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Remembering Ed Sanders and S.F. Timmerman

During the Christmas break this year, I attended the funerals of two giants in the history of the College of Bible & Religion—Ed Sanders and S. F. Timmerman.

Ed Sanders was a world-renowned expert in cults whose “Christian in the 20th Century” class was a “must take” when I was a student in the 1970s.

S. F. Timmerman was a respected campus leader as a student at Harding in the 1930s, and he went on to become one of the most influential and beloved missionaries of the post-World War II era.

At both of their funerals I was reminded of their great contributions to the kingdom of God, of the way we were blessed to know them, and of how proud I am of their connection to the College of Bible & Religion.

I have asked Dr. Mike Ireland, the son-in-law of Ed Sanders, and Dr. Winfred Wright, a French missions colleague of S.F. Timmerman, to write tributes to these two men for this month's issue of *Salt, Leaven & Light*.

-Bruce McLarty



Ed Sanders

On the first day of the new year we bade farewell to a gentle Christian man, Ed Sanders. He was a kind and generous man who loved people. If he ever had an enemy, I never heard about him.

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Maxine and S.F. Timmerman celebrating their 90th birthdays in 2008.

On Dec. 28, S. F. Timmerman, veteran missionary to French speaking countries, passed away at the age of 91 in Searcy, AR, where he had resided since 1998 with Maxine, his wife of 68 years. He leaves a great legacy to his children: Fanny, Carol, Rick and Lorna and their families.

Graduating from Harding College in 1941, S. F. (Samuel F.) had excelled in both academics and extracurricular activities. Following a liberal arts curriculum, he concentrated in the areas of Bible, English and history. He preached almost

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“...a rare man for all the best reasons. It is an honor to be his son-in-law.”

Ed Sanders

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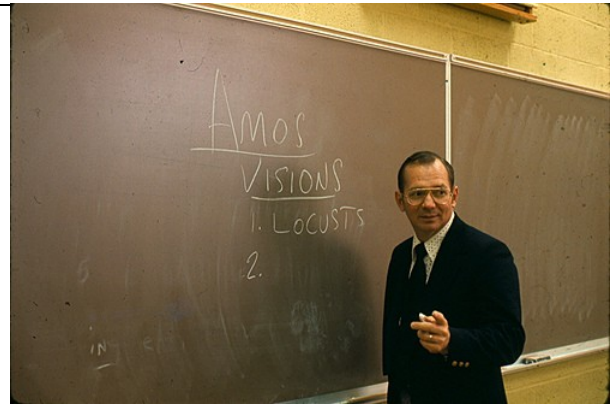
He lost his right arm when he was nine, but no one thought of him as handicapped. He could do more with one arm than most with two.

He was impressive in many ways, but one was his amazing knowledge of so many subjects. He loved to learn, and he was glad to share. He was a teacher's teacher.

For more than two decades he was a familiar face on the Harding campus. He was a popular teacher and the first director of the Christian Communications Program (1974-1981). Passionate about missions and the local church, he was a wonderful preacher for more than fifty years. His writing and preaching, counseling and mission trips, classroom teaching and school administration made an indelible mark on the lives of thousands. He traveled the world teaching about Jesus, encouraging churches, and training others to share the good news.

Ed Sanders was a rare man for all the best reasons. It is an honor to be his son-in-law.

-Dr. Mike W. Ireland



S.F. Timmerman

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every Sunday. Chancellor Clifton Ganus remembers him as a member of the Sub-T social club that placed the first archway at the entrance to campus and as an outstanding athlete, especially in baseball and softball. He was also editor of the Bison, the college student newspaper, and a debater, winning first place in an Arkansas debating contest. After graduation and marriage to the former Maxine Paxson, he preached for two churches in Tennessee before he and Maxine accepted a call in 1948 to go to Belgium as the first missionaries from American churches of Christ to a French speaking country.



Going first to Pepinster and Verviers, Belgium; he later served churches in Brussels, Belgium; and Montreal, Quebec.

Because he was an outstanding preacher and teacher and because of his excellent use of French, he was often invited to be the speaker for various evangelistic efforts. He also wrote frequently for *Vie et Vérité* (Life and Truth) and other French Christian periodicals and authored a book on the beliefs of European catholicism.

In 1998, the Timmermans retired to Searcy, AR, where he preached for various Arkansas churches, led church activities at Harding Place (a Christian retirement center owned by Harding University), and served as proofreader for the French editions of *Truth For Today*. He returned several times to mission points in French speaking Canada, Europe, Africa and the Caribbean to teach and preach.

The names of S. F. and Maxine Timmerman, more than any others, will always be associated with the beginning and growth of French World Missions.

-Dr. Winfred Wright

“.....the first missionaries from American churches of Christ to a French speaking country.”