

# HEY FOODFOLKS!

## Gleaning with the Birches - Nov '95

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At the House of David

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### THE HOUSE OF DAVID

THE STORY BEHIND OUR HOME IS BITTERSWEET and unforgettable. We share this with you to encourage you in your struggles, during those dark moments when God seems to be so far away.

When Barry and I were married nine years ago, we made a commitment to God and each other to be debt-free. This resulted from the struggles we had been through, each of us carrying lots of baggage into our relationship from past bad choices. This included a substantial debt that I had remaining from extensive problems during my divorce, and we proceeded to chip away at that debt. God graciously gave Bear a huge jump in his income, and within ten months \$13,000 was paid in full. As soon as that was paid, Bear's business (he is self-employed) took another turn, and we were back at our previous income level. We then began to save for a home, as our no-debt commitment included the purchase of a home. As we saved \$500, houses went up \$2000. It seemed like a hopeless endeavor, and at times we questioned the commitment made years before.



My brother David was living in Portland during this time, working as a nurse. He had bought a split-level home and moved my mom into it to give her security. He enjoyed being a homeowner, and was forever fixing and updating the house. He encouraged us to do the same, and as we explained the bizarre commitment we had made, he shook his head in disbelief. After all, no one tries to buy a house for cash; it's a poor use of one's money, and impossible anyway. When we explained that our God, who had capably supplied the money to get us out of debt those first ten months, was also capable of supplying whatever it took to buy a house, Dave was convinced we had stepped off the deep end. He had no personal relationship with Christ, and had not experienced His mercy and love in his own life, as we had. Dave humored us, but also respected our decision, and our faith in this powerful God. He had married in 1989, and after several years, the marriage was deeply troubled and floundering, and Dave was struggling. He took a job working as an air nurse for Critical Air Nursing, based out of San Diego. He would fly south for two-week stretches, working different air transports for critically ill patients from one hospital to another. He loved it, but the two-week-on, two-week-off shifts didn't help his crumbling marriage, and early March 1993 Dave came over to talk. He had filed for divorce, a mutual agreement between he and his wife, and he was feeling pain and frustration. He believed he would head in a different direction, move to Seattle and get his Physician's Assistant Degree. He was hurting and we hurt for him. We told Dave about the comfort and support God had given us in our times of pain. Bear and I shared the hope of eternity in Christ, and the faithfulness of Him. We encouraged Dave to seek Him out and Dave listened openly, asking questions and nodding in agreement. I gave him a book I had just finished, "A Poor Man's Proof for the Existence of God", and Dave, who always teased us before, willingly took it to read during his next two week shift. When he left, tears in his eyes, the three of us hugged and reaffirmed our love for each other. It was a very special time. Several days later Dave called. He was leaving town the next day, but wanted to let me know he had been reading the book, and found it easy and enjoyable.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH...we had unintentionally started a gleaning program. A friend had told us of bread going to waste at different organizations. We knew of three or four families that could use it, and began picking it up on an on-call basis from Union Gospel Mission. Soon UGM gave our name to the Blanchet House, who gave our name to NW Medical Teams, etc., and those three or four families gave our name to their sisters who were out of work and their neighbors who were struggling. We had buns on our sofas, bread in the entry way, boxes on our dining room table. We had no garage in our rental house, and no place to put the donations we received. We were excited and perplexed, and began to pray about the direction God had for us. What could we possibly do? March 3, 1993 I was particularly confused and frustrated, and asked God to make it perfectly clear to us what He wanted. When I got home from work I shared that prayer with Bear, and he read to me Oswald Chamber's devotional (My Utmost for His Highest) for that day:

***Feed my Sheep. . .  
John 21:17***

The message was clear and to the point, and as we read Chamber's explanation of the verse, we knew we were right where God wanted us, no matter how unreasonable it seemed at the time.

