

David Palmer Livingston, Jr

What we know and remember of Dad is that above all, he was a Psalm 1 man:

Blessed is the man who walketh not in the the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters that bringeth forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth will prosper.

Dad taught us those verses when we were young, but most important, he lived it. Every morning you would find him spending several hours on his knees before God, praying, reading God's Word, and memorizing Scripture. He didn't just give God his wish list, he put time in praising Him. And we know he prayed for all of us and all those dear to him. He was often seen reviewing his Navigator verse packs, his whole life. It was one of the sad things for him his last two years when he became blind that could no longer do so, and his mind had trouble holding a thought to remember some of the verses he had learned over the years. He was also famous for calling prayer meetings when needed and always said, "let's pray about that".

Dad was born in Des Moines, Iowa; his father was a reporter for the Des Moines Times. Then they moved to Park Ridge, IL where he spent a good portion of his childhood. Later the family returned to Washington, IA, where they were all from. He graduated from Washington High school and went off into the navy for World War II, where he spent most of the time stationed on the USS Monterey. Dad came to know the Lord in the navy. Gerald Ford was also on that ship and their ship was the first one into Tokyo Harbor as the war ended. When we were little he often told us stories of shipboard activities, riding on the torpedo bombers with his pilot friends, and how they used to siphon off sugar, cocoa, milk, butter and peanutbutter during the supply reloads... the items were squirreled away and then used to make fudge during off hours. He became famous and quite popular for his home made fudge aboard the ship.

Dad was an eagle boy scout. He loved to go camping. His mother laughed, telling the stories of him and his brother Bob often going camping - and that one time she couldn't find them but did find a note in the kitchen, "Mom, Bobbie and I went camping and we took a can of beans. Hope you don't mind. Davey." Since that was all they took, she assumed that is all they ate. Growing up, he often took us camping. He loved to explore the woods, look for mushrooms, swim in the clean cool streams and mountain pools, find wild flowers, or go hunting for arrowheads. He did a lot of mushrooming and blackberrying with his mother when in Iowa. He

loved to go hunting too but often came home with nothing - although he was decent at getting pheasants. One time, in the USA, all he got was a big fat coon - so he made us eat it. UGH. We all gagged thru a friend's favorite recipe, and then my mom threw it out the next day. He taught us to build fires, how to shoot a gun and gun safety, how to find safe clean drinking water, how to fish and how to paddle a canoe, and many other things. He taught each of us to drive a car. He taught us to swim and to ride a bike and to skate on ice, and to milk a goat. He was so fun to hang out with, and we learned so many things from him.

Dad was often the one who tucked us into bed at night. After reading us a Bible story and praying with us, he would turn the lights out and then lie in bed with us and tell us stories. Sometimes it was about the navy, sometimes things he did as a boy. But the really hilarious ones were the ones he made up under the title "Coal Black and the Seven Giants"... a take-off on Snow White with odd mixtures from various other fairy tales. Our favorite thing was "wrassling" on the floor with him. He would get on all fours and try to catch us, and then always grab one of us by the ankle, stuffing us under him as a captive, whereupon he tickled us half to death.

Dad was an avid gardener. Everywhere he went, he planted trees, fruit trees, grapevines, roses, and vegetable gardens. Because we moved often, many people were blessed by the fruits later from all that he planted and left behind. He loved to take breaks from his studying and research to go check the progress of his plants and trees - tho our mother found herself doing much of the weeding. In Korea he raised pigs, a fancy breed our grandfather sent over, so he could spread the babies around the community and improve the gene-pool of the local livestock. When the mission took over Kwandong College in Kangnung, Korea, in the early 1960's, he instituted an agriculture department and his father got Weyerhaeuser to donate 5 bred Jersey heifers to the college for the same purpose. We also raised turkeys and goats there. I remember we had one of the turkeys for Christmas dinner. Dad always carved the meat, so when he was carving the turkey and dishing out the dressing, my mother had a look of horror -- and with a blanched face she squeaked out, "but I didn't stuff that end!!" [Apparently, the Korean students who butchered it didn't know to remove the craw.]

Our family mostly never had more than one car at a time. There was a time in Korea we had an old world war 2 jeep that would never seem to start by itself. We lost track of how many times we got stranded and had to beg everyone handy to please push us down the road to jump start it. The police never saw it running under its own power, so never bothered to make us register it or get plates. It later was turned into a tractor at the machine shop at the college. The first vehicle we had in Korea was a bright red pickup truck we brought over on the boat with us from the USA. The govt made us paint it black because only govt and emergency vehicles could be red. A year after we got there, the US military gave Dad and another missionary two green

trucks – surplus. We scrounged a lot of military surplus in those days. The hitch to the trucks was that they were both jumbled up together in a huge mixed up pile of bolts, screws and parts, with no instructions. The two men put them together; in the end, the serial numbers of the cab and the engine didn't match but they otherwise ran nicely.

