



A Good Week into a Hard One...

Just a few weeks ago, I was getting ready to come back home from a week away. I had attended a conference for new staff who are also raising support; it was a good weekend to be reminded of the calling that God has placed on me to reach college students.

Before making the 4½ hour drive home, I called to let my parents know when to expect me; my dad mentioned that my Papa Bob was in the hospital again for about the 5th time this year. He had been in and out for heart and knee surgeries and was admitted a few days prior with a severe stomach ache.

I got to the hospital the next day and realized how serious it was this time. Two of my aunts, from California and Kansas, were sitting in the waiting room. It turned out that soon after he was admitted, my grandpa's kidneys and gall bladder began to shut down; he had been placed on dialysis, was barely conscious and wasn't looking good.

The next day it became clear that these days would be his last in this life.

A Broken Family into a New One...

My Papa Bob wasn't my biological grandfather, but he had married my grandmother 2 years before I was born and was definitely my "papa." He saw his children rarely and his biological grandchildren even less, but he loved them none the less – beside the 9 stockings for my cousins and me were 4 for his grandchildren that never came for Christmas. I've never gotten the whole story, but there was a falling out in his family long before I came around.

But this week was changing everything. Two of his daughters worked in the hospital that he was in, and they and his son had started to spend every possible moment with him and the rest of the family; we began to realize something – whatever happened in the past didn't matter now, we are family.

By the time Wednesday the 20th came, we had renewed relationships and gained family. Earlier that morning at about 1:15 A.M. with my grandma, dad, brother and me at his bedside, he struggled to say, "I love you," and let go.

A Good Life into a Better One...

He had served in the Navy, been a grandpa to those that weren't his own, a wonderful husband to a woman who had dealt with more than her share of hardship, and an unashamed follower of Christ.

At my grandma's request, I was more than glad to help give closure to his life at the funeral, and I'm sure I gave the message to his friends and family that he would have wanted – that his Savior wanted to share His love with them the same way He had for so long with my "papa."

Grace & Peace,

Please be praying for:

- The other staff that are working hard to raise their support as well.

- My Papa Bob's friends and our family that they would consider his faith and make it their own.

- Those on the college campuses that are hurting after losing a loved one.

Philippians

1:20-21

"...as always
now Christ
shall be
magnified in
my body
with all
boldness,
whether it is
by life or by
death. For to
me to live is
Christ, and
to die is
gain."