

CHAPTER 1: MY FAMILY

Mom Memories 2

Proverbs 31:10-12

*Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband safely trusts her;
So he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.*

Mom's Prayers

In the LaFountain family you couldn't get away from prayer and a consciousness that God's presence and watchful eye were about the place. If we were going off to school mom would often want to pray over us before we went out the door. If we were sick mom would pray, usually with a hand on our fevered heads, and rebuking the fever in Jesus' name she would commit us to God.



There were times when we were bad and deserved a good spanking that mom would first stop to lecture us on obedience and say she was praying for us. Sometimes she would take us aside for a one-on-one conference about our relationship to God and what our disobedience and rebellion would bring later in life. She'd always want us to pray too and ask God's forgiveness before getting that whipping. I don't remember that our prayers ever saved us from a good thrashing, but it certainly left an impression. There

were occasions as we grew older that she would add that she expected a trip to the altar at church the next Sunday if we really were repentant.

Going To Church

Getting ready for church was a hoot. Can you imagine getting six children in various states of chaos dressed and ready for church on Sunday morning and that with only one bathroom? It was chaotic. There were many arguments and so much fighting going on you'd think fire would come from heaven to consume us. But a miracle happened every Sunday morning, as soon as the car doors opened to get out at church we were little angels and mom and dad were all smiles like nothing ever happened.

Our Church

We had the privilege of going to a church under the ministry of some great preachers. Rev. Swaney was one of my favorites. He preached with passion. I don't remember any messages but I remember him sweating as he preached his heart out. His shiny bald head would pour down sweat as he preached. We had great musicians in our church. Ira Bleyaert on the piano, my Uncle Gene the organ, Mrs. Dunbar on the xylophone, and a full drum set where normally you would see the communion table. There were trumpets, trombones, an accordion and harmonica to enhance our worship. This was all back in the 1950's during the time period of Rev. Don Swaney.

***Shekinah* Glory Came Down**

I remember one church service in Monroe in which the Holy Spirit came down in awesome power on the congregation. They called it revival. I remember hearing Mom and Dad talking about it in the car on the way home. They mentioned the shimmering fog-like presence that appeared on the platform. When they said that, I remember thinking back to the service and remembered seeing that fog above the preacher. In my childlike heart I said to myself, "Huh, so that's what that was!" I never forgot it. I have preached about the *Shekinah* glory and used that illustration. I later found out that Jack Hayford has seen the same thing in his church. Mom may not even remember that experience, but it impacted my life greatly with a hunger to see and experience that presence of God.

Children's Programs

We also had the benefit of a children's program called *Jet Cadets* that encouraged Bible memorization through prizes and awards. We also had some amazing leaders and Sunday School teachers that loved us and taught us well. Many of them followed us in our spiritual journeys on into adulthood. Of course as with most churches we had the few boring teachers that simply read the lesson, but for the most part our memories are positive despite the damp church basement with mildew and peeling walls.

I always enjoyed having men for teachers, not because they were better than women teachers, but because we needed heroic male role models. One of my favorites was Glen Wilkins, an ex-boxer with a cauliflower ear. He impressed us. Then there was one pretty young mother who was loving and kind but to whom the boys in our class were relentless in their godless challenges to the existence of God, just to get her upset. I will never forget the day she ran from the class in tears because she could not answer their questions.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School was always a special treat. It sometimes went on for two weeks. We didn't mind. There wasn't anything else to do with our summers. When we lived out in the country on Keagan Road we were encouraged to invite

our friends and neighbors to bring them to VBS. Mom didn't drive and Dad was always at work, so we arranged with a farmer to pick us up with his old truck. We all sat in the back singing choruses during the 20-minute ride to church. I don't ever remember getting rained on and no one ever fell out either. Many of our friends came to Jesus because mom and dad were faithful to encourage us to get our friends to Vacation Bible School and church.