

INTRODUCTION

As an advocate for the elderly, and volunteer at Glendale Gardens Nursing Home, I am often asked to walk along beside residents that need extra support in their final journey on the road home. Sometimes it is simply for added attention, but more often than not, it is due to being without family.

Regardless of the circumstances, there has never been an instance but what the writer received a bountiful supply of blessings for having known the individual. Thus, it has been during this walk that the following twelve magnificent stories have unfolded, usually, right in the vision of the writer; accounts that have been chosen so, as readers, you can receive the benefit from the significant happenings that took place.

However, one overpowering reason for choosing these particular stories was to offer encouragement to all God's children for facing their own passing; something that all of us have to experience, or as a support for those that are having to endure the loss of a friend or loved one.

Folks, one of the most frequent comments from those being left behind is, "I don't know what to do or say!" First, please know that you are in the company of the majority of people due to the lack of comfort in dealing with the subject of death. Not only is it an emotional loss, but also a time that feels so final. Then accompanying the situation is the suffering of the individual that many times is so overwhelming to observe.

Consequently, when death finally arrives, adding to the stress is the funeral itself; followed by the settling of the estate. Having just been through the death of my mother, the writer can certainly identify with many of these stressors.

Given all these comments, the one that many of you are unfamiliar with is what happens prior to the final approach toward home for the one passing. Ladies and gentlemen, one thing you can always count on from the individual dying is his/her prior knowledge that time is of the essence; meaning, somehow, the old folks simply are very aware the end is in sight; a truism based on their remarks or actions that lead up to the departure itself.

Thus, having been approached by so many prior to their final decline with worries about not being ready, or feelings that past actions will cause God to not allow them into heaven, were responsible for this collection called, "Stories of the Saints". After communicating with many old folks regarding their concerns, it can be summarized that the catalyst for their fears stems directly back to their religious teachings. Instead of hearing sermons and discussions about God's grace, the focus was based around judgement, sin, and eternal punishment in the fires of hell. FEAR! Thus, the end result is a sense of terror when death knocks at their door.

Therefore, this collection has been written with the hope that the accounts recorded will add comfort to those feeling concerned about their eternal wellbeing. Additionally, in the process of reading it to someone, you, too, will be blessed. Since the number 12 is so significant in Scripture, keeping it to twelve accounts seemed appropriate. May God bless you is my prayer.