



Your NAWE Companion

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Are We Looking More like Jesus?

Tony Elder, *Conyers, GA*

Are you familiar with the story written by early American author, Nathaniel Hawthorne, entitled "The Great Stone Face"? The title refers to a mountain with a natural formation on one side of it which looked like a man's face. There was a legend among the residents of the nearby valley that one day someone from their valley would become a great person and he would look like that face on the mountain.

One little boy who grew up being told about the legend spent much time gazing on this unique formation, studying its features, and hoping to witness the rise of the great person who would exhibit its admirable qualities. Several times throughout his life, his hopes rose as certain individuals became great and successful people. But whenever he met them, he came away disappointed, realizing that they lacked certain key features exhibited in the stone face.

Finally in his later years, someone recognized the fact that this man himself had come to look exactly like the face on the mountain he had so contemplated and revered. He had become well-known for his wisdom, goodness, kindness, and integrity. He had gradually taken on those great character qualities he had seen revealed on the stone face, so that now its image could be seen in his own face.

What a great picture that is of the Christian's transformation into the image of Christ. The Bible says, "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:18). This reminds us that being a believer isn't only about experiencing the forgiveness of our sins and having the assurance of going to heaven one day. It's also about an ongoing change in our character – becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.

This process begins when we put our trust in Jesus as our Savior and continues throughout our lifetimes. As we behold the glory of the Lord, gaze upon Jesus in His Word, fellowship with Him, listen to Him, obey Him, and seek to be the kind of people He wants us to be, God transforms us and instills more of those Christlike qualities in us.

One day in his later years, Salvation Army officer, Samuel Logan Brengle, was visiting in a home. When he left, the little girl who lived there asked her mother, "Would Jesus have looked like Brother Brengle if He had lived to be seventy-five?" This little girl saw the image of Jesus in that old, godly Salvation Army officer.

Would anyone ever wonder that about us? Are we exhibiting such qualities in our lives that people see Jesus' attitude and spirit in us? Do they look at you and think, "Jesus must have been a lot like that person"?

No matter how Christlike you look today, there is still plenty of room for those godly qualities to expand and grow in your life. We've still got a long way to go. The important thing is for us to continue on the journey. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to keep chiseling away at us to make us more like Jesus.

June—July 2016



Praise & Prayer

Keep praying for Jim Garrett (Douglasville, GA), as he recovers from a recent accident in which he fell off a ladder. Jim severely injured both his left wrist and his right foot, requiring surgery on the foot. Pray for his injuries to heal fully. Also pray for patient endurance and encouragement for Jim and his family during these weeks when he has to stay completely off his injured foot.

Let's keep praying for our nation, especially during this election year.

Pray for our upcoming Annual Meeting:

- for preparations being made
- for safe travels
- for our speaker
- for guidance for our association

Annual Meeting

Greetings from Our Speaker

Dr. Philip Speas, *Kentucky Mountain Bible College*

I am looking forward to coming and speaking to the NAWE in July. Tony Elder and I became acquainted when we were students at Vennard College.

I was born in 1955 and was raised on an Iowa farm by godly parents. My mother led me to Christ when I was 5. At the age of 21 I answered the call to preach. To prepare for ministry I attended and graduated from Kentucky Mountain Bible institute, Vennard College, and Wesley Biblical Seminary. Soon after completing my seminary studies I married my wife, Wanda. My wife is our campus nurse and works as an ER nurse in a local hospital. We have four children. Our two oldest sons are ministers, our daughter is a Christian counselor, and our youngest son is in high school and is living at home. My hobbies are gardening and fishing. I am an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene. I pastored 3 churches before accepting the call to be president of Kentucky Mountain Bible College in 1993.

My passion is to help train people for ministry. KMBC is a specialty school that focuses on preparing youth for ministry with an emphasis on traditional Wesleyan theology. 77% of our four year graduates go into some form of ministry. A recent survey of our graduates shows that the ministerial retention rate is 78% after at least 5 years in the ministry. This is almost 4 times higher than some national surveys. This, I believe, is due in part to our school's extra rigor in the areas of academics, discipline, character formation, spiritual formation, work ethic, ministry involvement, cultural development, and leadership training. I enjoy my role in shaping the lives of the next generation of church leaders. These are challenging days to be in ministry. I am not able to do it in my own strength but God is more than able for He has called and equipped me to serve Him "in such a time as this."

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Calendar

July 12-14, 2016— Annual Meeting at Mt. Juliet, TN (just outside of Nashville).

For reservations: Quality Inn & Suites—615-773-3600.