

Words from the Woodwards

October, 2018

Our family has been comforted by the many condolences that have come to us as we mourn the passing of our daughter, Sarah Catherine Woodward. September 11 was the day she was unexpectedly taken from this life, apparently due to a pulmonary embolism. Shock, grief, mourning...

On September 15, Linda and I were given extra grace to have private time at the funeral home "with her" as we prayed, read Scripture, sang, worshiped and said our temporary goodbyes.

The Celebration of Life service at our home church in Pigeon Forge, TN was very meaningful and consoling. So many relatives and friends were able to attend and encourage us. Linda and I wanted to provide a solo and a devotional message, but opted to pre-record them so we would hopefully be more composed. The technology cooperated, so the videos were included. Linda sang "Blessings" and I gave a testimonial message about Sarah, the plan of salvation, and the provision of grace for daily living. These videos and the slideshow of photos are available online, linked to the page at GraceFellowshipInternational.com/blog

How are we doing? The grief journey continues, as it does for all of us who have loved ones who have passed on ... But we have received so many "grace tokens": a behind-the-scenes report that first responders reached Sarah in time to witness her last two breaths; she was not alone and didn't suffer. Linda found written prayers of Sarah, asking to be delivered from her chronic pain. The assurance of heaven is all the more precious. We have been blessed by cards, meals, emails, texts, bouquets, and more. God has provided supernatural comfort and peace.

We had prayed that Sarah's service would be used of the Lord in the lives of those who attended and others who view the videos. We are receiving reports that He is blessing the song and message in the lives of family and friends here and in distant lands. We carry the consolation of the hymns that we sang: *Amazing Grace* and *Great is Thy Faithfulness*.

Love in Christ,

John & Linda



[The Lord Jesus Christ declared]

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

Isaiah 61:1-3



John,

Thank you for the *Grace Notebook*. The Lord so often uses these messages for my daily renewal. So faithful is the Lord to teach me the "way wherein I should walk" and to "quicken me" so that "my soul is brought out of trouble." Best of all, I am then equipped to "have a word in season for him that is weary." May the Lord continue to richly bless.

Psalm 143:8-11, Isaiah 50:4

- VA

Dr. John,

Thank you again for your ministry. I often pass along these devotionals to friends and family. God is so good. With lots of appreciation,

- CT

[We] have attached a letter of thanks for the work you and GFI does for the people that the Lord guides to you. [My wife] and I are very thankful for the visit with you last Monday and the prayers you offered for us and our family. The letter attached is my witness to the men of God who provided steps in [our son's] life as I saw them, and to give praise for their involvement...

-TX

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