Dad had also done some construction. In college he worked on the side, building houses in Wheaton. So when we got to Korea, he and his brother, Bob, built us two houses in Kangnung, incorporating a lot of scrounged supplies from the local Air Force base. There were many dangerous trips over the mountains to get there and back. The bridges were all out; they had to ford all the rivers and move many large rocks from landslides. I am sure we never heard all the stories of those trips!

Dad came back from the war, went to junior college in Washington, IA and met my mother who was attending high school downstairs in the same building. They dated, he led her to the Lord, and after they both spent some time in college, they married in June of 1950. They then moved to Pittsburgh, PA where he attended seminary. Beth was born in Washington, and David in Pittsburgh. Later Tom was born back in Washington not too long before we left for Korea. Dad pastored a church in Taylorstown while attending seminary. Beth writes, "I still remember him coming home from work and picking me up and letting me pop his bubble gum. We two had a lot of fun together, giving my mom a break while she took care of baby David."

We moved back to Iowa awaiting our visa to go as missionaries to Korea. We took a condemned ship, the Fleetwood, to Korea. It was 2 1/2 weeks of rolling seas before we landed at Pusan. Our Uncle Bob met us there. After several days in Pusan we took a train to Seoul where we lived for a year, and then moved into the two houses in Kangnung. In Kangnung Dad had Kim Jay Gwon as his right hand man. Mr. Kim to us was "Kim Livingston" and we just called him "Kim." Kim often walked Beth to school, and let her hang out with him by the hour while he patiently answered HUNDREDS of her questions and taught her so many things including improving her Korean. Kim helped Dad with *everything* but was never too busy to spend time with us kids and look out for all three of us. He was Dad's right arm, often translating for him in meetings, and helping him do *whatever* needed doing. They started a small church that met in an old army tent, until we were able to build a small building. Our second term in Korea, Dad was president of Kwandong College, now a thriving huge university with over 10,000 students and affiliated with universities all over the world. It was a diploma mill when he took it over - no financial records, no student records, drunken professors who never showed up for class, and drunken students who also did not. When he ordered them to come to class or flunk, they all got furious. He also instituted a Bible department as well as an Agriculture dept and demanded all students attend chapel. It started riots and even North Korea got involved, reporting our doings over their radio stations. Things got pretty scary, and one day there was a

big showdown, which ended by the head of the opposition of the students, coming down front in the chapel service and giving his heart to Jesus. The whole tone flipped after that, and the school remains to this day, a vibrant Christian testimony to the world. Mr. Kim went on to seminary and is now working at Word of Life Press, traveling all over the world; his own children are pastors with wonderful Christian families. Our cook we led to the Lord, and her children and their families are also believers, blessing many others. The list of people Dad helped is too long to tell. There was a man with TB he gave shots to for many weeks. There were the poor we gave food and clothing to. The tiny mountain churches he would walk for hours to sit in on the services and encourage. Dad preached at many military bases and we always had the fellows from the local bases over. He led a number of them to the Lord. Everywhere he went he mentored, and he led folks to the Lord.

One event that stands out is during his days at the college. Every summer during the festivals that were held in the river bottom, the college rented a booth. One year he was given a prominent location for the booth – one he had asked God to give him - that previously had been the witch doctors' location – so they claimed. A huge controversy raged. The witch doctors wanted their spot back and went to great lengths to try to get it, cursing us, and working their charms against us. It was like Elijah on Mount Carmel. We were in the middle of a huge drought which was seriously detrimental to the raising of rice, as it requires the paddies to be full of water then. Of course, the witch doctors blamed us for that. Dad was taking advantage of the huge crowds to hold evangelistic meetings every nite at the festival. Near the end of the week, Dad announced, "Everyone bring an umbrella to the meeting tonite, because I am going to pray for rain. I feel led to pray for rain, and let them see WHO is really God, and it is not their idols and gods that is the One True God." So we took umbrellas. There was not a cloud in the sky as everyone walked to the festival location. In the middle of the service he stood up and announced, "I am going to pray for rain and we will see who the real God is." He did, and as the service ended, everyone who had umbrellas raised them as they walked home... the rest of the folks got wet.

