WOW: Word Of the Week

Threescore

October 28, 2026

The last WOW post in an October series looking back over sixty years of ministry. Three WOWs: gap, effect, threescore.

We don't use, we don't hear, this terminology very often in our modern world.

"Fourscore and seven years ago…." (Gettysburg Address, 87 years ago)

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years…" (Ps. 90:10, KJV; we can expect 70 years, 80 if we are strong)

As usual, I share a little literary background. History says this usage arose in the English language around the 14th century. Somewhere fairly early in my life, I learned that a score is 20. I cannot identify the exact time, certainly by the time I memorized the Gettysburg address, and likely before that since the KJV was the preferred translation in most of the churches in those days.

As I contemplate this week's WOW, threescore is a word that can be used to count my years in ministry. I am gratified that God has allowed me a longer than normal ministry—although there are several who have served longer. We human beings mark time. Threescore may be important, but it is not what is most important!

It's not the number of years, it's what you put in those years. (Incidentally, this phrase first appeared in a 1947 newspaper ad for a book on aging, a year before I was born. Ironic?)

It's not the years, it's the miles!

More than once, people have observed to Jan and to me, "You two have filled your lives full and overflowing." Indeed! Is that not the goal? We have told various parts of our story more than once recently. Fifty-seven (114!) years and counting. We have put a lot of living into our lives. More important to us, we have tried to put a lot of service and ministry into our lives. We have tried to put a lot of evangelism and touching the lost in our lives.

We do not think threescore is the end…. but we may be able to see the end from here!

We celebrate – not us, but God. God has been faithful always, because God is God. When life is good, God is faithful. When life appears less than good, God is faithful. The one who promised is faithful. Therefore, we live with confidence and conviction. (A favorite translation of Hebrews 11:1 describes faith with these two words.) God exists although unseen, God faithfully blesses those who diligently seek him.

May we all be faithful—confident in the one who promised, convinced about that which is yet unseen! Faithful unto the end!