



Links Players

When We All Get To Heaven

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. (John 14:18-20, NIV)

I was the first of my close friends to lose a parent. As Father's Day draws near, I'm struck by the ways God has healed my heart in three life-changing years. There are times that the grief is still unbearably fresh, but most days the memories are met with a tightness in my chest, a deep breath, and a smile.

For example, I can now go to the driving range where we routinely searched for the game's secrets and not dissolve in a heap of tears.

In recent months, several of my friends have dealt with profound sickness and loss, and they've each said the same: "I'm sorry I didn't do more when your dad was sick. I had no idea."

Of course, I tell them not to think that way for another second. There are things in life that we can't possibly understand until we walk through them. But then, as Paul writes in 2 Corinthians, our sufferings enable us to comfort others as Christ has comforted us.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." (2 Cor. 1:3-4)

There were times when I struggled with the guilt of missing work, the financial worries of long-term care, and making a bad decision. But God was there, time and again, speaking through others and waking me up at odd hours with clear direction from the Holy Spirit.

I asked; he answered.

I'll never forget something the LPGA chaplain said one evening over the phone that immediately erased the guilt from asking to take more time off work. She said, "There is no greater honor than to help usher a parent into the presence of Jesus." Amen.

PRAYER: Father God, we thank you for the hope and comfort the promise of heaven provides. Thank you for mending our broken hearts. Help us to make comforting those who suffer a priority in our lives.

Beth Ann Nichols

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