HANDIWORK OF GOD SERIES
CONSIDER THE LILIES

W L B Q July 16,1984

It is my privilege to speak to you again this week by means of radio, thanks to W L B Q and the Butler county ministerial association.

While praying and meditatiang about the messages this week the Lord seemed to direct me to bring a series of messages on the Handiwork of God.

The Scripture I would like to use this morning is found in Jesus sermon on the mount in Matt. 6: 28-30. "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lillies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

In our basement for several years there has been a Amorellio Lillie in a pot. It was green and flurishing when it was placed there to get it out of the way upstairs. It was negleted and received very little care during several years. I would look at it occasionally and water it. but then for months I would forget about it. Its leaves gradully turned brown and withered away. It never bloomed but looked about dead. Finnaly this summer I decided to do something about it. I planted it beside the house in the ground and watered it real good. To my surprise it began to shoot up dark green leaves in a day or two. then about a week later it shot out a big bud and a few days later burst into bloom , with four of the most beautiful red and white flowers. I looked out my window this morning and it was still beautiful and in full bloom. It is so amasing to me that that lillie bulb could have suffered so long and then when it was cared for to burst forth with such radience. Jesus said, "Consider the lillies" so I believe that we should be like the lillies, We may be neglected and pressed down and may think nobody cares, but when our time comes when we have the opportunity we will burst out with radience and show the true worth that has been in our heart all the time. Jesus said," the lillies toil not neither do they spin,2And yet Solomon in in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. The glory of the beautifull lillie is found in the heart of the bulb. That old brown bulb that I took from the basement had within it the pattern and design of the red and white flowers. God placed it there and so the lillie just waited until it could bring it forth to the world.

Like the heart of the lillie brings forth beauty, so the heart of the Christian brings forth the love,joy, peace, goodness, temperance, long suffering, gentlelness, hope, and faith. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" also His Word says, "Keep thy heart with alll diligence for out it ar the issues of life." All lillies are not the same but all have a beauty of there own. So all christians are not the same but all have a beauty of their own. Some have that lovely smile, some break forth with praises to God in song. Some can pray until heaven comes down in loveliness and peace. Some know the art of always knowing just when to speak the right words at the right time to help some one in need. and some are always helping others with their work.

The lily is the gueen of Bible flowers. Fourteen times the Bible mentions the lily but only twice the rose. The lily reigned in the time of Esther, in the time of Solomon, in the time of Christ. Ceaser had his throne on the hills. The lily had her throne in the valley. In the greatest sermon that was ever preached, there was only one flower, and that a lily. John Bunyan, the Writer of Pilgrims Progress, while telling about the House of the Interpreter, was shown a cluster of flowers, and was told to "Consider the lilies."

Belonging to this royal family of lilies is the lily of the Nile, the Japan lily, the Lady Washington of the Sierras, the Golden Band lily, the Giant lily of Nepaulm the Turk's Cap lily, the African lily from the Cape of Good Hope. Also we see the Daffadills The Easter lilies, the tulips, the Day lilies, The Star of Bethlehem, and the Aloes.

After the long winter months when the earth seems dead and lifeless comes the first Spring flowers, the Daffadills, those golden yellow lillies that burst forth even when the ground is yet cold and ~~and~~ sometimes snow covers them. They are a promise that God has not forgotten us and that Spring in all its beauty will soon be here. The children gather tham and are so glad they can take a boquet to their Mother or Teacher to show their love.

Next comes the tullips, so fresh and beautifull. then during the summer the Day lillies and the tiger lillies that thrive in the sun and hot weather. Sometimes we go through a winter it seems in our spiritual lives, but like the lilies we will shine forth for the Lord when the time is right. Dear friends, How long has God taken care of you? Quarter of the journey of life? Half the journey of life? Three-quarters of the journey of life? Can you not trust him the rest of the way? He has promised you the necessities, not the luxuries bread, not cake. If God so luzuriantly clothes the grass of the field, will he not provide for you, his living and immortal children? He will.

I take the lilies of my text as typical of all flowers, They are good for lessons of God's providential care. That was Christs first thought. All these flowers seem to address us, saying: "God will give your clothes and food. We have no wheel with which to spin, k no loom with which to weave, no sickle with which to harvest, no well from which to draw water: but God takes our thirst with the dew and the rain, and God feeds us with the bread of sunshine and God has clothed us with more than Solomon's royal robes.

