

Honoring the Pentecostal Who Linked Azusa Revival to the Modern Day

Before he was laid to rest Saturday in Springfield, Missouri, friends and colleagues eulogized Stanley Horton as a great man and educator with roots going back to Azusa Street. He was born only 10 years after the revival broke out at Azusa Street, and his grandparents were baptized in the Holy Spirit there. In the words of Assemblies of God General Superintendent George O. Wood, he was a “bridge linking the Azusa revival to the present day.”

The day he died, July 12, we ran Horton’s obituary that lists his many achievements. This is my attempt to eulogize a man I greatly admired and enjoyed the privilege of working with in his capacity as the senior editorial advisor for the Modern English Version, which I am publishing, that will release in September.

I’ve known about Horton all my life. Before I was born, he served as a professor at Central Bible College in Springfield, when my parents attended the school. But, I met him only once when I interviewed him two years ago about this work on the MEV, which you can view [here](#).

As we began talking to leaders about this new translation, I heard firsthand how men from Jack Hayford to George Wood conveyed that Horton’s involvement gave the translation credibility because of his reputation as a scholar and a translator.

We had intended to give Horton one of the first numbered copies of the MEV when the first edition comes off the press in less than two weeks. Now he is gone. He’ll never see the completed Bible. The MEV is his last big—and perhaps

biggest—project of a long, productive and respected life.

Horton was well-known for his work in academic circles, writing books, Sunday School curriculum and teaching at Bible colleges and seminaries. In the 1940s, it was unusual for Pentecostals to receive advanced degrees; yet Dr. Horton received two from Gordon College and Harvard University, as well as a doctoral degree in the 1950s from Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

In 2008 Evangel University launched the Dr. Stanley M. Horton Pentecostal Heritage Lectureship Series to reinforce the importance of the Pentecostal heritage of the Assemblies of God. In 2009 the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary established The Dr. Stanley M. Horton Scholarly Resources Endowment in his honor.

Throughout his long life he was given many accolades for his work, which you can read about [here](#). However, he was also known as a humble, loving Christian man.

“He was a man of impeccable integrity,” said Darrin Rodgers, the archivist of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, to whom Dr. Horton entrusted his papers only seven weeks ago.

“He loved his wife, Evelyn, and his children. He loved his students. He took time for everyone.”

At his funeral service in Springfield, friends and family celebrated his life. Here are a few highlights:

His daughter, Faith Horton Stilts: “He grew up immersed in a life filled with

faith, prayer, worship and bible reading. He could tell you so  many stories of people in his family who were healed by God, from broken arms to healing of paralysis to being saved from death’s door. The miraculous happened often.” Read the complete transcript of Faith’s eulogy to her father [here](#).

His biographer, Lois Olena: “His godly heritage ran

deep—providing the fertile ground for a life of service characterized by Pentecostal fervor, commitment to biblical scholarship and Christ-like character. He patiently answered vital questions, relayed countless stories, shared valuable insights ... I witnessed firsthand what it meant to joyfully serve God with everything, be gracious toward everyone, trust God obediently as He leads step by step and live a life that honors the past, embraces the present and prepares hopefully for the future.” Read the complete transcript of Lois’ tribute to her friend [here](#).

Archivist Rodgers also said in a recent blog: “He was one of the Pentecostal movement’s most revered scholars, one of its most prolific authors and one its most respected educators. His theological writings shaped generations of Pentecostals. But Stanley, to those of us who knew him, possessed something much greater than his Harvard degree.”

My longtime friend, **Cameron Fisher**, is a great-grandson of Elmer Fisher who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Azusa. He is Dr. Horton’s cousin once removed: “The few times I interacted with Stanley, I felt that strong familial bond. Stanley was a family hero. His demeanor and interactions with me are priceless memories I cherish. Stanley Horton’s legacy is one I am proud to proclaim as part of my family and Pentecostal heritage.”

Chaplain Jim Linzey, who worked with Horton on the MEV: “His acumen concerning Koine Greek was second to none, and his knowledge of translation principles of the Bible was always current with the times. Dr. Horton provided solid direction that helped define the *MEV* as a very modern rendition of the *King James Version*. His guidance helped shape the *MEV New Testament* as a very accurate translation of the *Textus Receptus* based on a very modern English vernacular.” Linzey said, adding that Horton told him he was extremely pleased with how the *Modern English Version* turned out and believed “it will tremendously impact the Church in the twenty-first

century.”

Jason McMullen, the publishing director for the MEV: “Dr. Horton will be greatly missed. Meeting him before his passing was truly one of the highlights of my life. Honoring God through the dissemination of the Modern English Version, upon which he worked, is our opportunity to ensure that a portion of this man’s great work endures until Christ returns.”

I feel privileged to have known Stanley Horton. There is so much more that could be or should be written about his life which is why we have links to his official obituary and the unedited comments from the people we quoted which go more in depth.

We invite you to leave your comments about Stanley Horton, or online condolences can be posted to the AGTS link and will be forwarded to the family.

Steve Strang *is the founder and publisher of Charisma. Follow him on Twitter @sstrang or Facebook (stephenestrang).*