

I Lost A Friend.

By Wayne Vasilenko

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The other day my best friend Richard Few went home to be with the Lord. Richard is a fun loving talented person who loves Jesus with all his heart. He is in heaven right now playing the guitar of his dreams singing praises to the Lord as you never heard him sing before. Richard spent a good part of his life doing the same thing while he was here with us. Through his music and prison ministry he had a hand in leading hundreds - perhaps thousands to Jesus. I can only imagine the line of people waiting to greet him when he went through the gates of heaven; People who he touched with his preaching, with his music, and with words of encouragement. I miss him already however, I rejoice in knowing we will meet again.

I have experienced the death of friends and family before but I want to say to all reading this that there is a big difference when you know where they stand with the Lord. Some of you may have noticed that I referred to Richard in the present tense in the second sentence of this writing. The reason I did that is because Richard still IS. He is still alive; it is just in a different realm of existence. This is the Gospel, the Good News! We read the words of Jesus talking about Him preparing a place for us, preparing a mansion for us in heaven... He even paid for our ticket, with His blood! I don't know about you but that brings a huge degree of comfort to me knowing the Lord as I do. It also brings comfort to me when a friend or loved one makes the transition and I know where they stand with Jesus. I have told the following story to many people: When my father died, I cried like a baby. I was upset because I didn't know for sure where my father stood with the Lord. I never heard him confess the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Savior. On the other hand, I did not shed a tear when my mother died. About a year before she died I talked with her and asked her a simple question, "If you were standing before God and He asked you why He should let you into heaven" what would you say? My mom gave the right answer. Do you know what the right answer is? This story was upsetting to one of my sisters when I shared it with her. She said, "Dad was a good man, he always did the right things..." My dad was a good man, but how good do you have to be to get into heaven? The BIG question is, "How good is good enough?" The Bible has the answer to this question and many more. You can find some of these answers in other sections of this web site. Start with the teaching entitled, "What Happened Here?" Yes, I Lost A Friend, but only for a little while. I have to say, it is good to know that. You can have the same assurance about yourself and your friends and loved ones also.

Matthew7:21-23(NIV)

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

John10:27-28(NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.