What are flowers good for some might ask? They are good for the bridal day. Did you ever see a wedding without flowers? When I think about my wedding day, I think of my beautiful bride carrying a large boquet of cala lilies. With those flowers She seemed even more beautiful. If a young man wants to show his love in the best way he gives his friend flowers. If a husband wants to show his love for his wife of many years He will often do it with flowers. There has been many an aged widowed soul who had a carefully-locked bureau, and in the bureau a box, and in the box a folded paper, and in the folded paper a half-blown rose, slightly fragrant, discolored, carefully pressed. She put it there forty or fifty years ago. On the anniversary day of her wedding she will go to the bureau, she will lift the box, she will unfold the paper, and to her eyes will be exposed the ahlf-blown bud and the memories of the past will rush upon her, and a tear will drop upon the flower, and suddenly it is transfigured as she thinks of her wedding and the treasured memories of the past.

What are flowers good for? When a precious loved one dies, you cover the casket with flowers, around this loved one there are flowers sent by dear friends. At the grave you take the flowers and when the last words are being said by the minister petals of flowers are lovingly dropped on the casked. The grave mound is coverd with them and when we later return to visit that grave we bring more flowers to show our love.

Flowers show us the brevity of life; the Psalmist said "As the flower of the ~~flower~~ field , so he perisheth; the wind passeth over it, and it is gone." Job said."Man cometh forth as a flower and is cut down." Isaiah said: "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the field." or we could quote from James the Apostle: "As the flower of the fiel so he passeth away." All natural flowers will soon be dead, whatever care you take of them. So we come up, we prosper, we spread abroad, we die, as the flower.

Flowers also afford mighty symbolism of Christ, who compared himself to the rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valley." The lily of the valley has beautiful bell shaped flowers of pure white. It grows in shady places where it is damp and cool. It has a delightfull fragrance and spreads it's perfume throughgardens and woods during the springtime. So Jesus goes through the valley spreading the perfume of his love and the purity of His life to give hope to all who are in the valley of trouble and sorrow.

As a young Minister on my first pastorate I often visited a lady of the church who was very weak and sick. One day when I visited her I noticed a vase of white lilies. She said to me, Bro. Gibbs, those lilies make me think of the white robes of Jesus. In a few days she slipped away to be with her Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

Perhaps the greatest flower of all to symbolise Christ, is the Easter lily. From the brown earth it rises in an aray of spotless white. The alters all over this land are adorned with this wonderful flower on Easter morning to symbolise the resurection of our Saviour from the dead. Then we hear the words of our Lord proclaiming, "I am the resurection and life, He that believeth in me thou he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. And "Because I live ye to shall live."

Dear friends we have considered the lilies this morning. They have much meaning for us, they are Gods constant reminder that he has not forgotten us and will keep His promices to us what ever comes or goes, prase His name. Let us pray, Dear Lord and Saviour thankyou for all the wonderful things you provide for us. this morning we want to especialy thank you for the flowers which are so much an important part of your creation. Help us to live in such a way that we migh glorify you, for we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

W L B Q Oct. 9,1981
Feb 1984

A Right View of Death

This is Pastor Ransom Gibbs of the Morgantown Wesleyan Church.
If you have listened to the devotionals this week you have heard my oldest son speaking in my place. I feel sure if you have heard him you will agree that he is called to be an Evangelist. I am very thankful that he has accepted the call of God to this place of ministery. My wife and I dedicated all of our 4 sons to the Lord when they were quite small to be used of Him in what ever way he would see fit. I have never been sorry that we did because it brings a great since of satisfaction to see our children yield to the Lord and accept His plan for their lives. I would like to praise the Lord this morning that each of our children have come to know the Lord, to love Him and to serve Him. I certainly feel rich in family blessings. It has been some time since it has been possible to gather them all around the family altar and hear them pray but I will never forget when we did. Or to look down in the pew while I was preaching and see them seated beside their mother. I thank God that I married a precious christian girl who has stood by me through thick and thin and sometimes it was prety thin. The Bible says that a virtous women is worth more than Rubies. I certainly have found that is true. Well I guess thats enough about my family.

