

The Hill (B.A.S.I.C. Training)
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Dear Friends:

I can hardly believe it's been over two months since Bob was plucked from this earth to be with God. I've cried, I've laughed, I've reminisced, I've rejoiced over the gift I was given of having shared my life with one of the finest examples of God's love in action I've ever known, I've missed a Godly husband, father, teacher, friend, and leader, I've cherished friends and family, and I've wept. Two or three mornings after Bob ejected out of his "earth suit," as he would have said, I was at the point that when my eyes opened I was actually disappointed to find that God had not taken me also. I raised the shade and wondered how the sun could be shining so brightly in the middle of my despair. I stumbled out to the front porch and stood there in my daze and shock, totally unable to make heads or tails of what was happening in my world. Then a thought ran through my heart and mind. It resonated in my spirit: God placed the sun in the sky this morning, just like He does every morning and has done since the beginning of time. He is the same, never changing, consistent, and faithful.

Mornings have been hard. I put my feet on the floor by choice and obedience, not because I want to be in motion, but rather because it's what God has asked me to do to fulfill purpose through me for that day. I have not yet adapted to the new normal I've always heard about in the face of loss. Nothing seems normal. Pieces of life seem familiar, but hardly normal. I can't quite get accustomed to the overwhelming sadness engulfing me. I have always enjoyed life and have been filled with excitement over the tiniest details and small blessings, but now I have to remind myself of their worth. One day after the passing of his father, Bob said that the singing of the birds didn't even sound the same. Now, I understand. I sometimes find myself grappling with appropriating the simplest of truths from God's word. However, I have come to realize two things from the experience of these past few weeks: God's grace is abundantly available waiting for us to accept it, and peace can be found even in the midst of a sea of pain.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27)

I stand confident that Bob is living, thinking, loving, resting, and worshipping according to scripture which tells us to be absent from the body is to be present with The Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8). He is in the very presence of the God who he has loved and served forty-one years!

Tuesday, September 30 would have been our 25th wedding anniversary, a day I somewhat anticipated to be harder than others. Instead it was a day filled with precious memories and reflection on the 25-year gift I had been given. Late that same night while searching through a stack of books, I came across Bob's "life notebook." Ever since I've known him he has always recorded his thoughts in such a detailed way. Entries covering several years filled the book. Some documented hard things, difficult or broken relationships, trying decisions, and unfulfilled

dreams as he waited patiently on God to show him more about the ministry ahead. Others recorded joyful times such as our engagement and marriage, the birth of Benjamin and many events of his childhood. Yet, at the end of most, hard or otherwise, Bob had penned, “God is always in control” or “God is good” or quite often “God is so faithful.”

I am clinging to God’s faithfulness and His promises, minute by minute. I can assuredly tell you having walked through this dark hour that God is most certainly faithful. He has used His word greatly to comfort and carry me as He reminds me that He is not going anywhere and that He is indeed the faithful One on whom I can rely. He is also faithful to you, and whatever you might be facing. He most certainly will be faithful to see you through.

Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. (Psalm 36:5)

He has also shown His faithfulness to me through many of you. I cannot even begin to describe to you the gratitude in my heart for the enormous outpouring of love and support we have received in the past weeks. I have cried many times over heartfelt notes expressing love for Bob, prayers offered on our behalf, or a life-changing truth God has shown you on a visit to The Hill. Your phone calls, texts and gifts have each spoken to me and have been Jesus’ love extended to me daily.

Benjamin continues at Murray State and he too, has the most wonderful, supportive peer group. About a week or so after Bob had gone home to be with the Lord, I was finally able to lay my eyes on Benjamin for longer than a minute and get some time with him alone. When I asked him to tell me what he was thinking and experiencing, he said, “Momma, I’m really, really sad because I’ve lost my best friend, but I’m not devastated because Dad prepared me for life and for this moment.” I was amazed by his perspective and grateful for Bob’s training and love of him throughout his eighteen years.

