

PREFACE TO

FINISH WELL

By
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There are those quiet but impactful moments in our lives, if given a chance, will write our legacy. As a young teen girl, I remember just about every Sunday morning, walking out of the church auditorium, and church folk gathering on the brown-pebbled concrete. Adults, teens, young children running in and out of the crowd, and a few older members lingering to visit and exchange pleasantries. Quite often a much older couple, married 70 plus years, would make their way through the crowd, always smiling, stopping to offer an encouraging word, shaking hands, giving hugs, lingering for a moment to pat a young child's head, and stopping to listen to a young teen. Many times I was the young teen that they stopped to say hi to, give a hug to, or to just simply squeeze my hand. Those small gestures by these two lovely people, unbeknownst to me at the time, opened up a path of how to live. It was on one particular Sunday, after a similar encounter with them that something so profound occurred. A small seemingly insignificant observation touched me and seared into my heart and mind and has never left me. A marker for life. As this little couple turned to leave and make their way to the parking lot, they looked each other in

the eyes, smiled, and he lovingly, romantically took her hand and arm in his and they walked away together, like young love birds. I have never forgotten that and to this day can see that picture vividly in my mind. It was on that day, that I watched them and said in my heart, “That is the kind of marriage I want”.

Several years later, my fiancé was able to be with me at church, meet this same couple and “see” what I saw. I told him about the encounter I had years before and shared with him, “that’s what I want us to look like when we get old”. He agreed. We are at the time of this writing about to celebrate our 35th wedding anniversary. There have certainly been trials, hard times, and storms that we have had to weather through, but we have stayed committed, we have endured. The Lord has been faithful; we continue to keep that “picture” of the finish line in our minds. We love well, we hold each other close, we look out for the other, we exchange smiles, laughter... we hold hands... and we walk together.

There was another path moment that occurred when my then fiancé and I were in college. Once again after church one Sunday morning, in the college town that we lived in, we were walking hand in hand to our car and came across a teenage young man. He was having trouble getting his car started and my fiancé offered to help. They were able to get it started pretty quickly, but we all lingered afterwards to talk. We were both quite impressed with this young man, he was respectful, and he was friendly, joyful, and able to carry a conversation well with adults. He had a spiritually strong mindset, and was wise beyond his years. He was a young man- set apart. As my future husband and I walked away, I said, “If we have sons, that’s what I want them to look like.” He agreed. The Lord blessed us with two sons, and as we raised them, the “picture” of that young man many years before was the goal we aimed for. The Lord continues to be faithful, as both our sons turned out looking very much like the original blueprint we had in our hearts and minds. We set the end “picture” in our minds and were intentional in all we did through the years to end up there. We are currently raising up our daughters that the Lord has blessed

us with and yes, we have a “picture” solid in our minds, and are moving intentionally in that direction, tweaking as we go, keeping the finish line in sight.

In our marriages, in raising our children, in our livelihood how do we get there? It is my heart’s desire to help you facilitate answering that question for your family. So let’s get started!