

Remember

By Justin J. Agoglia
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I remember watching you start each day off: both in prayer and in scripture...you showed me that although your family was important, God must always be on your daily calendar. Your relationship with him was a must; now it must be a priority for us as we try to carry on with our lives.

I remember how you were always there for my Boy's Brigade camping trips/regional competitions...you were one of the few fathers in attendance.

I remember the time when we almost lost mom in a terrible car accident...you unashamedly expressed your tears which showed me how much you loved her.

I remember when I was seriously injured in college and how you left a very important business trip to be by my side. Little did I know I would have to withdraw from college for eight months because of the complications from the surgery...you helped pack all my belongings and drove me home while I laid on my back the entire trip.

I remember the pain I felt after the one I loved left me for someone else...you were there with mom expressing your love for me even when I felt so unlovable.

I remember all the times we shoveled snow side by side...I was always amazed at how strong you were and determined to finish our long driveway.

I remember how you faithfully showed up for my athletic events, how you cheered me on and how excited you were when I scored a goal...I didn't recognize until later how much your encouragement meant to me.

I remember as a young boy that feeling of safety after we spent many Saturdays at grandpa's auto maintenance shop in Brooklyn. After a long day and feeling so tired, I remember resting on your thigh in the car and feeling your muscles move as you switched from the break to the acceleration pad...I never realized how safe I felt as I laid there, knowing I could close my eyes and fall asleep all the way home.

I remember coming home for college each holiday season. No matter if it was 9 p.m. or 2:30 a.m., you were there to turn on the spot lights in the driveway and then you and Kole greeted me by the back door...you made me feel so welcomed even though I was so tired and disheveled looking. You always welcomed home your prodigal son.

I remember Saturday mornings...you not only prepared the best breakfasts around, you gave us YOU with each hand-prepared meal you served us.

I remember the many times you and mom took us out to Riverhead to cut our own Christmas tree down...it was that time of being together, wife with husband, father and mother with sons, brothers with brothers that made the holidays extra special.

I remember going to Camp of the Woods as a family...this was such a special time for me because we got to spend so much time together. I know how much fun we had swimming in the lake, playing tennis, going to chapel, and going to Woodlands or the Mess Hall for dinner. (How I wish we could go back again, all five of us).

I remember the excitement we had when you brought all the Christmas decorations out of the attic...decorating the tree was more than lights and tinsel;

it was that you and mom were there for the holidays to enter into and be a part of our joy.

I remember sharing new music with you, new songs/lyrics I found which had the potential use for a life principal/lesson, a theatrical drama, or just simple entertainment...you entered into my world, dreamed with me, and encouraged me to dream BIG. After that, let God do the rest.

I remember the support and encouragement you gave me as I embarked on my own company (Skylar Design, Inc.)...now I wish I had you by my side to learn from and be your apprentice.

I remember the time when I lied to you...you certainly taught me a lesson to always tell the truth, no matter what the situation may be.

I remember the excitement we had in decorating the outside of the house with Christmas lights...what fun that was in setting everything up and seeing our house come alive with lights. ("It's my turn to throw the broken light bulb." - inside joke)

I remember having a baseball catch with you in the driveway...you showed me how to throw the ball hard and with accuracy.

I remember watching you demonstrate how to hit a golf ball...I know, keep your eye on the ball; don't lose site of your end goal.

I remember how you and mom showed concern for our health...both of you provided everything necessary to stay healthy...just wish we could have done more to restore your health and your life here on earth.

I remember observing you run your own companies and watching you lead by example. On one instance you carefully wrapped a box so meticulously for a client that I thought it was absurd...I found out later on that you always treated every client you had with such high regard. Thus, even

small boxes were given extra attention. You always taught me to give my all, my whole self, into whatever I did.

I remember the many summers you went to the local butcher and paid for the finest chop meat to make homemade hamburgers on the grill...it's amazing how "breaking bread" created a strong sense of community and fellowship between us.

I remember when mom lost her car keys in the Huntington bay...with a faith like I've never seen before you, you showed me what seemed impossible was possible through prayer and faith in God. Who would have thought that you could find those keys in the deep, murky waters?

I remember the many photos you took of us...now we have so many wonderful memories captured in a moment of time. Now, they hang on the walls of our home as well as the walls within our hearts.

I remember watching you under the most strenuous times in your life keep the rest of us calm...as a father, you were the "eye" in many of the storms we faced.

I remember as a young boy how I missed you when you were away on business for two to three weeks at a time. I remember how excited I was to see your face and just jump into your arms when you returned...now I wish I could anticipate that same feeling when I was a child and see you come through the front door.

On your last day on this earth, although you couldn't speak, I still remember watching you gasp for air and move your lips to say these last words to me..."Remember, God has a plan. Don't worry, it's going to be ok."

Thought:

After my father passed away, I recall mother saying, "I feel like I've been cut in half." It really is true that losing someone this close and this special feels like one has lost a vital limb. Something isn't right about death. From the human perspective, death has a way of robbing us of what is so important and so sacred to us. In my faith the one who has passed on into eternity, now truly gains; but for the rest of us left behind, we now suffer greatly.

Perhaps that's why I find myself remembering so many memories. It's in this process that we "re-Member" those parts of us that have been cut off. We want to bring back or rejoin that special person who was such a part of our lives. It's our way of holding on to the gift that person was to us.

I feel like I don't have the faith as others do. I'm not so strong, nor am I courageous as my father faithfully demonstrated to me, and I am far from being the model son. Then again, maybe in my re-Membering, I am just beginning to learn what it means to be a son.