

Faith Lift: By Grace through Faith

Please indulge me and let me write a second time about our 40th anniversary. Last Sunday night our children and their spouses took us to dinner at Brennan's in Houston to celebrate our anniversary. I'd like to share part of the toast that I gave that night.

"In the middle of June in 1975 I was asked to go to a silent movie. I was studying Greek at the time, but the lure of watching a silent movie being shown on the side of the Communications building at UT was the call of the wild. I walked over from my seminary doom room to the court yard and began to scan the gathering crowd for the girl that had invited me to see "The General" with Buster Keaton. She was nowhere in sight, but there was another girl that I did see who came and sat down near where I was. Soon, the girl who called me appeared and it turns out she was a friend of the girl that had caught my eye. Then the sister of the girl who invited me arrived and sat beside me.

Not long into the movie the girl who caught my eye came and introduced herself to me. Fourteen months later, on August 21, 1976 we were married in the chapel of the seminary.

Grace is the name of her sister who was sitting beside me when Anne and I were introduced. Faith is the name of the sister who invited me to the silent movie. Therefore, according to Ephesians 2:8-9, I was "saved by Grace through Faith,"lest any man should boast. ☺

Not only was I saved by Grace through Faith, the rest of these last 40 years have been blessed by grace through faith.

By grace through faith Anne and I were engaged on Valentine's Day.

By grace through faith we survived the summer before our wedding even though we only saw each other for one week out of the 3 months before we were married.

By grace through faith we lived on \$300 a month the first six months of our marriage.

By grace through faith after my graduation we moved out of our first apartment into our first house and shared it with a guy housemate. Our seminary apartment exploded a couple of weeks after we moved out. We thought we had been smelling gas.

By grace through faith we left Austin for Beaumont for two part time jobs. For the first few weeks we lived in a borrowed house till we could move in another house with an Episcopal minister. After several months we were able to buy our first home.

By grace through faith, three years later, in spite of having just put money down on a bigger house in Beaumont, we were called to Houston. We got our earnest money back and moved to our second home. While we were there our home grew to welcome 2 of our greatest blessings our son and our daughter.

By grace through faith we rented out that home when we were called to San Antonio. After three years there, even though we put money down on a new house that we designed, we experienced a recall and once again we were Houston bound. We got our earnest money back that time too.

By grace through faith we now find ourselves at Faith, 40 years and six churches later, with four graduate degrees and with two children with their own spouses and homes and four dogs and one cat between them.

By grace through faith we give thanks for every mountain top, every valley, every plain, every plateau, every detour, every brick wall, every surprise, every surgery, every recovery, every heartache, every thrill, every vacation, every return, every next big thing—all of which we have experienced because of meeting at a ... silent movie.

By grace through faith we will continue to be at home in each other until we find ourselves at home forever with all those who have gone before us....by grace through faith.”