



WOW: Word Of the Week
[includes a brief Spring 2023 Mission Update]

Milestones [Ephesians 4:12-16]
March 1, 2023

Milestones! Synonyms: milestone refers to an anniversary, special event, landmark, or occasion. Dictionary definition: a significant point of progress or development.

For Jan and me, milestones have been piling up! Pre-pandemic, we retraced our honeymoon travels; we enjoyed celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary with friends and family; now #55 is not far away! Birthdays are milestones of a sort, and as we celebrate birthdays this year, 80 is closer than 70!

I began preaching every Sunday in the fall of 1967—last fall marked 55 years of preaching almost every Sunday, and more recently multiple times each week using technology! This year counts 30 years since my first mission trip to Latin America. And 15+ years of almost full-time mission involvement since retiring from Christian higher education. In 2023, our mission newsletter (volume and number) reflects 18 years of regular mission reports.

A labor of love, blessed to give rather than to receive. Sharing Good News because that is what we are called to do, blessed to be able to do God's work for free. Receiving spiritual blessings rather than physical.

Some days, the intensity is incredible. Teaching online classes, 3 hours online every Saturday morning at a school of preaching in Latin America; teaching online during the week, answering questions, mentoring, teaching a Sunday series at Fort Gibson; also, a Wednesday series at our Tulsa church home. Finishing up a new series of video studies on Revelation; preparing evangelism videos for the online project in Bogota.

Milestones! What we now do in retirement. Watching the years add up. How much longer? God knows.

The three churches who stand by our side deserve a mention—Northside in Mena, AR; Fort Gibson, Main and Oklahoma in McAlester. Plus, individuals across the US who partner with us in the work.

Enough reminiscing! Words for this life, pointing to eternity. A word for this week. What will you think about when you reflect on this week's WOW? Our word: milestone. A text: Ephesians 4:12-16. A challenge!

Build your spiritual life keeping in mind the milestones—past successes and future goals. Milestones of faith, knowledge, maturity (vv. 12-13); equipping for ministry and growth. How? Here are three commitments to help us establish and reach spiritual milestones (vv. 15-16).

Truthing, life is about truthing—words, actions, life.

Growing up toward Christ, more and more like him, a measure of his stature.

Building the kingdom in love. Kingdom people committed to kingdom things, kingdom priorities, kingdom actions, kingdom goals. Fulfilling God's eternal kingdom purpose to bring everyone into Christ.