

WHAT WILL THEY SAY ABOUT YOU?

Last week, I attended the funeral of one of my Mom's best friends. Marilyn was a life-long friend, and I can hardly remember a time in my life when she was not connected to the goings and comings of our family. Only ten days separated any knowledge of the cancer and her death. The trip to Evansville started at 5:00 a.m., but I knew that I needed to be there to honor this special woman and to support my Mom in her own grief.

At the service, four of Marilyn's grandchildren (now in their 20s and 30s) spoke. One by one, they told of how she had always been there for them, taking them to soccer matches or dance lessons, and buying a teacher desk and three student desks for the basement so they could play school, while she made their lunch and acted like the school principal. Then, they each in their own way told of how she had encouraged them in their faith in God and helped them as they walked their own spiritual journey. One story I will never forget was that she would invite each grandchild every year to Florida. One of the grandsons told of how there were only two rules for that week with their grandparents, and each day both of the rules had to be followed before



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the grandchild went outside to enjoy the sun. Number one - they had to lather up with sunscreen, and number two - they had to memorize the Bible verse Marilyn posted on the refrigerator each morning. Amidst the laughter, there was a confirmation from each grandchild that Marilyn had made an indelible imprint on their lives.

As I sat there with tears in my eyes, I heard the pastor say that he had rarely heard testimonials from grandchildren so rich in a spiritual legacy. My own memories of Marilyn flooded back, as I, too, was the beneficiary of her generous spirit, as every event in my life, sad or happy, was greeted with a card of encouragement or congratulations.



Marti Starkey

Oh, what a legacy she left. While I am sure her legal affairs were in order, that was not mentioned at this most honoring of services. We should all get our estate in order for, as Marilyn would always say, "You never know what is around the corner." Then, our minds and our hearts will be free to engage in what is truly important to leave behind. What will your grandchildren (or your best friend's children) say about you?

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29