



## *A Special Thanks* *by Gene Easley*

### **Introduction**

I believe there are times in our lives when we need to give special thanks to God not just for our salvation or His many blessings along the way. But we need to give thanks for those individuals He has sent our way that have helped to form our Christian lives and have helped us on our Christian journey. I will mention only a few that have helped me in my life for the list would be very long if I attempted to name all that might be mentioned.

I'm not accustomed to giving eulogies, especially to those who are still among us and are still running in this earthly race. But I think it can be a good thing to say "thank you" while we have opportunity. Several of the following have already entered Heaven's glory and are realizing the rewards of the faithful, but some are still with us and still have their eyes on the goal.

### **Rev. and Mrs. L. G. Gilmore**

Bro. and Sis. L. G. Gilmore were my pastors during an important time in my Christian life. It was Bro. Gilmore who through his preaching and his life imparted faith into my heart to believe God. He helped give me a foundation in the Word of God, and made it so real to my heart that we must believe God no matter what the circumstances or conditions around us might be. He taught and practiced the truth that we can always stand upon God's Word.

Bro. Gilmore gave wonderful advice that has helped me through many battles along the way, and I am thankful. I remember him saying that the first thing he did every morning was to take his Bible and get alone and read the Scriptures and pray before he ventured out into any other activities. I have tried to follow that example through the many years of my Christian life and have found it such a valuable practice in giving me the strength and guidance I need to begin each new day.

I will never forget hearing Sis. Gilmore pray and intercede before God. I remember sensing so strongly the presence of God as she prayed that it made you want to walk softly before Him. She lived a holy life, and at the same time, took a personal interest in everyone she met. No one came close to Sis. Gilmore without receiving a personal witness about Christ. I thank God for her godly influence.

### **Rev. and Mrs. G. Dean Reid**

Rev. and Mrs. G. Dean Reid were leaders of Mid-Western Bible Institute where my wife and I studied, and they have been friends of ours for many years. Bro. Reid went to his eternal reward in March, 2014, but the effect of his ministry is still very alive in the lives of so many—especially the many preachers of the Gospel that he influenced. Bro. Reid's preaching always dug you out and fed you with spiritual substance. Few preachers have been able to open the Word as Bro. Reid did.

Bro. Reid's decisive leadership always gave strength to the work of God, and it was a great witness to me as a young preacher. He and Sis. Reid have, without doubt, influenced for good the lives of many young men and women who have felt and are answering the call of God on their hearts.

Sis. Reid exercises the true Biblical spirit of hospitality, treating everyone as a guest, while at the same time challenging you to be what God has called you to be. Her music ministry has been such a blessing in so many church services and around so many altars of prayer. I thank God for people like the Reids, who have touched so many while sacrificing so much.

### **Rev. Gladys Pearson**

Evangelist Gladys Pearson held several revival services at a church I attended as a young Christian. Sis. Pearson had a special way of opening the Word and taking you to a deeper spiritual walk than you had known. Her preaching made me want to preach. She made me want to forsake all to follow

Christ. She had a great influence on me to understand the call of God and to answer the call to preach the Gospel. Sis. Pearson spent much time in prayer and preparation before she stood behind the pulpit, and the visitation of God's Spirit during those revival services bore record that she had been with the Lord.

### **Rev. and Mrs. A. R. Trotter**

Bro. A. R. Trotter is a preacher's preacher. Those who liked preaching went to Bro. Trotter's church. His prayer life was visible in the pulpit, and the congregation was the beneficiary of all the time he spent on his knees.

My wife and I were always especially blessed by his Wednesday night services. We would go with an anticipation of God granting us a refreshing in the midst of what often was a week with many challenges. Bro. Trotter would come prepared for those services just as he did for the Sunday services. You never got a watered-down version of church on Wednesday night. He came praying, and he came singing and ready to preach and teach the Word of God, and our souls were lifted again and again to another realm in Christ.

