their example cannot be overstated in terms of the impact it can have on a young person.

The principles of the passage itself deserves a second look, that's what I want to do now:

1. **It's not what we know; we don't know enough.** ("Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.") Education, learning, and knowledge are important, but we'll never know enough; we need the Lord's wisdom. In 1799 George Washington was sick. He had served two terms as the first president of the United States. Now retired, he was 67, when he became ill. His doctors recommended "bleeding" him, a common practice at the time. It was thought that getting rid of the "bad" blood would help bring healing. However, Washington, in a severely weakened condition died, apparently of pneumonia. Antibiotics could have cured him. Human knowledge didn't

go far enough. We will never know enough, compared to God. That's why God's revelation to us is so vital.

2. **It's not what you can do (might or power); we aren't powerful enough.** ("Neither let the mighty man glory in his might.") Goliath was a 9-foot giant, probably stronger than any other human on earth in his day. Yet his "might" was not enough to guarantee him a victory; David felled him with a sling and a stone and cut off his head with Goliath's own sword. How many victories did God give His people when it seemed impossible, when they were outnumbered many times over? II Chronicles 20 tells of an amazing victory God gave Jehoshaphat and Judah in which Jehoshaphat put the choir in front of the army! Do not glory in your own might, power, or ability.
3. **It's not what we have; we don't have enough.** ("Let not the rich man glory in his riches.") (Psalm 49 declares that we carry nothing away when we die (vs. 17), and that those who trust in their wealth and boast in the multitude of their riches, cannot redeem their brother (vs.6-7). He (not we) owns the cattle on a thousand hills. Jesus said that a man's "life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses (Luke 12:15).
4. **Money can't buy happiness, health, success, or salvation.** If wealth is ultimately so powerless, why should we place our confidence in it? Rather, it's in understanding and knowing Him that we are to glory, to boast.
5. **We are to boast in the fact that He is the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.** These are the things He delights in. We are to boast in Him; He is to be our heart's passion and desire, and the source of our confidence.

G.K. Chesterson was out on an English countryside sketching pictures using colored chalks. He was frustrated to realize he had brought no white chalk. Suddenly he started laughing with uncontrolled delight when he realized that the ground

underneath him was porous limestone – a perfect white chalk.[2. Our Daily Bread, July 2016] God provides everything necessary for life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.