

# HUGS

Heartfelt, Uplifting, Guest Stories

DEVOTIONS FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY  
JANUARY 9, 2020

## A Lighthouse

What is there about a lighthouse that is so captivating? For me, it is the adventure of finding it and the excitement of seeing it. As my family and friends can tell you, I have been on many lighthouse adventures. Armed with books, maps and directions, I visit as many lighthouses as I can. Many of these excursions have been interesting, to say the least. We have been searched on a military base that was on lock-down after 911 (September 11, 2001). We have driven for hours looking for a lighthouse, only to find it had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. We have experienced high winds, rain and some very long walks. Some of the walks were hard, through sand dunes and rocks, but it was worth it when we saw that beautiful lighthouse!

On several occasions I have been lucky enough to climb a lighthouse. That can be another difficult task. There are lots of steep, winding stairs and tight squeezes. Once you get to the top though, it is always worth the effort. The view is breathtaking.

As a Christian it is easy for me to compare a lighthouse to heaven. God is the beacon that guides us home. We are armed with the Bible as our map and directions. We want to travel there with our family and friends. The walk can be long and difficult and may contain many obstacles. But what a view from the top once we get there! There will be nothing like it.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"  
(Psalm 119:105).

—Cheryl Hall

## And Prayed

Each year, since about 1986, a group of men from Calvert City have attended the boys Kentucky Basketball State Tournament. We have experienced great joy together, watching games, going to dinner, and returning to Rupp Arena for more games.

In 2005 we saw a talented South Laurel team win their opening round game. Following the game, we noticed their two leading players approach the team they had just defeated. Soon, both teams gathered at midcourt, formed a circle, joined hands, and prayed. It was heartwarming to observe this at a time when much of our culture frowns upon any sign of commitment to God, especially in large public venues. We witnessed this same scenario after their quarterfinal win, semifinal win, and their winning the state championship. We were encouraged to see young men showing allegiance to God.

South Laurel returned in 2006 with most of their championship team intact and as a favorite to win it again. They won the first-round game and we were reminded of what they had done the previous year as they approached John Hardin's players. They formed a circle, joined hands, and prayed. Their quarterfinal game was against Graves County, our first region champions. When the horn sounded Graves had defeated them 46-45. South

Laurel was devastated—their dream shattered. Graves celebrated, having beaten the defending champions and advancing to the final four. As we watched we wondered, would South Laurel act differently in defeat? Would they demonstrate the same commitment when under duress that they had in success? Then, they gathered themselves and their two leaders approached the Graves bench. The teams formed a circle, joined hands . . . and prayed.

--Gayle Hall

### **Remember Who You Are**

Anytime that I left on an outing of any kind as a teenager or young adult, my mother usually sent me on my way with the following words: "Remember who you are and whose you are;" or perhaps, "Remember who you are and who you represent." While brief and to the point, this message carried a lot of meaning.

Because of "who I was," my parents expected certain behaviors of me, and certain behaviors were forbidden. Further, it was clearly my responsibility to choose my companions carefully, as many good reputations have been ruined by a poor choice of companions (1 Corinthians 15:34).

Because of "whose I was," I was reminded that my behaviors and actions would reflect upon others beyond just me. This included not only my parents, family, and friends, but also upon Christ and his church.

Many people today find the thought of belonging to or bestowing honor upon someone else offensive. They wish only to please themselves and carry no sense of responsibility for any dishonor that they bring upon their families, loved ones or God. For Christians, this should not be the case. Scripture tells us that "...you are not your own for you were bought with a price..." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Thus, as Christians, we are to conduct ourselves in a way that makes us a "...light of the world..." so that others "may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). Therefore, in all that you do, remember who you are and who you represent. Others are watching!

--Jeff Hall

### **Our Awesome God**

The earth is 7,918 miles in diameter and 24,876 miles in circumference. If you were in an airplane and traveling at a speed of 570 miles per hour you could circle the earth one time in *43.8 hours*.

The largest star known to man is *VY Canis Majoris*. This star is about 1,750,000,000 miles in diameter and 4,350,000,000 miles in circumference. It would take the same airplane at the speed of 570 miles per hour about *350 years* to

circle this star one time. Yet this star is only one small dot, in one galaxy, among several hundred billion galaxies in the universe.

Our God created this entire universe. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

Now consider the size of man in the creation. How awesome it is that our God, who created such a vast universe, will allow us to speak to him through prayer, and he speaks to us through his inspired word. As small as we may seem to be in this universe, God loves us: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). By obeying God's word and living as he has instructed us to do, we can live with him who created all things.

What a blessing it is that God will be our father and we can be his children. His Son is even now preparing a place in heaven where we will dwell with him forever. We are blessed to have such an awesome God.

--Jerry Hall

### **For Jude**

If God allows, I will be a parent by the time this article is published. There are so many things I want to teach my child. I want to teach him how to love God. "...You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). I want him to learn to please God rather than to look for acceptance among his peers. "Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you" (1 John 3:13). And even to put pleasing God before himself. "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Mark 8:36).

I want him to understand that even though we are part of this world, we are to be different. "Do not love the world or the things in the world..." (1 John 2:15). I want to instill in him a confidence to live for God. "...Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). I want him to know that I don't expect him to be perfect. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). But nothing can take away God's love for him. "I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38, 39). I hope you will all help me. (Jude was born May 7, 2014.)

--Kensley Hall

