

Pentecostal Theologian Stanley M. Horton Passes at 98

Stanley Monroe Horton, 98, of Springfield, Missouri, died on Saturday, July 12, 2014, at Maranatha Village in Springfield.

Son of Harry Samuel Horton and Myrle May Fisher, Dr. Horton was born on May 6, 1916, in Huntington Park, California. His maternal grandparents Elmer Kirk Fisher and Clara Daisy Sanford participated in the historic Azusa Street Revival of 1906, leading the nearby Upper Room Mission. As a child of the Azusa Street Revival and Mission, Horton has served, in the words of Assemblies of God General Superintendent George O. Wood, as a “bridge linking the Azusa revival to the present day.”

Dr. Horton received his educational training at Los Angeles City College (A.A., 1935); University of California-Berkeley (B.S., 1937); Gordon College (now Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (., 1944); Harvard University (., 1945); and Central Baptist Theological Seminary (Th.D., 1959). He was Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Bible and Theology at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS), where he taught from 1978-1991. Prior to that, he served as chair of the Bible Department at Central Bible College from 1948-1978 and professor at Metropolitan Bible Institute from 1945-1948. He wrote the Assemblies of God “Adult Teacher” Sunday School curriculum for over 25 years. In 1980 he served as president of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. Upon his retirement from teaching in 1991, he held the position of general editor of the Pentecostal Textbook Series/“Logion Press” in Springfield until 2000.

Horton has been recognized as the premier Pentecostal theologian. A renowned scholar and prolific writer, he continued to travel the world until age 92, visiting 25 countries as a lecturer. He authored dozens of books – many of which have been translated into multiple languages, book chapters, and manuals and published more than 250 articles and book reviews. He was listed in “Who’s Who in Religion and Outstanding Educators of America.” His writings have appeared in publications as diverse as “The Encyclopedia Americana and the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements.”

He served as chair of the editorial committee for “The Full Life Study Bible” and its 2003 revision titled “Life in the Spirit Study Bible.” Foreign translations commonly refer to this as “The Fire Bible.” His book, “What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit” (Gospel Publishing House, 1976), has long been the definitive text on that topic in universities and seminaries around the world. Dr. Horton served as the official translator of 1 and 2 Corinthians from Koine Greek to modern Messianic Jewish vernacular for the “Tree of Life” Bible, an undertaking done in cooperation with the Messianic Family Bible Project and now the official Bible of The King’s University. Stanley Horton’s devotion to the salvation of “All Israel” and biblical translation abilities did not weaken with his length of years.

Robert Cooley, Horton’s student at Central Bible Institute in 1949 and later his colleague on the faculty there, would later comment about his writing, “He modeled a biblical scholarship that was practically applied. So if you read the adult quarterly for 25 years, you can see that the lesson material grew out of an academic understanding of Scripture but was very practical. It was the same with his articles and other books – a technical understanding of the biblical text but a remarkable way of translating that into a body of applied theology. This is the meaning of his life, that he had

a wonderful way to do that. His scholarship was never esoteric; it was for everyone. To be able to go from an exegetical theology to an applied theology was a real gift.”*

Horton’s life of service has been characterized by a unique combination of Pentecostal fervor, a commitment to biblical scholarship, and Christ-like character.

In 2010 AGTS honored Dr. Horton as a “Legacy Leader”—one who displays “fierce biblical faithfulness ... long tenure ... a high level of confidence but no appearance of arrogance or haughtiness ... [who] accepts the responsibility for [his or her] ministry ... [who] shows unconditional love for those he or she serves ... is persistent ... has a vision that always includes evangelistic passion ... and [who] makes decisions that will benefit the church ... well beyond their own tenure or even lifetime.” Part of that legacy was Dr. Horton’s support of women in leadership as well as his commitment to racial reconciliation. “Scripture makes it clear that we’re all one in Christ, and we need each other,” he said.

Committed to a sense that following Christ means being a “lifelong disciple,” Dr. Horton continued to serve the Church well into his nineties, on the Assemblies of God Commission on Doctrinal Purity, an adviser for AGTS doctoral participants, and an original board member of Israel’s Redemption – a role in which he served to the end of his life.

In 2008 AGTS established The Dr. Stanley M. Horton Scholarly Resources Endowment () in his honor. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to this endowment by contacting the AGTS Development Office at 417-268-1000.

In 2009, Gospel Publishing House released Dr. Horton’s biography, “Stanley M. Horton: Shaper of Pentecostal Theology.” As an addendum to the biography, a full bibliography of works by and about Dr. Horton up to the present time, and video interviews with him are available at

the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center website ([click here to view:](#)).

Stanley M. Horton was predeceased by his parents, his loving wife Evelyn Gertrude Parsons, and siblings Donald, Harold, David, Evelyn May, and Gertrude. He is survived by two sisters, Esther and Ruth of California; two sons, Stan, Jr. (Linda Self) of Springfield, Missouri; and Ed (Diana Dykes) of Branson, Missouri; and a daughter Faith (Brent Stilts) of Springfield, Missouri. He is also survived by three grandchildren: Matthew (Darci Stonebreaker), Monica (Matthew Bryant), and Zachary Andrew Horton Stilts as well as six great grandchildren: Cale, Aven, Asher, Noah, Lila, and Seth.

Visitation and funeral arrangements will be forthcoming.