



Freedom Project

So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed (John 8:36)

John and Anna Bazemore 3701 Sonoran Drive Colorado Springs, CO jfamilysix@yahoo.com

June 7, 2022



Dear Friends and Family,

There are times in our lives when God's goodness is so real we can reach out and touch it. Such has been the case for me over the last two months as I walked through the death of my father. In my grief I am reminded of God's words in Nahum 1:7—*The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him.*

My father's passing was very quick. In fact, I didn't know he was sick until ten days before he died. When I called him on March 28th he told me he was having surgery in a couple of days on his throat because he was having difficulty swallowing. I asked him if I should come home and he said no. Despite his words, the raspy weakness of his voice and the realization that my father had not eaten in five weeks, moved me to fly home (Jacksonville, Florida). When I arrived at my father's house, I found him weak and frail. I learned that he had not undergone surgery, but an endoscopy which was aborted because the scope could not get down his throat. He was scheduled for a swallowing test in mid-April. Over the next three days I tenderly nursed my father, trying to get soups and other soft foods in him to no avail. On Monday I was concerned so I called his doctor and told him that my father needed to be seen. The doctor took one look at my dad and sent us to the Emergency Room; they began running tests. Later that day we learned that my father had pancreatic cancer that had spread to his liver; he was terminal. Up to this point, he had no idea he had cancer. I spent the next three days sitting by his side as tests were run and doctors consulted. By Thursday, April 7th, he went to in-house hospice at the hospital. He died Friday afternoon, five days after his diagnosis.



In this time of personal sorrow, I experienced the goodness of God. It was as if God not only strengthened and comforted me, but also poured out His lovingkindness in very tangible ways. Like the opportunity to tenderly nurse my father for three days in his home. Like surrounding me with kind and gracious medical staff that helped me during my father's short stay in the hospital. Like giving me words of wisdom and grace to speak to my father and others through the endless waiting for test results and consults. Like giving me assurance of my father's salvation as I listened to him call out to Jesus, telling Him how much he loved Him and wanted to go to be with Him. Like the prayers, encouragement and financial gifts we received from fellow Christians. And finally, giving me precious last moments with my dad as I held his hand and stroked him lovingly until he took his last breath.

But God's goodness did not end there. He granted me the privilege of officiating my dad's funeral and fulfilling all his wishes concerning his burial. He gave me the comfort and strength to begin the process of settling my father's estate when Anna had to leave right after the funeral to go to Alabama to help our oldest daughter Megan who was giving birth to her third child. And when Madelyn Marie was born on April 28th we marveled at God's goodness to bring a new life into our family at the time we lost my father. God's goodness continued when Anna returned to Florida and we cleared his house, lovingly boxing up all his "treasures" and loading them in a U-Haul to take to Colorado. For many people this would have been an arduous task, but for me it was heartwarming because I got a closer glimpse into my dad's life. God gave me safe travel to Colorado Springs where I placed those special family pieces throughout my home. And lastly, God brought healing to the relationship between me and my sister which had been strained for years. In our shared grief we renewed our love and commitment to one another.

Death has a way of reminding us that time is short, and we should make the most of every opportunity. Interestingly, one of the reasons Anna and I returned from Italy was to care for my aging parents. We never imagined that our time with my dad would be so short, and he would pass away eleven months from the time we returned. Yet, in our grief we still rejoice; rejoice in the precious time we had with him and rejoice in the goodness of God that is demonstrated in the good times, the bad times, and the sorrowful times. His goodness is ever-present. Blessed be the Lord.

John and Anna