The future of the ministry here at The Hill and what that might look like in the days to come, rests on God’s will. First let me say that in all honesty, it never occurred to me, Benjamin, our board members or faithful staff for it not to continue. God started a work in Hardin in the late 70’s after he gave Bob a vision for a place where God’s word could be taught and people could come and participate in Bible studies, retreats, camps and conferences. The ministry known as Brothers and Sisters in Christ (B.A.S.I.C. Training) began with a group of six college students. In the nearly 25 years Bob and I have been married, we watched God grow and transform the ministry in ways we could have never dreamed. The Lord did exceedingly abundantly all we could have ever thought or asked and all we ever desired was for the ministry to be nothing more or less than God wanted it to be. But we always stood amazed as we watched God work while allowing us to be part of something we loved doing so much.

The board and staff recently met for a time of prayer and discussion to seek God’s direction for the next phase of the ministry. During this meeting the board requested that I fill the vacant position Bob held. The board also agreed it would be best to wait until after the first of the year to host any retreats. We are excited that we will begin the new ministry year on the weekend of January 9-11 with our annual Winter College Retreat followed by the Winter Youth Retreat for

13-18 year olds, January 16-18. We also plan to continue the Summer Youth Leadership Camp scheduled for July 5-11. God has equipped many men and women who are willing to give their time and gifts to work with the students who attend. The board will continue to pray for God's direction about other annual events we have hosted in the past.

Of course, some aspects of the ministry will have to change. The Lord directed and equipped Bob for many years to lead and teach His word through this ministry on The Hill, and his fingerprints are everywhere. He was passionate for truth, knowing the heart of God, and sharing it with all who would listen. He had the opportunity for so many years to teach a weekly Bible study on Tuesday nights that coincided with Murray State University's calendar and was unique in that Bob often taught subjects on which he was currently writing. The resulting lessons were an in-depth, challenging, contextual study of the Scriptures for which Bob spent countless hours preparing. At this time we feel it would be best to not continue. A future Bible study, whatever night, is certainly a possibility, but only in God's timing.

A strong emphasis of the ministry has been the production and distribution of all of the written, audio, and visual materials. We are committed to continuing this branch of the ministry and expanding it as The Lord directs. The past few weeks have been a busy time of sending out materials and preparing others. Please pray with us as we move forward with the translation of the works into other languages, the development of a new website, the publication of books three and four of the God's Heart series, and as we make books and audios available in other formats, and update the current materials. We have very competent and amazing people who are leading this effort and we will try to keep you informed as things develop.

The Hill facilities will continue to be available to rent for churches, para-church organizations, and youth groups. The "Quiet Cabin" is also available for groups of eight or less—families or individuals just wanting some rest and relaxation or needing a place to stay while visiting the area.

College students have lived and worked on The Hill for many years, and we desire for this interaction and discipleship to continue in the years ahead. They bring so much life and energy to The Hill and are an absolute joy to be around. Currently, I am meeting with some college girls to study the book of Romans, Brent Armstrong meets weekly with the young men who presently live on The Hill, and Benjamin has a heart to reach students in the many opportunities provided by his time on Murray State's campus. My heart gravitates toward this age group and I look forward to seeing how The Lord will direct us in this ministry.

While some things must change within the ministry God built on this hill, one thing will never change: This ministry will focus on a person, the same person on whom it has been focused since it's humble beginnings in 1982—Jesus.

Through my hours of sifting through piles of papers I happened upon the typed minutes from the first official board meeting on Saturday, May 29, 1982, and I want to leave you with a portion of it that spoke deeply to my heart.

“Bob Warren and two other members met on Saturday, May 29th, 1982 to discuss the master plan of the Bible teaching and conference center to be built on the 115 acre farm of Bob Warren, near Hardin, in Marshall County. The meeting was a preliminary fact finding event, with the three simply brainstorming as they walked over the farm and met later in Bob's cabin house. The opening prayer confirmed that Jesus Christ must do the work through many, many people. The efforts of man, no matter how well intentioned will never be able to accomplish the task that lies ahead. Bob Warren insists that he must not be personally lifted up or glorified in the process. If man is able through his efforts to accomplish the building of the facilities it will surely fail. Jesus must do it if it is His will.”

We know how the ensuing thirty-two years looked with Bob leading us under God's direction. What we've yet to learn is what the coming years will produce as we follow the lead of the Holy Spirit and allow Christ to work through us.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He Who promised is faithful; (Hebrews 10:23)

Again, I thank you for your love, prayers and support for Benjamin and me and all from The Hill.

In Christ,
Kim