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## DO YOU LOVE THE LORD?

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Years ago, when I was preaching in Jefferson City, TN, our congregation held worship services every Sunday at Jefferson County Nursing Home. One lady with whom I became acquainted while doing this was Ms. Perna Noland, a sweet and gentle southern woman who loved to see a man wearing a suit and complimented me every time she saw me. While not a member of the Lord's church, she was a woman who respected the Bible and came to every service she could before she passed away.

In Ms. Perna Noland's possession was a copy of a book written by her daughter, Ms. Ersa Rhea Noland Smith, entitled Flyin' Bullets & The Resplendent Badge. This book is a biography of the late Mr. Ray C. Noland, who was Ersa's father and Perna's husband. If you try to do a search for "Ray C. Noland" on the internet, even specifying "sheriff" (Mr. Noland's former occupation) or "Sevier" (the county in which he was formerly sheriff) you won't find much – most [relates to the book](#). [Mr. Noland's](#) memory lives on primarily in the hearts and photographs of his family members and friends, and in his biography, which, as far as I can tell, only has 1,000 copies in print.

Now, before I lose you, I did not write this article just to tell you about Ms. Perna Noland, her husband, or the book the book about her husband's life though – keep reading.

One Sunday, as I stopped by Ms. Perna's room I was saddened to learn that I had missed my opportunity to bring her to services – she had transferred from her wheelchair to her recliner, a difficult process that is not good for her to repeat often; she could not go to services, as she needed to rest. In her hands though there was something that caught my eye; it was a copy of the biography of her late husband. As I looked at the roughly 500 page book, I could see that it had been put to good use: several pages were loose and worn from the binding; all the pages were frilled from past readings; the cover was as dog-eared as could be. I asked her about the book and she explained its origin and its contents, and even that the cover had been replaced by her daughter. The dog-eared cover in my sight was not even the original!

I didn't take in the beauty of the picture I had witnessed until after I left her room. I realized then that state of the book in Ms. Perna's hands stood as a testament to her enduring love for its subject matter. Though her husband had died, her love for him was far from dead.

The title of this article, if you'll remember, is "Do You Love the Lord?". Before you answer that question, you must first answer this one: How much time do you spend with His biography? The Old Testament is our Lord's Family Tree, the photo album of His ancestry. The Gospel Accounts contain His life. Acts and the epistles are the story of His family in the faith and His last will for them. The Revelation shows the victory of His family over all else, the bright future he has in store for His church. The Bible is Christ's biography.

Are the pages of your Bible worn, have you read it time and time again? Or are there pages to which you have never turned, verses you have never read? Ms. Perna probably could have told you the story of her husband's life without opening his biography once. Could you do the same for your Lord? Now let me ask you – Do you love the Lord? "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97).