

From Dave's Laptop

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

Unlike my own family, which almost never went to the lake, Jill's family made many, many happy memories at Lake Allatoona near Atlanta in the summertime. It was, in fact, while she was lying in bed in their little lake cabin one summer night that Jill asked Jesus to come into her life as her very own Savior and Lord.

It is for this reason, among others, that Jill is so pleased to live at Lake Holiday, northwest of Winchester, in what I believe to be the northern-most settlement in the Commonwealth of Virginia. And it is because Jill lives on a lake that she wanted a kayak for Mother's Day.



Not knowing much about kayaks, I went with her on some exploratory shopping adventures, and I did a little research online as well. It was in the context of these efforts that I learned about the importance of having a skeg on your kayak.

A kayak skeg is a vertical fin on the bottom of the boat that has a function similar to the vertical stabilizer on an aircraft. As the water flows past both sides of the skeg, the opposing forces help to keep the kayak going in a straight line, which I understand is rather difficult without a skeg.

Pondering such matters caused me to consider how it is that I keep my life going in a straight line. And that consideration made me think about how I choose the course I want my life to take. How do I choose my straight line, and toward what?

While I've never plowed behind a mule, my Dad spent quite a bit of time plowing with a mule, and he always told me that the secret of plowing a straight furrow is to keep your eye on the end of the row. Knowing where you're going does wonders for keeping yourself "on the beam."

The last several weeks have been a time in which "keeping your eye on the goal" has seemed unusually important. Both Veeda Gaines and C. B. Jones were told by their doctors within just a few days of each other that the medical arts had done all they could do on their behalf, and the two of them experienced resurrection within hours of each other last weekend.



Making that Final Journey with the two of them was a holy experience for me, as I know it was for the others of you who shared the Journey with them and with their families. It was a beautiful thing to see how the CBF Family came together in those final days, and it's beautiful to see how we're moving together this week as we say our penultimate farewells.

You probably don't use the word "penultimate" every day, but you may know that it means "the thing before the last thing." For those who are in Christ, death does not have the final word—

Resurrection is the Last Word. Eternal Life is the Last Word. Jesus, the Living Word, is the Last Word!

As I've had penultimate conversations with Veeda and C. B. this week, I've remembered similar conversations with each of my parents before their own resurrections. I know exactly what I said to my Dad on the night his doctors told him what they told Veeda and C.B. two weeks ago, because I wrote it down (he was deaf, so I had to write it down). It was the evening of December 13, 2005, and we were in Baptist Hospital East in Memphis:

Dad: *"These are probably my last days with you; and I want you to know how much I appreciate all you've done for me."*

Dave: "We don't know how many days remain—10, 20, 100, 200 [there would actually be 83]. But every one is precious. And what little I get to do for you is as nothing when compared to what you have done for me.

"Dr. Hipps [their Pastor] said last night that you are the most Godly man he has ever known. Many others have said the same thing. And I can vouch for it, too."

Dad: *"It's undeserved."*

Dave: "He said he wished he had had a father like you. . . . What's it like to consider the fact that God has given you your ticket Home?"

Dad: (smiling) *"I'm ready to use it."*

Dave: "I find myself looking forward to Home more and more. What do you want to do when you get there?"

Dad: *"Just worship, I guess."*

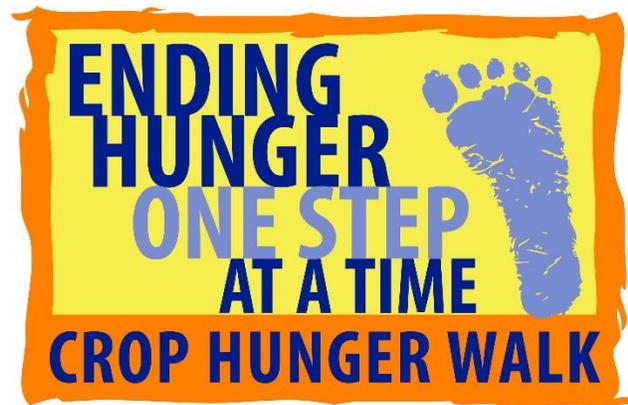
Almost exactly six years later, I had almost the very same conversation with my Mother. And only four weeks after that, my last words to her were, **"I love you, Mom. I'll see you on the Other Side."** Those were also my last words to Veeda on Friday morning and to C. B. on Saturday afternoon. That reunion will be a Merry Meeting, indeed.

Dave



Postscripts:

1. Tomorrow night's program on Nigeria is the last of our series, "Christians around the World." If we've missed your homeland, we didn't mean to! Let us know if there are other nations to which we might travel in the fall.
2. At our next Business Meeting on June 9, we'll have the opportunity to affirm two Deacons: **Earl Sasser** will be returning to active service as a Deacon, and **Allen Biggs** has sensed a call to Deacon service. Please plan to come to offer your encouragement to these men!
3. The nominations have been tallied, and I'll be making calls soon to recruit the persons you've nominated to serve on our **Spiritual Strategic Leadership Team**. Please begin praying even now for the exciting processes of discernment that lie ahead!
4. Please join us again this year for the **Greater Howard County Crop Walk** on June 2nd, beginning at 2:00 p.m. The walk will begin at The Meeting House, with registration beginning at 1:30 p.m.



**Give yourself a Great Gift
this year . . . join CBF!!!
June 9th is Your Day.**