When we left Korea we went to Israel where Dad studied for 1 semester in Jerusalem. On the way we stopped at Mt. Nebo which was then in Jordan. Moses was his favorite Bible character and one of Dad's lifelong dreams was to see what Moses saw of the Promised Land from Mt Nebo, before Moses died and could not enter it. While studying in Israel, at the American Institute of Holy Land Studies, Dad realized the issue of Bethel and Ai being mis-located, causing the scholarly community to dispute the Bible's chronology and subsequent dating, inability to locate nearby companion cities so the assumption was that they did not really exist, and the inability to find evidence of the Exodus or Conquest, etc. He reasoned that since the Bible was true, then the scholars must have found the wrong place. He went on later when we returned to the USA to found Associates for Biblical Research and was the director for 25 years, while he

led tours and digs in Israel, culminating in locating Ai at Khirbet Nisya, near the settlement of Psagot. He made many friends at Psagot while staying with them during his digs. His greatest regret was that he could not get back one more time to visit with all his friends there.

When we left Israel we spent the summer driving around Europe in a VW camper, visiting many beautiful castles, enjoying the local cuisine, and seeing the sites. One of the highlights was visiting Friedel Denkhaus in Germany. Friedel was a pastor, by then an old man, when we met up with him. During WW2, his city had been destroyed and bombed, the people destitute. When Dad came back from the navy, one of the things he had done, we discovered from Pastor Denkhaus, was to coordinate sending many packages of food and supplies to him to distribute to his congregation. Dad was humble, he never bragged on his accomplishments. We had not known about this until Pastor Denkhaus told us. We are still finding out about things he did for people that we never knew about.

We then spent a year in Wheaton while Dad got his masters degree from Trinity. After that we moved to Philadelphia so he could study at Dropsie College and University of Pennsylvania, working towards a Ph.D. With no real finances to fall back on, he had to work his way through and it took him many years to complete it. He worked as an assistant pastor at Huntingdon Valley Presbyterian Church for a few years, then he worked with Campus Crusade for Christ for a few years, and then went fulltime as director of Associates for Biblical Research (ABR). During his ABR days, he held many seminars on Creationism and Biblical Archaeology across the USA and in Europe, taught at several Bible colleges, and started a house church he pastored for several years. He finally achieved his PhD in the early 1980's at Andrews University in MI. ABR continued to grow and they moved to the Lititz, PA area where our mother now resides. Everywhere he attended church, he pretty much was either the pastor or an elder and also taught Sunday School sometimes in area churches.

Dad loved a good joke, as did his father. It was purely delightful to sit around with them and his brother, at family gatherings, and laugh our heads off. We miss being able to do that.

Dad was a very quiet man, very humble. There is so much we probably don't even know about him! The people he affected for one. Over the years we have met his friends from college, from the navy ship, and from seminary. We also met folks he met on his many trips and we met cousins and family members we barely knew – all had a good word about him and loved him. WE would always hear how he led this one or that one to the Lord, mentored them, and thru his ministry in their lives, they went on to seminary or into missions or other things, and ministered to so many others. The ripple effect of his small offerings of faithfulness to the Lord, we are sure is boggling his mind as he discovers now in Heaven how God blessed all of his little faithful offerings of obedience, and his times of walking by faith even when some of the times

were so rough. We are reminded of the boy who gave his five loaves and two fish to Jesus – Who then multiplied them to feed thousands.

There are some funny stories too. Mom and Beth still don't know what happened the day he went salmon fishing with some fellows he somehow met near Beth's home in Michigan during his last visit there, several years ago. He LOVED to fish. He would have LOVED to move there. He went fishing with the fellows the day before he and Mom drove back home. When he was packing up the car, he was wearing this big tall set of clunky rubber boots, totally inappropriate for driving home in a car, totally uncomfortable. "Dave, why are you wearing those boots? You are surely not driving home in those boots? Why aren't you wearing your shoes?" "Be quiet, Esther, just never you mind." She and Beth poked around and found a very wet pair of shoes in a plastic bag in the trunk. ??? He must have fallen in, while fishing? What an exciting time they must have had fishing him out! We *never did* find out what happened – and *didn't dare* to ask him.

Dad spent his last couple of years totally blind. Due to the effect of the Parkinson's medications he was on since the early 1980's, he had trouble sometimes recalling words to finish his sentences. It hampered his ability to continue to write and do research. Nevertheless, we thank God that He heard our prayers and Dad managed to get his research all written up and published; his book on Ai is available through Amazon and thru his website, www.davelivingston.com Despite his infirmities, he never complained. He always told us to trust the Lord, and to forgive, to praise and thank Him even for the bad things, because even those would be used for good. He left us an incredible legacy, and we thank him for that. He received one from his dear fathers, grandfathers and grandmothers, aunts and uncles - and he faithfully passed it on to all of us. We thank God for such a wonderful, loving, faithful father.