Sis. Trotter was always by her husband's side, not only accompanying him on the musical instruments, but in prayer and encouragement. Thank God for their unflinching dedication.

### **Rev. A. N. Trotter**

I only heard Bro. A. N. Trotter preach one time in person, but I am fortunate to possess many of his preaching tapes that we have listened to again and again. They have been invaluable to my spiritual life. His preaching revealed a depth of knowledge and understanding of a man who walked with God. His messages came from the heart of God through a man who lived close to His heart. I thank God for the spiritual strength and conviction my life has gleaned from the ministry of A. N. Trotter.

### **Rev. Don Brankel**

Although I have never been personally acquainted with Bro. Brankel, I have attended and benefited greatly from many of his revival and campmeeting services. Bro. Brankel's preaching ministry has left a mark on my life for which I will always be grateful. Bro. Brankel is a true revivalist, and the church is in desperate need for such preachers today.

### **Rev. Everitt Thompson**

Bro. Everitt Thompson and his wife, Violet, were our friends for many years after we met them in Eaton, Colorado. We never heard Bro. Thompson's preaching ministry from behind a pulpit, but the Thompsons had a heart for ministers and missionaries. As we traveled from point to point, itinerating for the mission field in Guatemala, Bro. and Sis. Thompson opened their home to us as a resting place between trips--housing us and feeding us at their table. Their kindness was matched only by the real spirit of prayer that came into the room when we stopped for a visit.

Bro. Thompson did not fail to have a Word from the Lord to encourage and strengthen us, and he prayed instantaneously--ushering us to God's throne room on many occasions. We wept and cried with him and got our cups refilled! He was, indeed, a man who prayed without ceasing. We appreciated him so much. He is now gone on to Glory.

### **Many Others**

At the time I write this, as I have already said, several of those I have mentioned are still here in the Lord's battle, while others have entered into His eternal presence. As dynamic as one's life or ministry might be, we are each only given a certain span of time to influence and win others to Christ. Then God takes us on. It behooves us to do all we can while we can.

As I mentioned, there are so many more that come to my mind that have meant so much to my wife and me. Some are close friends; others we knew for short periods of time; but they were all people with a touch of God on their lives, which in turn touched us. I thank God for many musicians and Gospel singers who have conveyed the message of Christ in a manner that allowed me to enter God's presence. I thank God for them and for the hours of prayer and practice that allowed God to use them.

There are so many more names and faces that come to mind. Many did not preach from behind a pulpit. They had no credentials from their organization, but they were such men and women of God that I am so thankful to have known them. I think of a little lady, Sis. Smith of Tucson, AZ, who stood probably only five feet tall, weighed about 100 pounds, and who came to church with such a spirit of

prayer that when she shook your hand you felt the power of God like an electrical shock. The spiritual help she contributed to the church service was immeasurable.

Bro. Marroquin was a gardener in Guatemala City. He worked two or three hours for the equivalent of about five dollars in American money. My wife would always prepare him a good hot meal during the time he was working at our house. It was not required of us, but we enjoyed a time of fellowship with him around our table. We once visited his church in a very poor Guatemala City neighborhood. He lived in what we in America would consider great poverty, but the impact he left on our lives stemmed from the good spirit he kept surrounded by the great hardness of his life.

God does not attempt to make everyone a millionaire when they become Christians, nor would that be a good plan or give a true witness of what Christianity is all about. True Christianity is when a little hardworking man with daily struggles to keep his family supplied with food can exhibit the presence of Christ in his life and can be used to encourage the lives of others. I thank God He brought across our path people like Bro. Marroquin.

### **Conclusion**

If you have served God for very long, I am sure you would have your own list of those who have influenced your life. They would be people that I may not have heard of--even as most of these that I have mentioned would probably be strangers to you. But, of course, that isn't the point. The point is that we all influence others' lives. May God help each of us be that person that someone else meets along the way, and their life is forever blessed by the encounter. What an awesome responsibility we each carry in the work of God!