This morning I would like to speak to you about something I feel is very important, our attitude about death. I have been reading in recent months about people who have had near death experiances. ~~A recent~~ Readers digest gives the account of a women who was undergoing a routine tonsillectomy when her heart stopped. She said, "All of a sudden I was rising through a white mist, "Then it was all dark, I wasn't frightened a little courious, I guess. I felt a sense of absolute love and peace embracing me, coming from a glowing circle of light. I wasn't a churchgoer I didn't believe in it. But I knew this light was God, and it was such love and joy that I wanted to go to it forever. Then the thought came that I had two children. I had a job to do and I had to return."
Dr. Raymond Moody in his book Life After Death details the experiences of some 50 people who have been near death, or "clinically dead," and then revived. He points out that in most all cases whether the person knew God or not, death no longer was something to fear. there was often a being of light that gave them peace and joy even though they never tried to serve God.
I don't know how you feel about this but it is very disturbing to me. If it dosn't matter how a person lives whether good or bad than why all the fuss about accepting Christ as our personal Savior and Lord. If it makes no difference then why not just throw the Bible out the window. Some may say well how can you account for the fact that these things accoured. to so many people. I am thinking of the scripture in II Cor :11:13-14 Where it states that even Satan masquerades as an angel of light and his servants as ministers of righteousness. Deception has always been the devil's right hand, if we are to believe the scriptures. The Bible says in no uncertain terms, "Be not deceived God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his rlesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; fut he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galation 6:7,8. Jesus said, except ye repent ye shall perish. Also the Bible says, It is appointed unto man once to die, and after death the judgement.

We have also the dying words of such famous people as the atheist Tom Paine " I would give worlds, if I had them, if the "Age of Reason" had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ, help me! Stay with me! It is hell to be left alone!" And Voltaire, who said, "I am abandoned by God and man! I shall go to hell! O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"
And Francis Newport who cried, "Oh, that I was to lie upon the fire that never is quenched a thousand years, to purchase the favor of God and be reunited to Him again(But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of torments than one poor hour. Oh, eternity, eternity! for ever and for ever! Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell!"

I believe as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ that it is my solomn duty to warn men and women that they must prepare to meet God. Jesus went all the way to calvary's cross because He knew that all had sinned and had come short of the glory of God and that the soul that sinneth it must die and that after death they would be judged and rewarded according to their deeds. I am concerned when death is taken so lightly and made a beautiful thing

for everyone regardless of how they have lived. This way of thinking gives false hope. Those reports of people who seemed to die and came back to life ## If they had remained dead they would all have been rewarded according to their deeds and there would have been ~~know~~ no respector of persons.

I am also concerned about how we bury the dead, I believe sometimes that if we are not careful as ministers of the gospel we may go to far in giving hope to loved ones when we know in our hearts the one who is dead gave ~~know~~ no indication that they loved God, or were faithful to him. If we do give a false hope we are only incouraging sinners to believe that they can live a wicked life and still make it through to glory. As a human being it is only natural for us to be well thought of, but we have taken a vow to God that we will be faithful to the souls of men and women and boys and girls. The Bible says that if we fail to worn the wicked, their blood will be on our hands. Im afraid we need to be more concerned about the way God looks at sin and remember that God has said, "The soul that sinneth it must die" and that God says, Repent or perish.

As a boy I heard the gospel of love and mercy but I also heard the gospel of the way God hates sin and the wrath of God. Im' afraid in this soft age today we have lost some of the ruggedness that the old prophets ~~had~~ such as Jeremiah Had. The Bible says, that not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

If the devil can't get us to believe their is no God the next best thing is to get us to discount his word and believe the lie that God is too good to punish anyone for sin and that we will all make it through the pearly gates somehow.

I thank the Lord for faithful preachers today who are much like the old prophets ~~and~~ who proclaim the truth without fear or favor. such men are the concious of our land today and bring the truth that we need. May we not despise them as Israel did and suffered the judgement of God.

Resource Streams in the Desert Feb. 13

In closing today I would like to ask each one of you how it is with your soul? Are you you ready to meet God, or are you using a false hope that maybe you will make it through somehow. I ask you ~~all~~ all sincerely not to drift along toward the judgement unprepared but come to God today and truly repent and believe the gospel for the saving of your soul.

Heavenly Father, thankyou you for this opertunity to speak to our friends and neighbors today, We know that it is not your desire ~~to~~ to see any lost but that they would come to repentance## May thy Holy Spirit talk to those who are lost today and may they come confessing their sins and be saved today. right now during this closing song, in Jesus name we pray, Amen

~~not used on WBQ~~

This is Pastor Ronson Gibbs of the Morgantown wesleyan church
my Scripture text this morning is found in Prov. 22:28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.
Landmarks have always been important in this country!
In New England the pilgrims landed on plymouth Rock.
The Wilderness trail blazed by Daniel Boone was so important to the early settlers ~~in Ky~~ as they ~~crossed~~ came ~~through~~ the cumberland Gap into Ky.
The Oregon trail was followed by those brave men and women going to the ~~far West~~.
The Santa Fe trail to California was a safe way to travel but those who chose there own way often bleached there bones on the parched desert of Death valley.
So The Way of salvation a way of Holiness

is a well marked path.
as the Bible says "a wayfaring
man though a fool need not error
therein.

