

I was walking with my hubby on our way back from lunch the other day, as we came across a pair of pants and a shirt just lying on the pavement, and I said jokingly, “Oh look at that, someone was vaporized…beam me up Scotty.” It was pretty funny at the time and we had a good laugh. Later on, in one of my delayed reactions, as is usually the case with me, I dissected the incident. I couldn’t help but tying that sight to that of a soul exiting the body. You know, the type of thing we’ve all seen played out in movies, like *Ghost*. Soon one thought led to another and I found myself once again contemplating the mystery that life after death is and the ways in which this mystery manifests itself in our lives.

Take dreams for example. They say they are by far the most common connection. At the risk of sounding a bit uncanny, I’ll share one I had recently about my sister wherein I’m washing the dishes and I hear a “psssst…” coming from the living room, I anxiously peek out of my kitchen door and see her standing by the front door looking at a framed scripture I have by it that reads “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” It seemed so real, so clear, I began to hyperventilate both out of fear and elation and tried speaking, but the words were barely coming out: “Do you love me? Do you love me?” She walks closer to me mouthing the words I love you, and I walk over to her with open arms and as I try to embrace her she disappears. I awoke suddenly hyperventilating just as in my dream. Now, that’s not the first time I have dreams of the sort involving loved ones I’ve lost, I’ve had many. I suppose it has a lot to do with how close I was to these individuals and how much they remain in my thoughts. Sometimes I feel aware of a loved one’s presence through an occurrence which may seem ordinary, like certain signs. These manifestations, while seldom “water cooler” conversation, are nevertheless experienced by many. I know, however, there are quite a number of skeptics out there about this sort of thing, but surely it can be argued that what is coincidence to one person is another’s message from beyond, wouldn’t you agree? I’m sure some of you have had similar incidents involving dreams and signs.

The whole process concerning the loss of a loved one, whether to death or to life (the latter a topic for another time), is certainly not a walk in the park, and one for which we are

never the same again. It is said that time heals all wounds. I would say some wounds yes, I don't know about "all." I think what time does do is that it affords us a period, a phase, within which to fully accept the will of the Lord and be at peace with it, that's time's healing power and we welcome it no doubt. As for the missing part…I for one miss those I've lost more and more as time goes by. Just recently while on this subject, a friend said to me "I will never be the same again," I agreed with her and added that for me, those pieces of my heart missing after each loss…well, you gotta go through it to understand. Sure, our faith, our blessings and the support from family and friends help us get through a loss, so yes, our lives fall back into place, eventually, our surroundings, our work, our friends, our activities, but not us, we, in part, are never the same again. Luckily, however, those of us rich in faith and abundant in memories are capable of experiencing these wonderful dreams, of seeing these wonderful signs. Compelling means of keeping our loved ones close to our hearts, vivid in our minds.

In this ever-changing world of ours there is one thing we can count on and that is God to be changeless and dependable. We can always rely on Jesus Christ, whose love and grace is eternal, to get us through our most trying times. In His infinite grace and wisdom He made sure to give us faith. This gift from Him has been my constant. How magnificent that our faith in God allows us to remain hopeful. Hopeful that all that we once shared with those we've lost is not gone but instead carries on to be transcended in the life to come. It is like that for me. I hope for those of you who share in my faith, it is as well. For after all, it is this faith, this hope that helps us prepare for that difficult day when our significant others, when we ourselves, are beamed up like Scotty.

May the light of your faith so shine that it will illuminate the heart of another.

"…Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." – Psalm 23

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