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, was a beautiful spring morning, and my mom's call didn't fit the scenario. She was hysterical and panicky. . . the plane was lost. What plane? Critical Air's flight from Bermuda Dunes, California had not returned to base the night before. They were sending search planes over the desert. Bear went to pick up my mom, and we spent the morning in prayer and fear. We sat in the kitchen and I opened my Bible, asking God for a word -- not necessarily whether Dave was dead or alive, but a word of hope. My reading finally led me to Deuteronomy 32:10-12:

***In a desert land he found him,  
in a barren and howling waste.  
He shielded him and cared for him;  
he guarded him as the apple of his eye,  
like an eagle that stirs us its nest  
and hovers over it young,  
that spreads its wings to catch them  
and carries them on its pinions.  
The Lord alone led him;  
no foreign god was with him.***

What did this mean? I could see in my mind the eagle, pushing her babes out of the nest and they fall, only for her to swoop down and catch them before they hit ground. Did God swoop down and catch Dave out of the plane? Was He there with Dave?

At 2:00 we received the call: the plane had been found. It was a non-survivable crash, and the pilot and two nurses aboard were killed. They had delivered their patient and were on the way back to base when the tail had fallen off the plane, causing an immediate descent, crashing and rolling into a ridge of mountains along the desert edge. We were devastated, and began to deal with our grief. Our biggest agony was in not knowing Dave's eternal status: did he call out for God in those last moments of his life? Had he read the book we gave him and made a commitment on his own? I prayed that God would give me the peace in NOT knowing, and the grace to be content knowing God was in control. It was difficult, and there seemed to be no answers. We made plans for the memorial service, and began to see God's hand. Dennis, Dave's insurance agent and good friend, a Christian, called with his consolations. He had been sharing Christ with Dave, and he, too, was concerned. We found the book I had given to Dave, with no marker. Had he finished it? My oldest brother, Sheldon, called on Sunday. Had I spoken to Dennis? Did he say anything? Shel explained that Dennis hadn't told us everything. A week before Dave was killed he had visited Dennis and changed the beneficiary on his life insurance to me. We were stunned and overwhelmed. We wanted Dave back. It almost made the hurt worse.

We made it through the memorial service, and began tying up loose ends. The insurance company needed a death certificate, and we requested one. We began praying about God's plan for Dave's money. The responsibility was awesome. We believed that Dave's insistence for us to buy a home was provided for in this gift. We knew that he would want his mom taken care of, and the rest of his family to benefit also. As we prayed, God gave us direction, and we made plans.

When the death certificate arrived, Bear and I stood together and read it line by line. David A. Edner...date of death, March 11, 1993 ... place of death, Chiriaco Summit, ***Eagle Mountain...***

Did God swoop down and save David for eternity? We cannot be sure, but we believe He has given us that hope, and our blessed Hope is what sustains us. There are no coincidences with Him.

***Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see.  
Hebrews 11:1***

You have seen the fruits of David's gift to us. As we looked for a home to purchase, we asked God for a specific list of things, if He approved:

Four bedrooms (one for an office, one for a guest room)  
Two bathrooms  
A fireplace  
A garage for the gleaning  
A purchase price of \$80,240 (The balance we had left  
after we spent the rest of Dave's money with God's direction)

He gave us:

Five Bedrooms (an extra for Andy)  
Three bathrooms  
Two fireplaces  
An extra-wide insulated garage  
A family room for entertaining  
A purchase price of \$80,500 (Okay, we went over a bit.)

You can also see that God provides abundantly and beyond what we could hope for. That is why we do not worry about the warehouse situation. When He is ready, and if it is His plan, we will have it.

The sign above our front door gives credit to those who have made our home, and your gleaning environment, possible: to my brother David, who we love and miss, and to Jesus Christ, descended from the line, or house, of King David, our Provider and Everlasting Hope. Praise Him!

*And we know that in ALL things God works for the good of those who love him,  
who have been called according to his purpose.  
Romans 8:28*

*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say  
"No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly  
lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of  
our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all  
wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is  
good.  
Titus 2:11-14*