The old testament tells of abraham's
journeyings and how God guided him. He
left the ur of the Chaldees because
of the call of God. He went out
not knowing whether He went but
God knew where he was taking
him. He had a definite plan for
his life, and so He has for yours and
mine.

Abrahams journeyings were marked
by his devotion to the will of
God. Over and over we read, "and
there he built an altar unto
the Lord. When he climed
mt. moriah he placed his own
son on the altar. His life
was marked by the fact that
he held nothing back from God.
later where this altar was, the
temple at jerusalem was built.

The Children of Israel crossed over Jorden and set up twelve stones on the bank that they had taken from the bed of the river and placed 12 stones in the river bed that they had taken from the bank. Why did God ask them to do that? So that in generations to come when these great grand children would see the stones and ask about them they would be told that their people crossed the river Jorden on dry ground and that God had performed a great mercial and stopped the water from flowing and let them cross over though the river was at flood stage and that they all got safely accross.

A tomb stone is a landmark that reminds us of the life of a loved one. If they lived for God there are many things about them that incourage us to fight the good fight of faith and be faithful unto the end that we also may obtain the crown of righteous

The alter in the church makes a place where many have wept and prayed and found peace with God. It reminds us of the need for repentance, God's saving grace and sanctifying power. It reminds us of ~~our vows~~ the vows we made to God. and the vows we made as bride and Groom as we stood before the alter and pledged our love.

The church building reminds us of Gods abiding presence and of happy times singing, praying and worshiping together with our fellow christians. During the world war I missed my church so much. We had our chaplain and services which ~~was~~ were a big help. but it wasn't like back home in my own church of which I was a member. I remember so well after coming home after the war and setting in the congregation quietly weeping

for joy in the sanctuary again.
as you travel through this great
land of America you see churches
along the highways and the byways
and the streets and lanes of the
city, just think, these are all
landmarks helping to point us
to God. When I see a church that
is closed it makes me feel a
tinge of sadness, because I think
at one time there were people who
received help and strength and
peace as they worshed in that
place.

There are other landmarks that
are not made of brick, stone or
wood but are fixed in the heart
mind and soul of Gods greatest
creation. Prov. 22:6 says, "Train
up a child in the way he should
go, and when he is old, he will not
depart from it. Many things fixed
on the memory and emotions
cannot be erased. as a small
boy I attended Sunday School almost
every Sunday. Many lessons I have

forgotten but I know many have been fixed indelibly in my mind and soul. One teacher I had taught us a Bible verse that I always remembered. "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Children today need the Sunday School and a faithful minister. I treasure the memory of my pastor Bro. Hunn. He led me to the Saviour and took such an interest in my spiritual welfare. Even though he had several children of his own.

Mother and Dad set up some landmarks too. Faithful attendance at S.S. and Church, the prayer meetings, prayer before meals. Family devotions and teaching of the word have been guides to help me to live for Jesus.

Deut. 6:6-10 says. and these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when

thou risest up.
and thou shalt bind them for a
sign upon thine hand, and they shall
be as frontlets between thine eyes.
and thou shalt write them upon the
posts of thine house, and on thy gates.
If children today were taught like
that much of our juvenile delinquence
would end.

Then there is the great work God
is looking for, Faithfullness
unto Him. "Be thou faithful unto
death and I will give thee a
crown of life." Jesus said so much
about the importance of faithfulness
Watch and pray. Fight the good fight
of faith, Without faith it is impossible
to please God. It is required of a
steward that he be found faithful".
we will be rewarded according
to our faithfulness.

The missionaries are examples
of faithfulness. David Livingstone
of England gave his life exploring
dark africa, many years he spent
in that heathen land until he died
and they buried his heart in
africa. but his body they buried

in West minster abbey in London England
today they say more people want to
see his grave than any other except
the tomb of the unknown Soldier.
oh apostle pauls life was marked
by faithfulness. "I have fought a good
fight, I have finished my course, I have
kept the faith.
many peoples lives ~~and~~ are marked
not by what they seem to have accomplished
but by the principles instilled
by them in their children who
become great. like abraham Lincoln
who said, 'all I am or hope to be
I owe to my angel mother.
We all are leaving landmarks
either for good or evil, whichever will
it be? I like the words of Joshua
when he said. Chose you this day
whom you will serve. as for me
and my house, we will serve the
Lord. May that be your prayer
today
Let us pray, Dear heavenly Father
help us to leave marks of righteousness
faithfulness and love as we journey through
this life. Bless each listener today
in Jesus name we pray. amen.

God's Greatest Handiwork, Man.

