



DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

I pray that this news update finds each of you enjoying our summer weather. It seemed that summer would never come this year, but when it did, it got hot didn't it? This summer was another interesting time as the temperature rose so did the chaplaincy's activities. Tempers, carelessness, drug activities and alcohol related misfortunes seem more frequent during the hot summer days.

The heat also caused a number of elderly people to succumb, not just because of the heat, but because their poor health lowered their ability to combat the heat.



One case that stands out in my mind happened on one of our warm days. The morning came with a welcome cool breeze and promised to be a nice day for family bonding. After breakfast and getting the kitchen put back in order, plans were being discussed for activities for the couple to enjoy that afternoon and evening. The cool morning gave way to a very warm afternoon. Each person was

sharing plans when one had a different idea than the other.

It wasn't long before the discussion changed from "what we can do," to "this is what we are going to do!" The day was wasted and the young couple found themselves in a heated argument because a consensus could not be reached. A few hours later in the evening the young woman felt overwhelmed and ended her life in the act of suicide. What started out to be a day in the sun, ended in terror of death during the darkness of the night.

When someone dies it sure leaves a deep hole in the lives of those who make up their sphere of influence. The case of suicide creates a real struggle for those close friends and family who are left behind.

Another case involved a very young family who lost their second little baby in just a two year span. The disbelief and hurt, not only for the mother and father of the children but also for their grandparents, uncles and aunts, and the close friends was manifested at the scene. I was with the young couple at the time of death of both

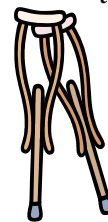
children and the realization of just how fragile life really is was pressed upon me one more time.

It is a very solemn to think that God would entrust Steve and me to be His hands extended in lives that have been hurts so badly. Because of unplanned circumstances, life sometimes seems to have taken all hope away from them in their tragedy. We would ask for your continued prayers for God's anointing to rest upon us as we respond to the calls to render help, comfort, and hope.

HOW IS MARK???

I am so glad that you asked me that question. My son Mark is recovering from his injuries and according to the doctors is doing very well. The 15th of this month he will go in for another bone density test to see how well he

really is healing and if he will be able to start therapy for his right hip and right leg. The doctors seem to think his L-10 vertebra is healing well, but they have found a tear in the muscle in his right shoulder. This is another cause for concern.



Emotionally he and Amy are doing okay. They both have “down” times but they have been able to quickly rebound. I am so thankful that they both know Jesus as their Lord and Savior and that they are trusting in His ability to heal and meet their physical needs. Because of people reaching out to them their financial needs, like the house and car payments, are okay for a couple more months. Social Security denied Mark temporary disability and they are in the process of appealing that decision. Please pray that the system would be sensitive to their needs.

GRADUATION IS OVER

Some of you know my two daughters, Glori and DaVena. It was a delight to be able to attend both Bonnie and LaVena’s graduations

and party with them afterwards. My two little bundles of joy have grown up



LaVena and her grandpa Lyle.

into beautiful young ladies and are headed into the frontier of adulthood with all the opportunities and challenges this presents. They both love Jesus and I am sure if they will keep focused on Him they will find fulfillment and success.

YOU DESERVE OUR PRAISE

This summer the Chaplaincy has been blessed because of

your love and financial support. This is the first summer that we were able to have complete paydays. I cannot thank you enough. I know some of you sacrifice each month in order to give to us, and it seems so little to say thank you. Steve and I pray that our God will bless you with and over abundance. “May the Lord’s face shine upon you both now and forever more”.

With prices rising in our economy, this summer has encouraged my faith in Jehovah-Jirah, (God who provides.) It is a wonderful faith-building experience when people work together to be God’s hands extended. Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts.

Chaplain Lyle

SCHOOL DAYS AHEAD!

The month of September will find our children returning to school. Let’s help them be safe by being courteous and careful as we drive the streets and roads of our county.

Just Some Thoughts...

Here we are again – time for another newsletter. Maybe I'm the only one this is happening to, but it sure seems like time is flying a LOT faster than it used to. I know that's crazy – we still have 24-hours every day – 7 days every week -- but just the same.... it feels like someone is moving the clock ahead.



And yes, I know we can only live 'one-day-at-time'. Someone much wiser than me said, "Don't worry about yesterday because it's gone – and don't worry about tomorrow because it hasn't come yet". That's always made sense to me, but sometimes it's easier said than done. {I'm not sure, but I think I just made a prayer request without realizing it – I'll let you figure it out since everyone has so much more time each day than I do – ha-ha!}

I do know this, I've done a whole bunch of funerals in the past couple months. I think I am up to 15 since June 1st! Most pastors don't preach that many funerals in one year, let alone 2 months. I'm not complaining you understand, since I am one of those strange pastor-types that enjoy doing funerals more than weddings. In fact, I had a gal come to me last week (following a funeral) and say, "When I die I'm going to call you" (to do her service). I wanted to say, "No you won't – you'll be in heaven already!" (but I didn't).

That's not the first time people have said that sort of thing to me – "I want you to do my funeral" -- in fact I've heard it quite often. I always receive it as a

compliment, but it also gets me thinking – how 'prepared' are we for our death? The most important thing is making sure you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior. If you don't have that in order, nothing else matters. But after that there are some other things one can do to 'prepare.' Let me suggest a few.

1. Take time now to speak with family about your personal wishes for when your time comes. ("There is a time & season for every activity under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die." Eccles. 3:1) The truth is we will all die at some point and trust me – talking about it now won't 'speed it up' one bit! There may be no greater gift you can give your loved ones than helping them know they are honoring you at the time of your death.
2. Go ahead and "plan" your own service. That may sound morbid, but the truth is this will make those decisions so much easier on your loved ones left behind. There is more than enough stress around at the time of any death and everything you can do now to help lower that stress is a special blessing to your family.
3. If you're able, purchase a funeral/burial plan. Again, having a 'pre-need' plan in place takes a lot of strain off everyone later. Besides (like everything else in life) the prices keep going up and up so this may be

a good way to avoid higher costs later.

4. Write a "Bucket List" (things you want to do before you die). Pray to God and let Him guide you as you develop your list and then set about doing as many as you can. (If you need help getting started see the movie with Nicholson and Freeman.)
5. Tell those you love how you feel about them as often as you can. Way too many times I've heard the words, "I wish I had told them I love them more often." (Don't forget to tell God how much you love Him too – He loves being loved!)

Truth is that most of what I have said is selfish on my part. As a chaplain it's always easier for me to help families when at least some

of these things have been taken



care of. And yes, I do 'practice what I preach'. In fact I reminded our daughter just this week what I wanted done with my ashes when I die.

For those of us who are believer's in Jesus Christ talking about death can be a celebration – after all, we are promised "eternity with Him in heaven." And last time I checked "eternity" is a long, long, long time. If you'd ever like to talk personally with me about any of this, please call. I'd love to have a cup of coffee and talk about eternity. Shalom! *Chap Steve*