I have enjoyed being with you this week by means of radio. I am concluding the 15 weeks messages today by speaking on God's greatest handiwork. My scripture is found in Genesis 1: 26-28 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Genesis 2:7 "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

It is beyond our ability to comprehend all the things in God's creation. The countless number of stars, the inuerable kinds of plant and animal life, and the great invisible forces. We think of God as almighty and able to create anything he wants to. He created so many wonderful things, yet I want to show you this morning that Human beings are to God his most loved creation of all.

Paul in his letter to the Hebrews writes in ch.2 v. 6. "But one in a certain place testified saying, What is man, that thou art mindfull of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels; thou crownesdst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands;"

No other work of creation was made like man in the image and likeness of God. This fact aought to make us feel highly honored to be like God. No other creature has the intellegence of man. The ability to reason, make decisions and work out difficult problems God endowed man with. Also he has the ability to read and write a language. There is not any other creature that can control all other creatuers, We say the lion is the king of beasts, It is powerful but no match for a man. A man can very easily kill a lion or capture him and keep him in a cage for the rest of his life. The elephant is the largest land animal, but even a little african pigmy man can kill one with a spear. The Wahale is the largest animal and weighs many tons but man has been able to distroy them until they are becoming extint. Man can tame and train the animals. I saw a killer whale that was trained to let a man ride on his back. I saw a lion trainer put his head in a lions mouth in a zoo in St. Louis.

Mans scientific knowledge has enabled him to go faster than any animal and fly faster and higher than any bird. Travel in space, going to the moon and back no other creature has done. The radios the television the computers and the use of atomic energy makes us wonder what man will be able to do next.

When God made man and placed him in the garden He walked with him in the cool of the day. No other creature God could have fellowship like he could with man. Like seeks after like and God made man like Himself so that he could have fellowship with Him. He had created the angels before this but He said he created man a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor.

There is one important ~~difference~~ difference between man and the other forms of life, The power to choose between right and wrong. I spoke earlier in the week about how the animals follow their God given instints such as times for migration, hibernation, and caring for their kind. The animals have no power of choice, they just follow their natural instincts, but God didn't want man to be like that because He wanted man to do what was right because he loved Him, not because of some instinct. He wanted Adom and Eve to talk with Him and love Him because they wanted to, not because they had to. When they were in the garden God wanted to see if they realy believed, loved and trusted Him so he put their love to the test, not a hard test but a good test, by telling them they could have anything in the garden to eat but not to eat of the fruit of one tree, lest they die. It was a fair test but Adom and Eve failed the test and failed God and showed they did not believe in Him with all their hearts. Because of

this they lost fellowship with God. They sinned against God and God could not have fellowship with them. They realized they had done wrong but didn't know what to do. God was disappointed with them and they were driven out ofethe garden and suffered much because of their disobedience

There is another way that man is different from other living things. God breathed into his nostril the breath of life and he became a living soul. A living soul never dies. When an animal dies he ceases to exist, but when a man dies his soul leaves the body but lives on forever somewhere. Jesus spoke of a poor beggar that died and was carried by the angels to Abrahams bosom, a place where he was well taken care of and happy, called papadise. He also spoke of a certain rich man that when he died found himself in a place of torment called hell. Jesus said everyone has the power to choose where he will live on after this body is dead, either heaven or hell, which will it be? Jesus said He was not will ing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

God must look upon the universe that he has made and enjoy the stars, the planets, and all the heavenly bodies. He must delight in seeing how they go in their paths through space perfectly. He must enjoy seeing how the great invisible powers work to keep things in order. He must delight in having the thousands of angels doing his will and loving Him but God has proved his love for us mre than anything else. He sent His only Son Jesus to this earth to live among us, to suffer with us, to know our joys and our sorrows and our heartaches, then to be despised and rejected of men and to be tortured and killed hanging on a cruel cross in or that we might be saved. He never did that for and angel, or any other heavenly body.

Just think dear friends, God loved the world so much that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal like. You and I are a part of the greatest handiwork of God. If we will love him and serve him he has promised to take us home to a better place, ~~than that~~ we read about in the book of Revelation ch 21,v 4 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." v.7 "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. " Ch.22 v.5 "and they shall raign for ever and ever."

Dear friends, are you serving God as you should, if not why not? You are His greatest treasure. Rev 22:17 is God's final call to us in His word, listen please: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. and let him that is athirst come. And whosover will, let him take the water of life freely."

Let us look to Him in prayer, Dear saviour we come to you because we love you and we know you first loved us. Bless any that are listening to this message today and help them to follow you all the way, in Jesus name we pray, Amen.